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OLD SCHOOL, OR PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS.

WRITTEN BY
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INTRODUCTORY.

As the War Between the States drew to a close, there were new wars and strife for Beebe and his publication, "Signs of the Times." As he recounted in an Editorial, for the first time in his many years as pastor among the Old School Baptist churches, he suffered a division under his pastoral care.

The issue that precipitated the division was abolition. While Beebe was not pro-slavery, he contended that the scriptures did not authorize the position of the Abolitionists. He was assailed as well for his firm stand that Christians should not take up arms against their fellow-men; a position that caused some sharp, but cautious, exchanges with his son, William, through the pages of the paper. There was, too, the usual criticism against Beebe's firm stand on eternal vital union. In this controversy, Beebe certainly had sufficient support from across the land, as the doctrine was, for the most part, warmly received among the old order of Baptists.

Positively, Elder Beebe continued to answer the numerous queries regarding various scriptures with his usual excellence. It would be difficult to find an article written by an uninspired man that could approach the spiritual brilliance of his exposition of Song of Solomon 2:15, "Take us the Foxes," found on page 215.

With a profound hope that this volume will prove as useful to the reader as have the previous volumes, it is sent forth with thanksgiving that the Lord has continued to make this project possible.

The Publishes

ROMANS 5:14

Brother Beebe: If you have light upon the subject, please give your views on Romans 5:14, especially who were the *them* there mentioned, and by so doing much oblige yours in great tribulation,

John Hargrove.
Gibson Co., La.,
February 18, 1864.

Reply: The whole verse reads, “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.” The grand theme of the apostle, as we understand him, was to show how sinners are justified and saved by grace through their vital relationship to our Lord Jesus Christ. In his illustration he refers to their being made sinners in the earthly Adam, by his transgression of the law of God under which he was created. All who have, or hereafter shall descend from the earthly Adam were created in and identified with him. As his descendants they are partakers of his nature; and as their entire development is subsequent to his transgression, his posterity all participate in the sin of his offense, by the which judgment came upon all men unto condemnation. Being in him from his creation, we sinned in him before any of us were brought into personal manifestation. Hence when death passed upon him, it passed on all that he was, as the embodiment of his entire race. In this as in many other important things, Adam is, as our text affirms, the figure of him that was to come. As Adam’s offense brought judgment unto condemnation and death upon all his seed as such, so the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Lord from heaven, and whose righteousness is the righteousness of God, is after the same similitude, imputed to all his seed, that to all who are or ever shall be born of God as his chosen generation, unto justification of life. As it was totally impossible that any who were in the loins of the earthly Adam to escape the guilt and consequences of his disobedience, so it is also and equally impossible that any who were created in Christ Jesus, chosen and embodied in him before the foundation of the world, should fail to participate in his righteousness, and the free gift by it, unto justification of life.

Incidentally, in the elucidation of his subject, he shows that, although from Adam to Moses the divine law had not been presented fully in its perceptive form; yet, the descendants of Adam were included in his condemnation. This is proved by the unremitting reign of death. As the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, and sin is the transgression of the law, and death the consequence of sin, so death has passed on all men, “for that all have sinned.” “For until the law,” that is, until it was given by Moses, sin was in the world; it did not require that a law should be given, and again transgressed, in order to involve those of Adam’s children who lived from Adam to Moses. Sin being during this lapse of about twenty-three hundred years, in the world, as it proved was the case, by the reign of death as the consequence of sin shows clearly that all the posterity of Adam were sinners and doomed to die, as they had all sinned in him, in the first transgression.

By those who “had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” we understand those who had not during that period transgressed any express command in the manner in which Adam had. The word *similitude*, simply means likeness, or manner. The one offense, or transgression of Adam consisted in his doing what God had expressly forbidden him to do. Paul says, in verse thirteen, “sin is

not imputed where there is no law.” For instance, if man had been created a free agent, or actor, having liberty to do as he pleased, he could not have been convicted of sin in following the inclination of his own mind. But being a restricted agent, and having received an express command from his Creator, his disobedience to that command was sin. If the liberty to eat of all the trees of the garden had not been abridged by the express exception of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam’s eating of that tree would have been no transgression; hence the strength of sin is the law. It is sin for us to do what God has forbidden us to do; and equally so, for us to leave undone what he has commanded us to do. There were many thousands who died in the space of time indicated, from Adam to Moses; and of that number we may reasonably conclude there were at least some who died as soon as they were born, who had not sinned after the manner, likeness or similitude of Adam’s sin; having been conscious of no law or commandment to them expressly given, and deliberately disobeyed. For Adam was not deceived, although the woman was; but Adam knew that his eating of the tree was a transgression of the command of God. To sin after the similitude of his transgression could not then have been possible for unconscious infants, or any others who were unconscious of disobedience to God. Yet they died, as well as all others of their race; which proved that they were sinners; although incapable of what we sometimes call actual personal transgression, after the manner of Adam’s transgression. Had death only reigned over those who sinned in the manner or similitude of Adam’s transgression, Adam would not have been as striking a figure of him that was to come. Adam’s transgression landed all his posterity in guilt, judgment, condemnation and death; thus showing in the nature of the figure that the righteousness of Christ should deliver all his seed from condemnation and death. The argument of the apostle that those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression demonstrates the position by him assumed, that all have sinned in Adam, and that sin being upon all his race, death, which is by sin, reigns over them all. It does not require that we should in our own individuality be born into the world and in our own persons actually transgress the law, as Adam did, to make us sinners, for we were involved in sin and death at the very moment that Adam was; for we were there, and to us in him was the command given and transgressed; consequently death, in passing on him, passed on us all. It therefore follows that we were conceived in sin, and go astray from the womb, speaking lies; for, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one (Job 14:4).” Hence we see the throne of death set up, and his cruel reign extended to all the seed of Adam: even them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s sin. It is certain that his unborn posterity had not sinned after the manner or similitude of Adam’s transgression; that is, they had not in their individual persons consciously transgressed any law or commandment, in the way, manner or similitude of his sinning; but were all held, as involved in the sin which they committed in him, and so death passed upon all for that all have, and had sinned.

“Conceived in sin, O wretched state,
Before we drew our breath;
The first young pulse began to beat,
Iniquity and Death.”

Thus as guilt, condemnation, ruin and death came on all the children of the earthly Adam before the first of them were born, and allowed no exemption to any of his then undeveloped seed so the free gift of justification to life comes by the second Adam, on every one of the seed of Christ; and was extended to them in him, before the world began, consequently before any of them were brought into manifestation as the sons of God by a spiritual birth. “That as sin hath reigned unto death,” by the earthly Adam; “Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our

Lord.” So as our sin by Adam reigned unto death; so *our* righteousness in Christ, the righteousness of God given to us in him, has reigned by him unto eternal life, to as many as the Father hath given him.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1864.

MATTHEW 13:47-49

Brother James C. Riggin, of Fulton Co., Ill., desires our views on the parable of the net, Matthew 13:47-49.

“Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just.”

With much fear and trembling, we venture a few remarks upon the design and application of this parable. We have generally felt but very little confidence in our ability to expound any of the parables; mostly from a sense of our incompetency, and also because we meet with so many forced interpretations from those who are wiser than ourself, and so much which seems to us speculative and unwarranted by the general bearing of the scriptures. It is true that all the wise and gracious sayings of our divine Lord and Master are parabolical to those who are not born of God and instructed by his Spirit. But there are very many plain declarations in the holy scriptures, many precious promises, divine assurances, and important lessons of instruction which are so clearly stated as to prevent a liability to speculate upon them. If we were humble enough to always acknowledge our ignorance, and wait for divine instruction on such portions of the word as are sealed and hidden from our understanding, it would be more safe for us to express our views: but there is a kind of aspiring ambition in our proud hearts to attempt to forge out some plausible interpretation of the most profound mysteries, rather than let it be known there are some things in the word too deep to be sounded by our short lines.

What remarks we may now make on this parable are to be received only as our remarks, and to be carefully examined by our readers, and not hastily adopted without assurance that they are sustained by better and higher authority.

The Kingdom of heaven is a kingdom, principality or government of a spiritual nature; it is not of this world, neither is it like the kingdoms of this world; but still it is, a portion of it at least, in the world. The terms are used, as we understand them, not to designate the general providential government of God, which extends alike to all beings and all events; but more particularly to designate that kingdom which Daniel prophesied that the God of heaven should set up in the days of the Caesars of Rome, that should never be destroyed. John the Baptist in preaching declared in his day that it was at hand, and so Jesus also preached while with his disciples under the law, before his church was organized. We suppose the kingdom of heaven in this parable means what we sometimes call the visible church of Christ; and if so, the question arises, how is it like a net that was cast into the sea? The sea is, as divinely interpreted, “the gathering together of the waters (Genesis 1:10);” and figuratively the waters

represent “people, and multitudes and nations and tongues (Revelation 17:15);” the net may therefore signify the church or kingdom set up among the Gentile nations of the earth, and the gospel of this kingdom sent forth to every nation and tongue under heaven, as nets are cast into the sea by fishermen, for the purpose of catching fish; so the gospel kingdom is cast among the Gentiles, to collect into it those who are to be saved; those other sheep, which Christ said he must also bring into his fold (John 10:16). No intelligent fishermen would think of casting his net where he knew there were no fish; none would be so stupid as to believe the casting of the net would make the fish; but in living waters, where there are living fishes, the net is cast for the purpose of gathering them into its folds, and drawing them to the shore.

Now we suppose our Lord designed by the parable to give his disciples to understand that as the net often collects in its folds some kinds of fish which are of no value, which are thrown away when the fish are examined; that so in the progress of the kingdom of heaven among the Gentiles many would be gathered into the church, which have no affinity to the people of God, and will be again cast out from fellowship. “Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up (Matthew 11:13).” We do not believe that any can enter the spiritual precincts of the kingdom of Christ but those who are born again of the water and of the spirit (John 3:3,5). And none of them can ever be cast out, for Jesus says, “I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand (John 10:28).” But we do believe there are many hypocrites and nominal professors who get into churches of the saints, not by the door, but as wolves get in among the sheep, to devour and waste the flock. And we are very certain that all who come in without the grace of God will be cast out without his favor. Many of this sort imposed upon and even bewitched the churches of Galatia; they gained a standing among them. Paul, “Would that they were even cut off;” for they troubled the saints, instead of comforting them. So there was found in some of the churches of Asia some who held the doctrine of Balaam, and of the Nicolaitanes, and a certain very popular and queenly prophetess with her illegitimate brood which were to be cast into a bed, and killed with death. For if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy. There were false prophets among the people of Israel, even as there shall be false teachers among you; but swift destruction awaits them; their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. See II Peter 2:1-3.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked. A separation is decreed; for, “So shall it be in the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.” Many flatter themselves that they may enter the kingdom in some other way than that which God has provided, and they boastfully say, it will not be asked how they got there. But it was demanded of one, “Friend how comest thou in hither, not having the wedding garment,” and his fate shall be a warning to others, for he was bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, etc. (Matthew 22:18) That there will be a final purging of the church of God, and effectual and everlasting separation of the wicked from the saints is fully declared in the word. There have been from time to time severe trials and persecutions brought upon the church to scourge out those who have no vital connection with the mystical body of Christ, and these may be used, and we have no doubt are used at the present time for the purging of the church. We know that fiery trials shall try all the saints, individually and collectively, and when they shall be thoroughly tried they shall come forth from the furnace like gold seven times tried in the fire. As the fishermen draw to the shore much that is cast away as worthless, so is the progress of the kingdom of heaven, or organized church, among the Gentiles. It has and does gather much that will not stand in the trying day. The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just. Thus the Savior applies this parable, almost in the same words in which he did that of the wheat and tares which precedes it in this same chapter; thus signifying that the same lesson of instruction and

admonition is embraced in both parables. The angels are the messengers commissioned to draw the discriminating line between the living and the dead; between the wicked and the just. This the faithful ministers of Jesus have been doing ever since the net was first cast into the Gentile seas; but in the end of the world, as the final closing up of the mystery of God; angels are commissioned at the time when the Lion of the Tribe of Judah shall open the seventh seal, to sound the seven trumpets, and pour out the last plagues upon the earth. These angels shall execute their commission in the end of the world; and the execution of their work extends until the final separation indicated in our parable shall be fully accomplished.

However the wicked and the just may be intermixed here on earth, and the church infested with hypocrites and false professors, the day is at hand that shall burn as an oven; when all they that are proud and they that do wickedly shall be stubble. God, by the angels, or messengers of his own appointment, will thoroughly purge his floor, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. May we through rich, free, sovereign and abounding grace be garnered with the wheat, and saved with an everlasting salvation.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1864.

HAGGAI 1:6

Brother Beebe: If it will not interfere with other matter, you will oblige me by giving your views on Haggai 1:6: “Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put into a bag with holes.”

I. W. Bayly.
Princess Anne, Md.
Feb. 16, 1864.

This message was sent to Zerubbabel, the governor of Jerusalem, and to Joshua, the priest, and through them to the people of Judea, in the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia, admonishing them to proceed with the work of building the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem. The work had been commenced under the patronage of Cyrus, by whose hand God had delivered Judah from her seventy years of captivity in Babylon, but hindered by the adversaries of Judah, who had taken offence because their proffered services to help build had been rejected by Zerubbabel and Joshua, and, in revenge, they charged them with disloyalty to the king and succeeded in procuring an edict, or injunction, from the king causing the work to stop, but God sent the prophet Haggai with a command to go on with the work. This prophet is urging his divinely authorized admonition, “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord’s house shall be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways.” And of the things which they were to consider, whether it were better for them to obey God or men, mark the dealings of God with them in their disobedience. How had they fared while the work was

suspended through fear of the human government claiming the right to dictate in this matter? This suspension lasted from the time of the decree of Artaxerxes until the second year of the reign of Darius, and during that period God had withheld from them the blessings provided in his covenant for their obedience, and had sent upon them the judgments in that covenant provided for disobedience. The scarcity of bread among them was not because they had sown too sparingly, for they had sown much, but brought in little. God in judgment had withheld the rains and dew, and suffered not the earth to yield to them its bounteous harvests. This is one thing they were called upon to consider. Another matter for serious consideration was, that what they did eat was forbidden to satisfy their appetites. “Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink.” Neither in eating nor drinking could they be satisfied. “Ye clothe you, but there is none warm.” They could prosper in nothing. Even the hireling who earned wages could not permanently invest them; their money was put into bags with holes, so that it was lost. Now God commands them to consider these his dealings with them, and bear in mind that “the way of the transgressor is hard.” God would not allow them, as his peculiar people, to prosper in disobedience. How true the testimony of them as an inconsiderate people is given in the first chapter of Isaiah, more inconsiderate than the very ox, and even the stupid ass reproved them. “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” God had promised them corn and wine and oil if they were obedient to him, and assured them that the willing and obedient should eat the good of the land, but the same covenant provided that if they were disobedient he would send the sword, the famine and the pestilence. Under their then present circumstances it became them soberly to consider whether there was not clear and palpable evidence that God disapproved of their disobedience. How astonishing, that having so recently returned from their seventy years of captivity in Babylon, they should so soon require to be reminded of their duty to obey God by his judgments. They were a carnal, but typical people, and their waywardness as a stiff-necked and rebellious people but too plainly points to the inconsistency, disobedience and backslidings of the spiritual Israel of God under the new covenant in this the gospel dispensation, and the frequent chastisements to which we are subjected for our wanderings. These lessons are written and left on record for our instruction and admonition, and although the new covenant under which we live is a better one, containing better promises, and in it God has promised to be merciful to our unrighteousness, and that he will remember our iniquities no more, yet with equal certainty he has provided that he will, in parental love and covenant faithfulness, visit our iniquities with the rod, and our sins with many stripes.

We learn from this record of God’s ancient people, or we should if we but considered our ways as God commanded them to consider theirs, that our comforts, joy and spiritual prosperity, though not for our good works, yet are inseparably connected with our faithful obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. Can the child of God be happy in disobedience? Can the Christian prosper when indifferent to the honor of his Lord and Master?

Let us look about us and consider, Have we sown much? Alas, perhaps too much have we sown to the flesh, from which we are reaping corruption; food that will not satisfy the cravings of a child of God. Have we drank from broken cisterns, and found that the streams of earth cannot satisfy like the streams of that river which make glad the city of God? Have we wrapped us in a cloak, or garments of Babylonish texture? Can Christians feel warm and comfortable in a Babylonish garment? Have we upon the legal principle been working for wages? How have we husbanded our gains? What have we laid up in store against the time of need? Let us consider that it does not become us to live in ceiled houses, while the church of God is neglected and the ways of Zion mourn; that we are not to court the smiles of princes, potentates or monarchs at the expense of our sacred allegiance to the King eternal,

the only wise God our Savior, nor to barter away or yield one particle of what he has revealed in his holy word, to save from the rack, the torture, the scaffold or the stake these poor, frail, dying bodies. “He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it (Matt. 10: 30).” “Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God (Psalms 100: 22,23).”

Middletown, N. Y.,
April 1, 1864.

LUKE 12:49-51

Brother Joshua Dickerson, of Ohio, desires our views on Luke 12:49-51, and in complying with his request, we will notice the three verses in the order in which they are recorded. They read thus:

“I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division.”

Although the heavenly messengers who announced the advent of our Savior made the plains of Judah vocal with their lofty notes of “Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men,” clearly setting forth that the Savior’s mission was a mission of peace; that he came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them; and that the very spirit of the gospel is love to God and love men; and that none can enjoy the spirit of Christ in their hearts while they cherish ill will to their fellow men, still the advent of the Prince of Peace was designed to kindle a fire on the earth that should never be quenched until the enemies of the Lord shall all be consumed and the children of God thoroughly purified as the gold. In the first verse of our text, Jesus says, in most positive and emphatic language, “I am come to send fire on the earth.” Not literally by an incendiary torch by him or any of his followers, applied to the persons or property of any of the children of men for when his indignant disciples, on one sore provocation felt disposed to command fire from heaven to consume a village of the Samaritans, because the wicked inhabitants did not receive him, Jesus rebuked them, and told them plainly that he came for no such murderous or destructive purpose. True, these Samaritans were wicked, and enemies of Christ and his cause, but the spirit which the disciples evinced, to resent by retaliation, was not the Spirit of Christ. It is possible that some of Christ’s disciples have subsequently been deceived by the same spirit of revenge which Christ rebuked in James and John on that occasion. It would be well, at least, before indulging in so unlovely a spirit, to enquire of Jesus, as James and John did, whether it be his will that we invoke or command fire for the destruction of either friends or foes.

To harmonize with the uniform teachings and works of the Messiah, and the very spirit of the gospel, his words in our text are to be understood as being metaphorically used, and used to signify the great commotion, strife, opposition and persecution his coming should produce in the earth, and the tribulation his people would have to encounter, and the cleansing and purifying effect upon his church, and the final inevitable destruction of his enemies, and the everlasting salvation of his people. All that was written of him in the law, the prophets, and in the psalms, must be accomplished. And these had all

foretold the events to which Christ evidently alluded. A few passages from the many must suffice at this time.

The prophet Malachi, foretelling the day of our Lord, says, “For, behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” “And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet... (Malachi 4:1-3).” “And the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple,” etc. “But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver,” etc. Isaiah says, “For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:5,6).” Again, “Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire; and the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame, and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day (Isaiah 10:16,17).” “For behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury and his rebuke with flames of fire; for by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many (Isaiah 66:15,16).”

In the foregoing passages, as well as in many others to which we might refer, we have abundant testimony that the advent or coming of Christ was designed and before ordained to send fire on the earth, so that his declaration in our text is fully sustained by the testimony of prophecy, all of which he came to fulfill. Fire is the most grand and magnificent of all the elements of nature, and shall survive and triumph over all the rest, melting them with fervent heat and consigning them all to final conflagration. The peculiar properties of fire are light and heat. Its nature is searching, melting and consuming. It is figuratively used in the scriptures to signify and illustrate several very important things.

First. It is applied to God himself. “For our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29).” To Jerusalem he will be “A wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her (Zechariah 2:5).” In the application of the metaphor to God himself in the first of these scriptures, he is called a consuming fire, signifying the purity and holiness of his nature, that nothing unholy or impure can endure his presence. As set forth in his fiery law, the Mount Sinai where God proclaimed its precepts, we are told, “burned with fire (Hebrews 12:18).” And that he will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, when, in the person of his Son, he shall come in the last day to judge the world in righteousness, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Thessalonians 1:7,8). But in the text, Zechariah 2:5, he is a wall of fire for the protection and glory of Jerusalem. Thus when Moses saw the bush enveloped in flame, he was astonished that the bush was not consumed. That bush was a type of the church, and the God of Abraham and of Isaac, and Jacob was in the midst of the burning bush; not to consume, but to protect it. So also with the cloud by day, which was a pillar of fire by night unto the Hebrews in the wilderness. God was in the cloud and in the pillar of fire, for the destruction of their enemies, and for the protection of his covenant people. He sits as a refiner’s fire, not to consume, but to purge the sons of Levi. He will consume their dross and purge out their impurities, and he will utterly destroy his enemies with unquenchable fire. But his saints, like their representatives in the furnace of the idolatrous king of Babylon, shall come forth unsinged by the fire and uncontaminated by the furnace, for the form of the fourth is in their midst, and God has promised that the flames shall not kindle upon them (Isaiah 42:2).

Second. This metaphor is used to signify the word or words of God. “Is not my word like a fire, saith the Lord (Jeremiah 23:29).” The searching, powerful and irresistible omnipotence of every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God is frequently set forth by the similitude of fire; an element that no flesh can stand before. In their effect upon the wicked, his words are represented as the “Rod of his mouth.” “Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy; his lips are full of indignations, and his tongue as a devouring fire, and his breath as an overflowing stream... (Isaiah 30:27,28).” “And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked (Isaiah 11:4).” Compare this last text with II Thessalonians 2:7,8: “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall *consume* with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” “For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the *breath of the Lord*, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it (Isaiah 30:33).” “But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness, and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions; and the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it (Obadiah 17,18).” “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth (Psalm 49:1-5).” The word, in its power and vitality, is well compared to fire in its effects on different objects. It melts the wax, but it hardens the clay; it burns up the hay, wood and stubble, but it refines the silver and purifies the gold. The written testimony or word of God contained in the holy scriptures, when brought in contact with the doctrines of men and devils, will discriminate between truth and error, as fire will separate between gold and dross. Paul says, “If any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is (I Corinthians 3:12,13).”

We will suppose a church started upon the foundation which Paul as a wise master builder has laid, which he says is Christ Jesus, and then, like the churches of Galatia, having began well, are afterward subverted and drawn into error; or like the Corinthians, to whom he was writing, because disorderly in doctrine or practice, how is the wrong to be detected but by the searching power of the fire of God’s word? If we try by any other test we cannot detect the wrong, for human wisdom is vain; it can demonstrate nothing of a spiritual nature. But let every man’s work be tried by the scriptures of truth, and while it will burn up all the wood, hay and stubble, it will prove that the incombustible materials cannot be burned. To this fiery ordeal every doctrine and theory must and shall be brought. God will judge the world at the last day according to Paul’s gospel; that is, according to God’s word. The humble child of God desires this trial. “Search me, O God, and try me,” is his language; while he that doeth evil hateth the light, because his deeds are evil. Amaziah, the wicked priest of Bethel, could not stand before the burning truth of God’s words which the prophet Amos brought, and he accused the prophet of disloyalty to the king, treason to the nation, and conspiracy against the government of Israel, and tried to intimidate and drive him to some other place to eat bread and prophesy. See Amos 7:10,13. It was so also with Micaiah. Ahab could not endure the word of the Lord by him, and he was incarcerated and sentenced to eat the bread and drink the water of affliction. Thousands of instances are recorded to

the same effect. But although king-craft and priest-craft, and all who fatten on their patronage, may wreak their vengeance on the messengers of the Lord, the fire of his word they can not quench. They may seem, for a time, to triumph in their suppression of the truth, but they stand on slippery places, and fiery billows roll beneath their sliding feet.

“Those heaps of wrath, by slow degrees,
Are forced into a flame,
But kindled, O! how fierce they blaze,
And rend old nature’s frame.”

There are multitudes of what are called Christian churches scattered all over our land, in which the most pernicious doctrines are promulgated. Would not a plain, clear and unreserved presentation of the word of God among them be like fire among the corn of the Philistines? But,

Third. The ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ are metaphorically represented as fire. Not because they of themselves possess any power superior to that of other men; nor can they receive that power from any other source than from the Lord. But the Lord “Maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flaming fire (Psalm 104:4; Hebrews 1:7).” This is what *He*, God himself, maketh them, by calling them by his grace, quickening them by his spirit, and then putting his words in their mouth. The word of the Lord was like fire shut up in the bones of the prophet Jeremiah. When this prophet had encountered Pashur, the priest, and had been tortured in the stocks for telling the truth, and the word of the Lord had become a reproach, even to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, he became discouraged, as perhaps some of the Lord’s servants do at the present day, and resolved, saying, “I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more of his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay (Jeremiah 20:9).” The apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, on the day of Pentecost; and cloven tongues of fire were given them, so that they could not forbear to publish the gospel in the face of the most bitter opposition and persecution.

But here we must discriminate between the fire itself, which is the word and spirit of the Lord, and those who were under its power and influence. A candle can give no light until it is lighted by the application of fire, and then it burns and gives light to all that are in the house. It was thus when a live coal from off the altar of the Lord had touched the mouth of Isaiah, he was qualified to receive his commission, to bear the messages of the Lord to Israel, and like a lighted candle, he began to shine. John the Baptist also was *a burning and a shining light*, bearing witness of Jesus (John 5:35); for he came from God and burned with celestial fire. This fire is kindled in the hearts of those who are called to the ministry of our Lord, as in the heart of the two who said, “Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures (Luke 24:32)?” This is the fire that burns upon the sacred altar of our God, which warms the hearts of all who have ever felt its melting power and experienced its burning love; and it is in all respects unlike that flame which sets on fire the course of nature; for James informs us that that is set on fire of hell.

This is the fire, if we mistake not, which Jesus came to send on the earth. It is the fire of heaven; it burns in the enraptured spirits around the eternal throne. It consumes nothing that is pure and holy; it shines with uncreated radiance, and is the true light of life and immortality. O, for its sacred flame to warm our cold hearts, quicken and animate our languid affections, consume our dross and tin, and melt us in love to God, love to his cause, his doctrine, his ordinances, and all his precepts. This holy fire from heaven, sent forth by our Redeemer on the earth, must so illuminate the church as to make her like a city that is set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid. It will also qualify not only the ministers of

the word, but all the saints individually and collectively to so let their light shine as to glorify their Father in heaven, from whom they have received it. This fire, sent forth into the world, must come in contact with the darkness of this world, and so provoke the wrath of the prince of darkness, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. And it will assuredly provoke the rage and malice of wicked men who love darkness more than light, because it reveals hidden things of dishonesty, exposes hypocrisy and delusion, and because it exalts God and abases the sinner in the dust. This fire proceeds out of the mouth of God, and as God is true, it shall ultimately consume anti-christ, which is not to be done by armies in the tented field, recklessly shedding the blood of their fellows, but it shall be done by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. His words are fire, and they proceed out of his mouth, as the breath of the Lord, which shall not return unto him void of the work whereunto he has sent it.

This fire is kindled in Zion. The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame. “Judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God (I Peter 4:17).” “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, *and by the spirit of burning*; And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory there shall be a defence (Isaiah 4:4,5).” The fire of the Lord shall fill his enemies with consternation and dismay, and they shall realize the force of the words of the prophet, “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.” And they are heard to cry out in terror, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings (Isaiah 33:14).” As our Redeemer has come to fulfill these predictions, and to execute these judgments, “Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth (Malachi 3:2).” How awfully sublime and terrible the display described by inspired men of God, “Clouds and darkness are round about him. A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlighten the world. The earth is afraid. The hills melt like wax at his presence (Psalm 97:2-5).” “Zion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O Lord.”

This fire Christ came to send on the earth; this collision of truth with falsehood, of righteousness against unrighteousness, of holiness against sin, and of love against hatred, Christ came to inaugurate and lend in triumph through the earth. With his sword upon his thigh, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, he rides prosperously, conquering to conquer, until all enemies shall be subdued and put under his feet.

“And what will I, if it be already kindled?” This interrogative was not uttered to solicit, but to impart instruction. The conflict between light and darkness was already apparent in the earth. The powers of darkness were already arrayed against the light and glory of the Redeemer’s kingdom. In the former part of the chapter (Luke 12) the evidence of hostilities are seen. Hidden things must be exposed to light. Secrets whispered in closets should be proclaimed on housetops, and this exposure of the hidden things of dishonesty should so much exasperate the convicted parties, as to make them seek revenge by taking the life of the disciples of our Lord, as well as that of the Master himself. This in many cases they should be suffered to do, that the cup of their wickedness might be filled up. But for the encouragement of his trembling followers he bids them, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, for that is the utmost extent of their restricted power; but fear him whose superior and supreme power controls your destiny for time and eternity. God, whose careful providence protects the little sparrows, has numbered the very hairs of your heads, and in this, now begun, and still progressive conflict will shield his saints, who at the exposure of life and liberty, own his name before men and suffer no evil to

reach them that he will not overrule to their good and his glory. As this already kindled fire should increase to bursting flames, then they shall bring you into the synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers, but even then, when this battle shall be with burning and fuel of fire, think not what ye shall say. The battle is the Lord's. It is not to be conducted on the part of Michael, your prince, or any of those who are with him, of the "called, and chosen, and faithful," with carnal weapons. No revengeful spirit or disposition to retaliate or render evil for evil will be tolerated in any of the soldiers of the cross. Nor should they consult their own reason for words, but confide wholly in God, "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." The circumstance recorded in this chapter of an application made to Christ, to adjudicate the settlement of a disputed inheritance, afforded opportunity for him to disclaim all connection between civil and ecclesiastical matters, and at the same time striking at the root of the difficulty in which the disputants were contending, he gave wholesome instructions and warning against covetousness, illustrating his admonition by the parable of the rich man, whose whole concern was to provide much goods for many years on the very night in which his soul was required of him. This opportunity was improved by solemn admonitions to his disciples against an undue concern for the things of this world, seeing that their heavenly Father knew what was needful for them, and he would amply provide. They were admonished to have their loins girded about, and their lights burning, like men who were waiting for their Lord, and to be ready at all times, inasmuch as they knew not at what hour their Lord would come. It was in connection with these important instructions that he said to them: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled." That the fire was already kindled, and what he would, or what he himself was personally to share in the conflict, is very forcibly set forth in the next verse of our text, the consideration of which, for want of space, we defer till our next number.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N. Y.,
April 15, 1864.

LUKE 12:49-51 (Continued)

"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division."

We come now to offer some remarks upon the second verse of our text, which seems to answer the enquiry instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ as to what he would, or what part he was to take personally in the flaming dispensation, which was to melt down the elements of the old heavens and earth, and ultimately to consume anti-Christ by the Spirit of his mouth, and to destroy the man of sin by the brightness of his coming. It was not a fire which he was to send and witness as a disinterested spectator, but into which he was to be himself baptized, immersed, overwhelmed, or buried quite. As God was in the flame which Moses saw in the bush, as he was in the pillar of fire which led the way of the Hebrews, and as the form of the Son of God was in the midst of the burning furnace with his three Hebrew servants, so was he to enter and prove the temperature of the furnace in which he has chosen

his children, and which they are to pass through under the gospel dispensation. “But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” The baptism of which he spake was evidently his sufferings of death upon the cross, his bearing in his own body the sins of his people, his putting away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, when here in his own body all the bolts of wrath which were due for all the sins of all his people, from the beginning of time to the end of the world, should fall on him. For this baptism of sufferings he came into the world. God hath laid on him the sins of all his members, made him the Surety, made him who knew no sin to be made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. And do we view him stricken of God and afflicted? Then, O remember, it was “for the transgression of his people he was stricken!” “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.” “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” The very word *baptize* or *baptized*, is the most significant and expressive word in all the languages ever used by mortals to express the sufferings of the Son of God when he poured out his soul for sin, and bore the crushing weight of wrath which no other being in earth or heaven had power to bear. He was not *rantized*, or sprinkled with sufferings, but was plunged into and overwhelmed with them. Baptized into death. The same idea is prophetically expressed by the Psalmist in Chapter 42, Verse 7, “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.” The sign of the prophet Jonah is used by divine authority to set forth the baptism of Christ into death; for as Jonah was plunged to the bottom of the sea, overwhelmed and buried three days and three nights, even so (in the baptism of which our Savior speaks in our text) the Son of Man should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Buried by baptism into death. Of this baptism Jesus spake in answer to the request of the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said unto them, Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? The ordinance of Christian baptism, as well as the Supper, sets forth the Lord’s death and sufferings, and in baptism his resurrection is also clearly represented. Our Lord had been baptized by John in Jordan, giving an example to his followers, and he said, “For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” But now the dreadful hour approached when he must be plunged “deep in the shades of gloomy death,” and from thence arise from the dead, as in baptism, the subject is not only immersed in the watery grave, but raised up again from that grave. But, without enlarging on the figurative import of baptism, as emblematical of the death and resurrection, first of Christ the first fruits, and then afterwards of them that are Christ’s at his coming, we will return to the consideration of the baptism of overwhelming sufferings of which he speaks in our text.

If the fallacious arguments of infant and adult sprinklers in their extravagant efforts to pervert the ordinance of baptism were valid, how convenient it would have been for the Redeemer to have said, There is no special virtue in sufferings; one drop or a few drops are as good as a fountain; a little suffering, by the same rule, would do, without sinking down in deep waters, where there is no standing. But, unlike the deceivers of this evil day, there was no guile in his mouth. He met the stern demands of eternal Justice, drank the dreadful cup, and received the baptism which was appointed. It was for this end he came into the world; and dreadful as was the storm of wrath, the bolts of heaven, the weighty vengeance of Almighty God, he must endure it all. But oh! how was he straitened till it was accomplished! Remember it was in his immaculate body he bore our sins; and in that body he knew all the feelings of our infirmities. He was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death. Was made flesh, was made of a woman, and made under the law. Took on him part of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of, and in that flesh was as keenly sensitive to pain and sufferings as we are. He could dread the terrible conflict when he should grapple with the monster

death in his most frightful form. How awful was the hour when his holy soul was in an agony in the garden, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling to the ground. Here was a straitened place for his soul. The sword of heaven awoke against the Shepherd; the vengeful stroke must fall upon the Man who is the fellow of the God of hosts. No lenity could be granted in the case; his agonizing soul, exceeding sorrowful even unto death, his bloody sweat, his strong crying and tears, could procure for him no relief! "O! my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass!" But it is not possible. Then, "Father, save me from this hour!" Still no respite. The Father had given him this cup, and he must drink its dregs. From heaven the sympathizing angels descend and throng around him, ministering to him. But the stern decree was irrevokable. Billows must sweep over him. Deep waters must come into his soul. Sprinkling for baptism would not do. God's honor, as well as the salvation of millions, hinged on this fearful hour. There could be no abatement of the rigid demand of law and justice. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not a jot or tittle of the law could fail till all was completely fulfilled. The fire was kindled on the holy altar; the suffering victim is the Lamb of God, a Lamb truly without blemish, the firstling of his flock must, through the Eternal Spirit, offer himself without spot unto God. Where shall we find language to express the full import of the Savior's words, "How am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Already the enkindled fire is felt in his writhing, struggling soul; but still more fiercely shall it burn until the offering is consumed upon the burning altar. The cold and chilling waves of death already lave his sacred feet; but deeper and still deeper must He descend into its icy stream! There is no retreat; the way is strait. The stormy billows rear their frightful foaming crest. Deep crieth unto deep. The waterspouts are heard! Deep waters come into his soul, and the raging billows of death go over him! "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" The startled heavens respond! The affrighted sun grows pale and dim, and wraps her luster in a veil of horrid darkness! The trembling earth is rocked with an earthquake, and shudders to her utmost centre! The adamantine rocks are riven asunder! The slumbering dead from the repose of ages spring from their opened graves! The veil of the temple is rent in sunder! The immersion is complete. The baptism is accomplished. Deep in the shades of gloomy death the dear Redeemer has descended, and all the billows have gone over him.

"'Tis done! the dreadful debt is paid;
The great atonement now is made;
Ye saints, on him your guilt was laid;
For you he bled and died!

"For you his tender soul did move;
For you he left the courts above
That you the heights and depths might prove,
And lengths and breadths of perfect love,
In Christ your baptized Lord."

But baptism signifies resurrection as well as death and burial; and we conceive that it was no less indispensably necessary that Christ should rise from the dead than it was that he should die and be buried. He was delivered for our transgressions, and, glory to his exalted name, he has by his one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified; in his death he canceled all the demands of law and justice, and secured his people from hell and wrath; but to complete the baptism he must arise for our justification. Even if our sins were all washed away by his blood and canceled by his death, we could not go to heaven, even when the thunder of the law was hushed by his atoning blood, unless we partake of his resurrection life. The same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead must also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit dwelling in us. If Christ be not risen, all our hopes must perish; and of all men we

are the most miserable. All who have part in his death have part also in his resurrection. The church is his body and members in particular. Christ is the life or vitality of that body. It was not possible, therefore, that he should be holden of death, only until the early dawning of the appointed day. Truly, the Lord is risen indeed; and has become the first-fruits of them that slept. His people, which are his body, which were “Buried with him by baptism into death,” are “quicken together with him and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The risen Jesus is our life; it is hidden with him in God; and when he shall appear, we shall be like him. We are married unto him that is risen from the dead, and being married we are no more twain, but one; and what God has thus joined neither earth nor hell can rend asunder.

“In him his members on the tree,
Fulfill’d the law’s demands,
‘Tis ‘i in them, and they in me,’
For thus the union stands.

Since Jesus slept among the dead,
His saints have naught to fear;
For with their glorious suffering Head,
His members sojourn’d there.

When from the tomb we see him rise
Triumphant o’er his foes,
He bore his members to the skies;
With Jesus they arose.”

The sons of Zebedee were told that they should “drink of the same cup which Jesus drank of, and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized.” And the apostle Paul makes this appeal to the children of God: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of Christ’s death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection (Romans 6:3-5).”

(To be continued)

Middletown, N. Y.,
May 1, 1864.

LUKE 12:49-51 (Continued)

We come now to offer some remarks on the third and last verse of the text proposed for consideration, viz.:

“Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather a division.”

How mysterious and inscrutable are the ways of God! How unlike the ways and thoughts of finite beings! No man by searching can find him out, or trace his footsteps, which are in the mighty deep. The

suppositions and conclusions of even his saints are only correct and reliable so far as they are based upon the revelations made to them by the word and Spirit of their God. The very appeal of our Lord to his disciples in this text implies that the disciples were indulging in the belief or supposition that the advent of Christ was designed of God to give peace on the earth, and we are not disposed to doubt that they were greatly amazed when Jesus told them plainly that such was not the design of his coming. Before, however, we impute dullness of perception to them, let us enquire whether the same apparent causes which led them to suppose he had come to give peace on the earth would not have led us to the same supposition. There was to favor their supposition:

1. The very title applied to him in prophecy, The Prince of Peace, and the declaration that of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end; and that he is known in the New Testament as “The very God of Peace,” who shall shortly bruise Satan under the feet of his disciples, we would naturally suppose would have led them to the conclusion that he had now come to give peace on the earth.

2. The song of the heavenly messengers who announced his birth to the shepherds, “Glory to God in the highest, *on earth peace, good will toward men,*” was certainly calculated to strengthen their supposition.

3. His humble birth most clearly indicated a peaceful mission. No demonstrations of terror, no clouds of wrath, no fiery bolts, or startling thunder tones were seen or heard. Beaming mercy smiled, “and wrath stood silent by.” No flaming sword of vengeance flashed in his hand; no terrors darkened on his brow; the holy babe of Bethlehem reposed in a manger without a complaining word. Was ever such condescension witnessed in heaven or on earth before? Who would not have supposed that he had come to give peace on the earth?

4. From the example presented in his holy life, his bitter death, and his triumphant resurrection, might we not infer that the Meek and Lowly Lamb of God had come to hush the clamor of war, to allay the spirit of strife and discord, and to inaugurate a dispensation of the most perfect peace? He went about doing good; when he was reviled, he reviled not again, when the greatest provocations were given – when insulted, reviled, buffeted, spit upon, and persecuted, he made no resistance, showed no resentment, but bore it all patiently. And when led forth to prison and to death, he went like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. And when in the agony of the cross, mocked and derided he cried, Father forgive, for they know not what they do, all seemed to say that he came to give peace on the earth.

5. The laws which he enacted in his kingdom, and the special instructions and commandments which he gave to his people, forbidding them the use of carnal weapons, and forbidding that they should even resent injuries maliciously done to them, but to do good to them who persecuted and evilly entreated them, and to forgive from their hearts all who trespassed against them, as they desired that God should forgive them, and positively forbidding them to avenge themselves; all went to show that in the dreadful conflicts which they were to encounter from a wicked world, although their blood should crimson the earth, still in no case should they be the aggressors, nor in any case, or under any circumstance should they retaliate, but submit their cause to him who has said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” It is presumed that from all these considerations, the disciples supposed that their Lord had come to give peace on the earth.

It is true, nor should we so interpret these sayings of our Lord so as to contradict the glorious truth that Christ is himself the peace of his people; that his peace he leaves with them, his peace he has given unto them, and their peace shall flow unto them as a river, and as the waves of the sea; that “Great

peace have they who love the law,” and nothing shall offend them. But this is peace which the world knows not of; earth has no participation in it. But the saints, “Being justified by faith, have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Their eyes behold Jerusalem, the church of God, a peaceable habitation, a quiet resting place. By the atonement he has made peace, or reconciliation by the blood of his cross, not for the earth, not for the world in a general application of the term, but it is applicable exclusively to those who are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But our text will not allow us to suppose that the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ was designed to produce harmony between truth and error, or fellowship between Christ and Belial, or communion between the church of God and the temple of idols. His Spiritual kingdom and the world lying in wickedness were to remain as distant from each other as before, and the distance to be more clearly marked. While the divine mission of the Son of God was to redeem his people unto God out of every tribe and kindred of the earth, it was not to arrest or retard the progressive development of the powers of darkness, or make the world more friendly, or less belligerent to the cause of truth and righteousness. The mystery of iniquity was to continue to work, and the cup of anti-christ was to be filled to its brim, and this could only be accomplished by their bitter persecution of Christ and his followers. “Many shall be purified and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand (Daniel 12:10).” The coming of Christ was not what brought sin and depravity into the world, but his advent was designed to bring the depravity of the world into manifestation. “If I had not come, etc., ye would not have had sin, but now ye have no cloak for your sins.” His coming had afforded occasion for the manifestation of their depravity, for “Ye have both seen and hated both me and my Father.”

If then, it may be asked, the meek and lowly Savior’s mission was not to destroy but to save; if in all his life, his doctrine, and his works he was holy, harmless and separate from sinners; if he went about doing good, not only to his friends, but also to his enemies, and if he neither himself assailed the rights of others, nor allowed his disciples to do so, how could his coming have a tendency to make a division, or send fire on the earth? We can only understand the conflict to arise from the opposite principles of holiness and sin, of truth and error, of spirit and flesh, of light and darkness. From the time that sin entered and mankind became depraved, all the fallen family of mankind have stood in hostile array against every sacred principle of truth and holiness, so that every display which God has been pleased to make of himself, and of the purity and perfection of his attributes has been in conflict with the wicked disposition of fallen man. The manifestation of the Spirit of Christ in Abel provoked the opposite spirit of Cain, who was, as far as the spirit which actuated him was concerned, of the wicked one, and under that influence he slew his brother. The peace-loving and harmless spirit of Abel made no assault upon the rights of Cain, but being so opposite to the murderous spirit of Cain, that Cain was angry and slew him. “And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brothers’ righteous.” Here in this first outbreak of malignant cruelty and murder we have an early development of the enmity which God has put between the serpent and the woman, and between her seed and his seed. Cain was an active and working religionist, and had a religion perfectly adapted to his fallen nature, but it was of the devil; for it was a revengeful, blood-thirsty religion, which clearly demonstrated its paternity; for “Satan was a murderer from the beginning.” Therefore, all that kind of religion which delights in shedding blood was pre-figured in the religion of Cain. Jesus charged home upon the murderous and adulterous generation all the righteous blood which had ever been shed upon the earth, from that of Abel unto Zacharias; and Jude brands the same infamy upon the same race of religious fanatics under the present dispensation, which was marked upon their prototype. “Wo unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and

perished in the gainsaying of Core (Jude 11).” As the light of truth detects and exposes the hidden things of darkness, so the coming of the Son of God into the world, and light of truth beaming from him through all his faithful witnesses, should reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. To test and expose the murderous spirit of all false or worldly religion, our Redeemer says, “Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city (Matthew 23:34).” This conflict as we have shown had been in the world from the days of Cain; had drenched the earth with blood again and again; this fire was already kindled, but yet more fiercely it should burn. The coming of Christ was not intended to harmonize the conflicting elements, but more clearly to develop them. There was nothing hid that should evade exposure; nothing whispered in the ear that should not be revealed on the house top. Hence his advent and ministry were violently opposed, and he was persecuted, and finally crucified by wicked hands. And the things done in the green tree would assuredly be repeated in the dry. Unto his faithful followers it is given, in his behalf, not only that they should believe on him, but also that they shall suffer for his sake. The ministers of Christ were sent forth as lambs in the midst of wolves, and duly advised that they should encounter the powers of darkness, false teachers, and vile deceivers, who should deceive many, and so turn the popular tide against them, but Jesus said to them, “All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake (Matthew 24:8,9).” So great should be the trial that many even of their professed brethren should “be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another; and many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved (Matthew 24:10-13).” “And this gospel of the kingdom,” with all these surroundings, attended with the same results, and subjecting its witnesses to the same cruel treatment, “shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” The tribulations attending the promulgation of the gospel should witness in all the world, and down to the end of the world, who are, and who are not, the servants of the Most High God; the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. It should draw the line between the righteous and the wicked, between them that serve God and them that serve him not. In this searching development, “There shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (Luke 12:52,53).”

The division is now very apparent. The conflict is now raging. Blood in torrents is now flowing; the most violent passions of cruel and bloodthirsty men are now unbridled, and all is being pushed forward by raving fanatics who wear the clothing of sheep; who profess to be commissioned from heaven to stir up the deadly strife; and the number of those who breathe the spirit of love, of peace, and who labor to allay the murderous strife are in this day lamentably few and far between.

In conclusion, permit us to say, in all this conflict between truth and error, light and darkness, holiness and iniquity, not one drop of blood has ever been shed with the divine approbation, by any of the saints of the Most High God. Peter once from a reprehensible impulse of the flesh drew a carnal weapon defensively in vainly attempting to defend his Lord, and with it smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But mark! Our Lord reproved his imprudent zeal, and healed the wound. “Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be.” The spirit

of Christ in his children fulfills the righteousness of the law, causing them to love God supremely, and their neighbor as themselves, for on these two precepts of the divine code hang all the law and the prophets. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Is he thy neighbor, thy friend? Reciprocate his friendship. Is he thine enemy? Love him and pray for him, for so your Savior expressly commands thee. But has thy neighbor trespassed against thee? Forgive him, as thou hopest to be thyself forgiven of God, against whom we have all trespassed. For if ye from your hearts do not forgive, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. "Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and all evil speakings." "Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men; love the brotherhood; Fear God. Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your own masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully; for what glory is it, if, when ye are buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously (I Peter 2:11-23)."

Let it be remembered that the friendship of the world is enmity to God. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, but continually casts up mire and dirt." And "There is no peace to the wicked, saith your God." The way of peace they have not known, for misery and destruction are in all their ways, and their feet are swift to shed blood, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. But blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Middletown, N. Y.,
May 15, 1864.

ORDINATIONS

Brother Beebe: If it is not asking too much, I would be glad if you would take up the subject of Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, in the ordination of Elders and Deacons. What is the practice of the Old School Baptists? If it is their practice, by what authority? Please give your views through the "Signs of the Times" and oblige one who wishes to know the truth.

Yours truly,
Abraham Foutch

Vandalia, Iowa
April 11, 1864

Reply:

There is not a perfect uniformity in the practice of Old School Baptists in their manner of setting apart their Elders and Deacons to their respective callings. In the ordination of Elders, however, it is the general practice to call a council, or Presbytery, to be composed of Elders and brethren from sister churches whose concurrence in behalf of the churches in regard to the call and qualifications of such candidate for ordination is deemed essential to their future usefulness; inasmuch as the Elders are set apart for service in all the churches of the same faith and order, where they may have occasion to officiate in their sacred vocation. When such concurrence is obtained, the most general custom is to recognize the brother as an Elder in a public manner. First, a sermon is preached suitable to the occasion, then a prayer is offered, and at the same time the hands of the Elders present are laid on the head of the candidate, after which a solemn charge is given to the candidate by some Elder father in the ministry. Then the right hand of fellowship is extended to him with a few appropriate remarks in which he is recognized as a regularly ordained Elder of our faith and order.

We have said there is not a perfect uniformity as to the ceremony. Some brethren have doubted the propriety of laying on *our empty hands*, as we can not impart to the brother the gifts of the Holy Ghost. It is by them supposed that the laying on of our hands would imply that the gifts of the Spirit were pretended to be so given, and others perhaps have objected to the ritual from other reasons.

As our own views, however, are asked for, with out any design to disparage the views of others or to provoke any discussion or controversy on the subject, we confess that our convictions are in favor of the formalities which we have described. There can be no public recognition without some formality, and if we have rightly read the scriptures, it was an apostolic custom to set brethren apart to the work of the gospel ministry by fasting and prayer, and with the laying on of hands, to faithfully charge them before God and the elect angels to preach the word, and also to give them the right hand of fellowship to go and preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and the apostle tells us we have them for our example. There were many cases of the laying on of hands, where the design does not to us appear to have been to convey the gifts of the Holy Ghost, but simply to set apart brethren to the work where unto the Holy Ghost had called them.

With regard to Deacons, as their office is local, or generally confined to the church to which they belong, there does not appear to be any necessity of a council from abroad; and our churches generally ordain their Deacons by the unanimous voice of the church, solemnly invoking the blessing of God upon them to make them useful in their sacred calling. Still there are some churches who set them apart in about the same way in which Elders are ordained.

Middletown, N. Y.,
May 15, 1864.



THE NEW BIRTH

Elder Beebe: There is one thing that I am lost in; that is the subject of the New Birth. I believe you and the other writers in the “Signs of the Times” understand that there is nothing that belongs to a person in a state of nature that receives a change. I believe that all are alike born in a state of condemnation, and if not delivered from that condemnation they must forever perish. Now, if both are alike, that is, the righteous and the wicked, they have something that will exist after the death of the body, and if it be not changed, what becomes of it?

Here is the point on which I am perplexed. Now will you please write me a letter and give me some light, if I have eyes to see and a heart to understand? Don’t do as you did before – promise and never perform.

Hiram Winchel.
Marbletown, N.Y.
April 8, 1864.

Reply: In the multitude of pressing cares devolving on us, we had forgotten that we had promised to write brother Winchel on the subject of the New Birth, and we confess it was wrong for us to make such promise; but having made it, it was wrong to forget or fail to fulfill it. It would require the knowledge, wisdom and the inspiration of the apostle, and the patience of Job to meet all the queries and settle all the doubts that may be suggested by the thousands of our readers on all the deep mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, in which we profess ourself to have but a very limited understanding. We hope our brother will pardon our seeming neglect. He understands us and others to hold that there is nothing changed in us by the new birth. That is not our position. Every thing is in some sense changed, but no part of our old carnal or fleshly nature is born over again or made spiritual. A birth is that which brings forth into manifestation something that was never manifested or born before. All that is born of the flesh is flesh, and all that is born of the spirit is spirit. Now if our flesh were born again of the spirit, it would become spirit or spiritual; would live on spiritual food, but could no longer live on the fruits of the earth. The new birth is of incorruptible seed by the word of God which lives forever. But our fleshly nature is just what it was before; it requires the same earthly food and medicine; is as subject to disease and natural death as it was before. The new birth brings forth in the children of God a spiritual life that they never had before, which can only live on the bread which cometh down from God. It is a new life implanted in them. It is Christ in you the hope of glory. But still the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit which is born of the spirit is life because of righteousness. It is Christ in you; but it does not so change your fleshly nature as to fashion and make it like Christ’s glorious body; nor will such a change take place until the resurrection. If the new birth, instead of the resurrection, should make our bodies spiritual, they could not die or be sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body. Pardon and justification are not the effect of the new birth; they result from the blood and righteousness of Christ. The new birth implants in us that life and light by which we are made to see, feel, know, and understand that we are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The new birth qualifies those who are born of the spirit to understand the things of the spirit so far as they are revealed to them by the Holy Ghost. But the reasoning powers of our old depraved nature are still left in the dark, for the natural man (or the *old man*, which is born of the flesh) receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are spiritually, and only spiritually, discerned. “The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not.” That which we find in us which is born of the flesh is of the earth earthly, and will remain so until delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God in the resurrection, when our mortality shall be swallowed up of life. This is called the

old man, the *outer man*, the *carnal man*, etc. But that life which is born of God and implanted in our hearts by the Holy Ghost is “after God,” (not after Adam) “created in righteousness and true holiness;” It is therefore called *the new man*, the *spiritual man*, and the *inner man*, which cannot be corrupted because it is born of *incorruptible seed*; it cannot sin because it is born of God, and that incorruptible seed remaineth and abideth in him. In his flesh, or old man, Paul could find no good thing; in his spiritual life, or new man, John could find no bad thing; no sin. These two natures, Paul says, are contrary the one to the other. With the one he served the law of God; but with the other the law of sin. Trace your own personal experience, dear brother, and if you do not find these things in you, we shall have judged you wrongfully. But we are persuaded that you will find the flesh warring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. What else can be meant by the Christian’s warfare?

Do you enquire, If then the body and soul, which were born of the flesh, are not by the new birth born over again and made spiritual, holy and immortal, what change has this new birth effected in the sinner that is born again? We will endeavor to show that a wonderful change is effected. That man was a boasting Pharisee, he is now a trembling Publican. He could confidently venture near the burning throne to tell the Lord how good and pious and benevolent he was; but now he stands afar off and smites upon his breast, afraid to look up, lest his guilt-stricken eyes should meet the all-seeing eye of a sin-avenging God. This we think is something of a change. But has his nature become changed from natural to spiritual? Ask you, and he will reply, The law is holy, and good, and just, and spiritual, but I, alas! am carnal, sold under sin. I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. My legal hopes, my self-righteousness, and my free moral agency all gave up the ghost together. The dead sinner is quickened, for life is implanted in his heart. God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, has shined in his heart, to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He is crucified with Christ, nevertheless he lives. Yet not he, (his body, or nature, the old man, is dead because of sin) but Christ liveth in him, and the life which he now lives in the flesh he lives by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved him, and given himself for him. What does the new born, heaven born sinner find to be changed? Ask him, and he will say: “One thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see.” He was once under the power of darkness, but he is now translated into God’s marvelous light. He has eyes now to see, for God has blessed his eyes, and God has shined in his heart, and God has enlightened his understanding. What else that indicates a change? The things that he once loved he now loathes and hates, and what he once hated he now loves with all his heart. He has, in short, become a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the word of reconciliation. His mouth that was full of cursing and bitterness now breaks forth in unknown joys and sings surprising grace. Once he thought that God could not in justice condemn him to everlasting woe and misery; now he is amazed that God can be just, and justify the ungodly. Once he was living without hope and without God in the world; now he has both, for Christ is in him the hope of glory. Is not this a very great change? Well, from whence does it proceed; from the old man, mended up and made spiritual? No, not a particle of it. The works or fruits of the flesh are precisely what they were before; but the fruits of the spirit, which is born of the spirit, are being developed, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. These are very opposite to the fruits or works of the flesh, and they all proceed from the new implantation, for the flesh profiteth nothing. If the flesh were regenerated and changed from flesh to spirit, (and if it were born of the spirit it is spirit) would it not bear the fruits of the spirit? If the tree were made good, would not its fruit be good? Christ settles this question: “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.” How is it with you, brother Winchel, does

your fleshly nature bring forth good fruit? Has it ever brought forth good fruit? We know your answer. Well then, the point is settled; the tree is evil, and cannot bring forth good fruit. Again, if our earthly nature which was born of the flesh, or any part of it, were born of the Spirit, or any part of it were born over again, regenerated and made holy or spiritual, why is it unsafe to walk after it? “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.” “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” “But ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness.” Therefore brethren we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live (Romans 8).” Can we read these solemn warnings given by the holy apostles to those who were already born again, charging them to mortify, repress and shun the leadings of their flesh, and still contend that the flesh by the new birth has become so changed and pure that it would be safe and proper to be led by it?

We think we have proved that if that which was born of the flesh has been born again of the spirit, it has become spirit, and its fruits must be, cannot possibly be otherwise than holy. Yet we are told by the authority of God himself that if we live after the flesh we shall die. And this warning is given only to those who were the subjects of both births. We apprehend the difficulty with some arises from a traditional notion of some imaginary distinction between a man and his soul. We admit a distinction between the soul and the body of man, but can conceive of none between the man and his soul. Take the soul from the body and that body ceases to be a man. Even should his animal vitality remain, without his soul he would not be a man; only an animal, like other animals that have no souls. In the creation the body was formed and existed as a body, but it was not a man, in the full sense of the word, until God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. That soul was a man, and that man was a living soul. And as the progenitor and seminal head of the human race, the first Adam was made a living soul, so from him descended by natural generation all the souls and bodies of mankind. No birth of the flesh ever brought forth a man without a soul; yet Christ has said that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. For the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, as the spiritual progenitor of his people, was made a Quickening Spirit, and by that birth we are partakers of the divine nature. These two natures, in conflict one with the other, from the time of the new birth will struggle in the same person until that which is born of corruptible seed shall fill up the measure of his days on earth and then return to dust; but that nature which is born of incorruptible seed shall return to God from whom it came. The soul of the believer, with this divine life implanted in it, as soon as released from the earthly element, shall throw off all its bondage of corruption and leave all that is vile behind, and by virtue of the immortal life of God in it, shall enter the state of immortal bliss, and mingle with the spirits of just men made perfect. And at the final resurrection of the just, the bodies also of all the saints shall be quickened by the spirit of immortality, the first fruits of which they received when born again; and in that immortal life shall they be perfectly conformed to the image of the Son of God, and bear that heavenly image as they have when here in the flesh borne the image of the earthly Adam. “But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11).” This change has not yet come. It is astonishing that any of our well informed brethren should think this change had already taken place, when “we ourselves which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*: the redemption of our body (Romans 8:23).” The spirit in the Christian which is born of God is called the spirit of adoption, wherewith the saints are sealed in their persons,

soul and body, until the day of redemption. And it is called the spirit of promise, and why is it so called? What has it promised? It seals the promise that every one who is a subject of the new birth shall be raised up at the last day, perfectly holy, spiritual, and perfectly happy. It does not seal to us any assurance that we now, either in soul or body, are what we shall be, for it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but it seals the glorious promise to us, and us to it, that when he who is our life shall appear, we shall be like him. And what more do we want? “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness (Psalm 17:15).”

If brother Winchel, or any other brother, regards our views on this subject as heresy, we will not dispute with them; or if they believe that in soul, or body, or spirit, they have as yet attained the mark of their high calling, we will request them to compare notes with one who could not run so fast, and whose desire and prayer better suits the condition of some of us slow travelers. Paul desired above all things that he might know Christ and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable unto his death. “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, *either were already perfect*, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.” (Not quite so fast, Paul, as some in our day.) “But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:10-14).”

We commenced this article for a private communication to brother Winchel, but having written more lengthily than we had intended, and hoping that the subject may not be barren or unprofitable to others, we publish it in connection with his last appeal to us. And we do sincerely hope that what we have written may be satisfactory, and that it may be edifying and comforting to all who have been perplexed upon the subject.

Middletown, N. Y.,
June 1, 1864.

INQUIRY AFTER VIEWS

Elder Beebe: Will you give your views through the “Signs of the Times” on Ephesians, last chapter, and also on the last chapter of I Timothy?

Enquirer After Light.
April 26, 1864.

Reply: In the present excited state of the public mind, while the most unbridled infatuation is sweeping with unprecedented fury over our land, and so few comparatively escape the desolating tempest, it may be imprudent to do more than to request all who are really beginning to inquire after light to read attentively the two chapters referred to, and soberly consider what they contain, and if they be not

blinded by the god of this world, they can scarcely fail to find some light. At all events we can offer no commentary that we think would make the subject treated on more clear and lucid.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1864.

ETERNAL UNION

Westville, OH.,
April 19, 1864.

Elder Beebe: I have been a reader of your paper, the "*Signs of the Times*," for some months past, and have been well entertained with many precious truths therein presented. Some ideas, however, I have been unable to comprehend, owing perhaps to a dull understanding on my part. Nevertheless, my desire is to have a current knowledge of the teaching of God's word. And as I noticed in a recent editorial that any scriptural subject upon which brethren desire to be enlightened, is deemed worthy of your notice; therefore, I thought it might be of profit to myself, and others perhaps, who are also young in the cause, to solicit information through the "*Signs of the Times*" on those points of doctrine that are obscure to my mind. I profess to be a regular Predestinarian Baptist, and have a hope that a few years since I learned by experience that I was a lost sinner, helpless and undone, justly condemned by reason of disobedience to the law of God; at which time I felt that what was said by the mouth of God's prophet of ancient Israel was true respecting my case: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;" but am now permitted to indulge a hope (though sometimes very faint), that I have the same *Almighty Savior* that Israel had for his. However incredulous I may be respecting other things, and however much I groan under a sense of this, yet it is a sad reality which I daily feel, I am unholy. I think sometimes that I can very pertinently adopt the language of Paul, and say, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (a) My hope is that when the morn of eternity dawns, I will awake fully with the likeness of Christ, and join in the choir above, to be forever employed in repeating his praise, and recounting the wonders of his grace, that a sinner condemned to die should be raised to a crown of glory on high. This hope is based on the belief that God did, in the Counsel of Eternity, make choice in his Son of a people, of whom Paul says, "They were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Ephesians 2:3)." (b) And further he informs us that the design of this choice was that they should be *holy* and without blame before him in love; and in accordance therewith, they are made the happy recipients of all spiritual blessings, to be enjoyed in heavenly places in Christ, having predestinated them unto the *adoption* of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. O glorious hope of eternal blessedness! Surely none who are sighing for deliverance from sin, and are longing for that which is perfect to come, can harbor thoughts of disrespect towards God's distinguishing love. Here is the Eternal Source, from whence the ungodly and the profane are made holy and conformed to the image of Christ. Here, by the sovereign act of Heaven's King, untold millions of Adam's polluted and sin-plagued posterity are secured for the enjoyment of life and immortality. Here is it fixed by immutable decree that the fetters of sin shall be broken and the tyranny of Satan overthrown. Here it is emblazoned in

glittering letters, which are unmistakable, that the stranger and the alien, the apostate foreigner and the child of wrath are constituted children of God and heirs of the Eternal inheritance. (Galatians 4:5-7)(c)

Among those invaluable blessings of the Spirit which the elect of God enjoy as a part of their patrimony here, an evidence of their justification stands of infinite importance. How shall a man be just with God? is a question which must have baffled forever the reason of man, and remained eternally unknown to angels. But the God of angels and of men is brought to view in the sacred oracles, as the Judge who justified the ungodly (Romans 4:5), (d) In consequence of which Paul could with defiance challenge all intelligences to lay anything to the charge of God's elect; and when interrogated as to how he could be so defiant in throwing out a challenge so broad, knowing that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, his reply is, "It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Here the spotless righteousness of the adorable Redeemer is presented as a dress for the naked sinner. Here the purple fountain, filled with Immanuel's blood, is brought to view to wash away his guilt and cleanse his leprous soul. And here his glorious name, who bled and died on Calvary's tree, is proclaimed as the Lord our Righteousness. All glory be to him who took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and thus whilst veiled in flesh did bear the law's tremendous curse, and endure the dread stroke of incentive justice, that his people might be freed therefrom. This righteousness is to all and upon all them that believe, without regard to their former condition, or respect to their parentage or genealogy whatever; no previous excellency can be admitted as a plea; for there is no difference, as in Romans 3:22, (e) well may David say, and Paul, with all the saints in every age with acclamation loud and long did repeat it, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness, without works." That man can say with Mr. Toplady:

"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

But as my design is to solicit information from those who are older and wiser than myself, it will not be considered presumptuous, I trust, if I refer to those ideas which I have been unwilling to receive, or of which perhaps I have had a misunderstanding. I dislike very much to see among Baptists a manifest spirit of unfriendly criticism, but what would appear to be infinitely worse and presumptuous in the extreme would be for a boy to assail with a view to demolish the views of an old father in the ministry; at least, it would be showing a disrespect to the opinions of those whom we would venerate. I trust I shall not appear guilty of either. The first to which I shall refer I find in Volume Thirty-two, No. 5, p. 37. In your reply to a request on the fifth chapter of Romans, you say that the whole human family were a unit in the first Adam, that they all acted in him, sinned in him, and were made sinners by his transgression. Again on page 46, No. 6, you say, "Being in him from his creation, we sinned in him before any of us were brought into personal manifestation; hence, when death passed upon him it passed on all that he was, as the embodiment of his entire race." Now, if I apprehend the meaning of your words, the conclusion is this: that all of Adam's posterity were created in and simultaneous with him, were all embodied in and had an actual existence with him, and in consequence of what they did in him in the first transgression, death is passed upon all. Thus far we agree, or rather thus far light has been given. But in the 14th verse it is said, "Adam is a figure of him that was to come, which is Christ," of

which you say, page 37, No. 5, “The second Adam, the spiritual progenitive Head of the spiritual family, or posterity or seed, embodied them all in himself before the world began, and as sin, condemnation and death came by the one earthly Adam, so justification unto life and immortality came by the second, or anti-typical Adam, to all his seed.” Again you say on page 46, No. 6, “As it was totally impossible for any who were in the loins of the earthly Adam to escape the guilt and consequences of his disobedience, so it is also and equally impossible that any who were created in Christ Jesus, chosen and embodied in him before the foundation of the world should fail to participate in his righteousness, and the free gift by it unto justification of life.” Now, my understanding of your views is this: That judgment unto condemnation and death is passed upon all the seed of the first Adam, in effect, of their participating in his transgression. (Like as it is said by Paul of Levi, who paid tithes in Abraham; for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him. Hebrews 7:9.) Likewise after the same similitude, righteousness is imputed to all those who were created and embodied in the second Adam, by virtue of their being participants in the one great transaction that brought justification unto life, for, in effect of what they did in him. (f) This would seem to conflict with what I regard as a Christian experience. (g) The sinner who feels his just condemnation does not think for a moment of throwing the responsibility for his guilt upon the first Adam, or any one else; but, as he vents his plaintive sigh, it is with bitter remorse he cries, “I have ruined my soul.” But now suppose the Savior comes to calm his troubled breast, and speaks his sins forgiven, how changed the scene becomes! At once he quits his mournful cry to ask from whence this heavenly message came; but ere the wasting moment is gone, his tongue begins the heavenly theme, “Salvation, and glory to God!” In Christ he views his all. But now we will present our similitude to him, and tell him that like as he involved himself in guilt by participating in the act of the first Adam, in like manner has he freed himself from condemnation by acting a part in the work of the second Adam. (h) Such a thought would be repulsed with utter abhorrence; for he says, “When I was yet *without strength* in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*.” This will not do; but I cannot arrive at any other conclusion, if justification be based on the supposition of being created and embodied in Christ before the world began. (i) You say that when death passed upon the first Adam, it passed upon all that he was, his entire embodiment. (j) Shall we say the same respecting the seed of the second Adam? Were they all embodied in him when he was delivered for their offences and rose again for their justification? Were the patriarchs and prophets there, with all the train of saints who fell asleep before the Holy Child was born? Were they all embodied in him when on Calvary he cried, “It is finished!” If not, I can't see how justification could be based on the supposition of an actual embodiment. None could have been held amenable for the act of the first Adam, but those who composed a part of himself when the deed was done. (1) And could such a thing have been that any of his posterity were separated from him prior to his fall? I presume they had not been involved in his guilt. (m) It appears from scripture that his wife, though formerly taken from his own side, acted separately in incurring the guilt of sin upon herself; and had either of the first conjugal pair abstained from the indulgence of sin, they had not been involved by the guilt of the other. (n) Hence it appears evident to me that if justification comes in the manner afore prescribed, then all the elect, or those that will ever be in heaven, must have been actually embodied in Jesus when the atonement was made, and they considered as sinners; for none others would need its benefits.

These, brother Beebe, are some of the thoughts that rushed into my head as I read your comments on the fifth of Romans. I hope, therefore, you will not think it impudence that I have written them

out in order that you may set me right wherever I have misapprehended your meaning. A few queries for information, and I am done. Was Christ brought into being as a creature, simultaneous with his elect? Was the spiritual family of God ever corrupted in sin? Hoping to receive information, and pardon for imperfections, I will leave it for your disposal.

W. T. Pence.

Reply to Brother W. T. Pence:

It would afford us pleasure to be able to relieve the mind of our young brother, and of all others of all their perplexities and difficulties in understanding the testimony of the scriptures on the profound mystery of Godliness; but we freely confess, although we have been, as we hope, in the school of Christ more than fifty years, we still stand in need ourself to be instructed in the first principles of the gospel of Christ. Young as our brother may be in his Christian experience and profession, he probably has, or soon will have learned, that it is easier to ask questions in relation to the deep things of God than to give a satisfactory solution of every question that may arise. If the two queries at the conclusion of our brother's letter are intended to comprise the whole matter of his inquiry, we might come directly to the points designed for discussion. But if it be necessary to review the whole of his communication, and compare it with our own views, as expressed in all that we have written and published for the past thirty-two years on the subject of the eternal vital union of Christ and his church, and the union and identity of the earthly Adam and his posterity in the flesh, or even what we wrote on Romans 5, and published in No. 5 of the current volume, then indeed the field before us is very large.

As the queries referred to, if we understand their design and import, have a direct bearing, at least, on all the points wherein our brother asks for further light of us, we propose to attend first to them, and then we will review the entire letter, and remark on such passages as we have indicated by letters of the alphabet in their order. In doing this we shall require to be as brief as we can and make ourself understood, lest we swell our article to too great a length.

Query First. – “Was Christ brought into being as a creature simultaneous with his elect?”

Here our brother takes us beyond our depth; for we know nothing of Christ being brought into being as a creature at all. It is true, as an apostle has said, we have known Christ after the flesh; but henceforth know we him no more. If by creatureship, brother Pence means manifestation in his mediatorial character, or when the Word was made flesh, or was made under the law, made of a woman, to redeem them that were under the law, we hold that his elect were in him as the Christ of God, long anterior to his incarnation; as long anterior as his existence was to that of Abraham. See John 8:58. The scripture that speaks of him as the first-begotten from the dead, and the first-born of every *creature*, we understand as applicable only to his resurrection from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that slept. As the Son of God, we can attribute to him neither beginning of days nor end of life. All we can learn of his unexampled pedigree is that He was and is in the Father, and the Father is in Him: He and the Father are one. This is the true God and Eternal Life. And as Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead, so the church of God is the embodiment of Christ. The Head of the church is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God. In this mystery of godliness, we only know Him as the brightness of his Father's glory and express image of his person, and all we know of the Father is revealed to us by and through him. Matthew 11:27. Luke 10:22. Neither do we understand that the “incorruptible seed” or Spirit of immortality in the saints of God is a created seed or life; for it is Christ in them the hope of glory, and it is called *Eternal Life*. An inspired apostle testifies that this *Eternal Life* was with the Father, and was manifested. I John 1:2. “And this is the record that God hath given to us, *Eternal Life*; and this life is in his Son (I John 5:11).” That which is eternal we understand to be without beginning or

end. We can conceive of no period in time or in eternity when the Eternal Life and immortality of the church was not hidden with Christ in God. Christ is himself the Life. He only hath immortality dwelling in the Light. “And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true; even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life (I John 5:19-20).” This eternal life God has given to his children, not in the earthly Adam, who is of the earth earthy; but in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. If this eternal life were not the life of God, how could its impartation to us make us or manifest us as the sons of God? Can we be vitally the sons of a parent in whom we had no life or being before we were born? If so, what definite idea can we form of the relationship of parent and son? Are we indeed begotten and born of God? Is the life which we receive in the new birth a life that was with the Father and given to us in Christ, and called Eternal Life? Is it Christ? Is it the life of God in Christ? Or is it only an improvement of the life of the earthly Adam, which we have received by our first or natural birth of the flesh? If it be but an improvement made on the life developed by our fleshly birth, why is it so emphatically declared by both prophets and apostles, that all flesh is grass. But the incorruptible seed is by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (I Peter 1:24-25). “That which is born of the flesh [or is the production of a fleshly birth] is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (John 3:6).” And this spirit, which is born of the Spirit, is the Spirit of Christ, and it is Christ. “For to me to live is *Christ* (Philippians 1:21).” “Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me* (Galatians 2:20).” This Christ living in the Christian is what is called the *new man*, which after God, (not after man) is created in righteousness and true holiness. It is the *new man* which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him (Colossians 3:10). This creation is not natural, but spiritual a creation in Christ Jesus; not the making of something from nothing; but the gift of that Eternal Life, which John says was eternal and was with the Father. This Eternal Life was given to the saints in his Son. It is this identity of life and immortality which *creates* or constitutes their vital union with Christ as their spiritual Head, and seminal progenitor. This life being given to the saints in the Son makes them one with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father; and in this manifestation (for John says *the life was manifested*) is presented to us the mediatorial relationship of Christ, both to the Eternal Father and to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. We can conceive of no period when Christ did not exist as the mediatorial Head of his church; nor can we conceive of the existence of the Head without the body of Christ. We now speak of his spiritual or mystical body. If it be admitted that they are one with Christ, even as is Christ one with God the Father, we can no more deny the eternal vital union of Christ and his members than we can deny the eternal identity of the Father and the Son in the Godhead.

As we know of no beginning of the existence of Christ, we will take the liberty to so change the form of the enquiry as to substitute the word *manifestation* for that of existence, and then we hesitate not to answer the question affirmatively. As the second Adam, his church – his bride – was always in him, as Eve was originally in the earthly Adam, or as the human race was all in Adam from his creation. But as we are extending our article too far for our limited space, we will now pass to consider the other question of brother Pence, viz.: “Was the spiritual family of God ever corrupted in sin?”

Answer: The spiritual family of God are terms which are used to denote the church of God in distinction from the world at large; and that family or church, as we have labored to show, sustain a two-fold relationship; that is, the constituents of the church or family of God sustain a relationship both to the flesh and the Spirit – both to the first and the second Adam. In the one relationship, the members of that family were children of wrath even as others. They were *corrupted in sin*, sank down in

depravity and death and ruin, in the first Adam; from which they are redeemed, washed, cleansed and made pure by the blood and righteousness of the second Adam. But their life in Christ Jesus, which is hid with him in God, was never corrupted, for the scriptures affirm that it is incorruptible. It being the life of God in our Lord Jesus Christ, given to us in him before the world began, secured or preserved in him, how could it be contaminated? Christ is himself that life, and he is holy, harmless, undefiled, and higher than the heavens. And further, this life, when developed in us by the new birth, still retains its immaculate purity; for there is no possibility of its being corrupted. We are born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and that which is absolutely incorruptible, never has, nor ever can be corrupted. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him.” And that seed is, as we have proved, incorruptible. “And he cannot sin, because he is born of God (I John 3:9).” But we also have a nature which is born of a corruptible seed. The production of the fleshly birth is so completely corrupt that it is called corruption itself. In this bondage of corruption all the family of God are held as long as they remain in the flesh; as well after the new birth as before; and so much so that with their flesh (which is born of the flesh, of corruptible seed), they serve the law of sin; even when with the mind (for they have the mind and Spirit of Christ, which is born of an incorruptible seed), they serve the law of God. This corruption of the Adamic nature is of long standing, and is deep rooted, and will continue to develop its pollution until it shall ultimately be raised a spiritual body; “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” Why? Because “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” Hence the necessity. “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” These vile bodies are not yet changed; they are still Adam; for “As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy.” But they shall be changed, for Christ shall change them, and fashion them like unto his resurrected and glorified body. “For if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Now they are mortal and corruptible, but when quickened by the Spirit that raised up Christ, and which dwells as the *new man* in all who are born of the Spirit, they shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Having dwelt perhaps too lengthily on the questions proposed, we, in conclusion, will briefly notice a few things marked by italics interspersed by us throughout the letter of brother Pence, for convenience of reference.

(a) This *mind* with which our brother serves the law of God is the mind of Christ, which Paul says we (his children) have; with it, he says, “I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin.” Are not these the two natures or principles which Paul says are contrary one to the other, and which he designates as the flesh which is born of the flesh, and of corruptible seed, and in which he could find no good thing; and the other the Spirit, which is born of the Spirit? Does he not denominate the one the *old man* the outer man and the natural man – and the other the new man – the inner man and the spiritual man, which is born of God? By each and both of these he identifies himself. “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” (Galatians 2:2 compared with Romans 7:20-23.) “Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind,” etc. Why does Paul use the personal pronoun *I* in a two-fold application to himself, saying, I live, yet not I, and the law of sin, yet it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me? Does he not here clearly

define the living I to be the inward man, in distinction from the body of this death, from which he groaned to be delivered? Brother Pence has the same two natures or opposite identities in him; he feels the conflict raging. Can he tell us whether these were both born of God, or were they both born of the flesh? Or will he not rather say that this outward man is born of the flesh, and descended from the earthly Adam, and is the earthly Adam; and that the other, the new man, is born of God, and is a development in him of that spiritual eternal life which was with the Father, and was given him in Christ before the world began, and implanted in him by the new birth? We are mistaken if he will not say that all that is earthly, sensual and devilish in him he has derived from the world, the flesh and the devil; and all that is spiritual, holy and heavenly in him has come from God.

(b) It is important that we should read these scriptures very carefully, lest we should become confused by an unwarrantable mingling of passages which should be considered distinctly. True, Paul says to the saints which were at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings.” But where? Not in earthly, but “in heavenly places.” Not in the earthly Adam, but “in Christ Jesus.” As in the earthly Adam God blessed us with all earthly blessings, including every green herb, and all the productions of the earth, the light and atmosphere of the heavens, and all the gifts of nature, so all spiritual blessings of life, holiness and happiness, all the provisions of grace, mercy and peace, were given us in Christ Jesus. These gifts were not given according as we should earn or merit them, but “according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Now, what was in Christ Jesus, as set apart by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus? Was it our earthly or spiritual life? Were we, when chosen and blessed in him before the foundation of the world, dead in trespasses and sins? Had we then walked according to the course of this world, were we then children of wrath even as others? It appears to us that the children of God always were perfect in Christ, but no where else. This spiritual and blessed people, which thus stood in Christ as the children of God, by his divine purpose and decree, were ordained of God to a first and a second birth, to bring them into manifestation in their twofold character, in which Paul, and brother Pence, and every other Christian, find themselves, as Christians, while here in the flesh. Our relationship as children of God was not predicated upon our becoming “partakers of flesh and blood;” for the relationship was complete before Adam’s dust was fashioned into a man. But for his own glory God ordained that his children should become in time partakers of flesh and blood, share in the apostasy of that flesh and blood, and in that condemnation consequent thereon, and from that condemnation and wrath be redeemed, and these bodies washed, cleansed, purified and adopted in due time into the fellowship and liberty of the children of God. Our life of God in Christ required no adoption; for it is born of God. As the children of God they have a glorious birthright; but as the children of Adam, we were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. That this adoption relates to the resurrection and immortality of our now mortal bodies is clear from the arguments of Paul in Romans 8:11-25. In our fleshly nature we have all sinned, and in Adam we all die. Death has passed on all men; and those who are redeemed, freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, were by nature children of wrath. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

As we were sinners in the flesh, it behooved Christ to be made flesh for our redemption. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that

through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” To legally represent his children who had sinned in the flesh, he was made of a woman, made under the law, for it was under the law we stood guilty and condemned. He was therefore made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye the children of Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. We conclude that it was as indispensable for Christ to be born of the flesh, and take on him the seed of Abraham, in order to stand in our law place and bear our sins in his own body, and expiate our guilt, as it was that we should be born of his Spirit, and by the life brought forth in us by that birth become partakers of the divine nature, in order that we may reign with him in glory.

(c) As aliens and strangers we are brought nigh by the blood of Christ, together with the impartation to us of the spirit of adoption, while our vital relation to God is far more ancient and eternal, based upon a life given us in Christ which was never alien to God, but forever hid with Christ in him, and this sonship is developed by a spiritual birth. The word constituted may embrace the idea, but we prefer the scripture word *adopted* in its application to the redemption of the purchased possession.

(d) Justification, as a legal act, is not effected by a mere arbitrary judicial decree of the Judge. God is not only the Judge, from whose decisions there is no appeal, but he is the Righteous Judge, and as such his decisions are in harmony with his eternal justice. And justice could not clear the guilty without an adequate atonement. Hence the apostle adds, “It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

(e) There certainly is no difference in regard to the depth of depravity and ruin into which all mankind are fallen, nor any creature excellence to commend one more than another to the saving favor of God, for salvation is by grace; but if our brother means that there was no difference of relationship to God; no special relation to Christ, or in other words, that the saints did not possess a sonship in Christ Jesus before the world began, we shall not be able to agree with him, for if a vital relationship to God through Christ is a spiritual blessing, all the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus were blessed with it by God the Father, in Christ before the foundation of the world. As to their parentage in the flesh, there is no distinction, for they are all Adam; but in their spiritual relation they are “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people,” and it is because they are sons that God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son in their hearts, crying “Abba, Father.”

(f) The apostle Paul, in I Corinthians 15, draws the parallel between the first and second Adam, and shows that as the first was made a living soul, the second was made a quickening Spirit; that the first is of the earth earthy, the second is the Lord from heaven. And then he adds that as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy, and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, and this he applies to the death and resurrection of the saints. “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” “In Adam they die or are sown in corruption; in Christ they are raised in incorruption.” And in his elucidation of this subject in Romans 5, he says that Adam is the figure of him that was to come, and thus illustrates the figure in its application to Christ as the anti-type: “As by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin, *and so* death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But not as the offence so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one man many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift, for the judgment was of one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification; for if by one man’s offence death reigned by one,” etc. “Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. For as by

one man's disobedience, many were made sinners," etc. Now, if these scriptures do not prove the position which we assumed in the article referred to by brother Pence, we must be even more dull of comprehension even than we had supposed. If our brother can tell us how it were possible for us to have been in Adam, as Levi was in Abraham, and not have sinned in him, or how Levi could have been in the loins of Abraham at the time referred to, and not have paid tithes to Melchisedec, we will also ask him to explain upon what principle we could be involved in condemnation, and under the reign of death, for Adam's offence. Has any decree consigning the children of men to die and return to the dust been subsequently made or published? We have said in our former article that all the human race were a unit, in the person of Adam, when that unit transgressed, and when sin entered, and death by sin, and when death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. As none of Adam's posterity were born when sin and death entered, and as some of that posterity are probably not yet born, upon what other ground can we understand that "all have sinned," and as sinners, judgment has come upon all men to condemnation? But the apostle in showing in what sense Adam is the figure of Christ, represents him as such in his seminal and federal character, and that Christ, the second Adam or progenitive head of all the children of God, embodies them in vital union with himself, so as to make them partakers of his divine nature, as Adam's earthly children are partakers of his corrupt, depraved and fallen nature. No production or offspring of the fallen Adam can as such be holy or free from the pollution and mortality of his fallen nature, so nothing existing in or proceeding from Christ, the second Adam, can be unholy. A corrupt fountain cannot send forth pure streams, nor can a pure fountain send forth impure waters.

(g) This does not conflict with what we have understood Christian experience to be. It is true every quickened sinner is made to feel the dreadful corruption of his own heart, and his own personal transgressions rise like mountains before him with crushing weight, but this is not all. So far as his present acts are concerned, he hopes to find relief by reformation; he resolves to do better and to sin no more; but alas! he soon finds that there is a deep fountain of corruption within; that his whole nature is depraved; that he inherits a wicked nature from his earthly parent. It was so with the psalmist when he confessed that he was conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and from that cause he had gone astray from the womb speaking lies, and the words of the poet become appropriate to his case:

"Lord I am vile, conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall,
Corrupts the race, and taints us all."

Not to extenuate his own vileness, but from a deep conviction of his sinfulness, both by nature and by practice; not to throw the blame off from himself, for what is he himself but Adam developed or multiplied?

(h) The views which we have expressed are justly liable to no such construction. The work of redemption, as we have tried to show, was performed by Christ in his incarnation. Himself bear our sins, not in his spiritual or mystical body, but in his own body which hung upon the tree. He suffered for us in the flesh, not in the spirit. He suffered for us in the flesh; his spirit did not die. When he yielded up the Ghost he committed his spirit into the hands of his Father. The revelation made by the Spirit to the heaven-born child of God is that the life which is communicated to him in his new birth by no means inflates him with pride or boasting, but rather leads him in amazement to exclaim, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God!" As Christ is "The only begotten of the Father," our sonship is in his sonship, as our life is in his life, for John says, this life which God has given us is in his Son, and Christ says it is eternal. This vital union,

or union of life and immortality, which makes Christ and his members one, even as Christ and the Father are one, is that life wherein the saints, as chosen in him, were blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, before the foundation of the world. The work of redemption is quite another thing. That work, as we have shown, required that Christ should take our nature on him, and come under the law which we in our own, not in his divine nature, have transgressed. So that as we from his fullness receive, and grace for grace, so he from our nature received our sins, and bore them in his own body on the tree. He received our sorrows, bore our griefs, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. But such is the nature and reciprocity of the union. We in him, and he in us, that eternal justice could hold him responsible for our sins, and acquit us from all the demands of the law for his righteousness sake. If we are Christ's, then we are Abraham's seed. Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, and in that incarnation suffered in the body of his flesh for us and in us. For such was the oneness and identity of Christ and his members, that when he died for them all then were they all dead, legally dead, for the law had exacted and received its utmost demands at his hand; hence we sing:

“With him his members on the tree
Fulfilled the laws demands;
'Tis I in them and they in me,
For thus the union stands.

”Since Jesus slept among the dead
His saints have nought to fear,
For with their glorious suffering Head,
His members sojourned there.”

(i) The justification of the ungodly is based upon the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. He was delivered up for our offences, and raised again for our justification. We are not aware of having ever represented that our having been in Christ, before the world begun, superseded or rendered unnecessary the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet his death and sufferings would no more have justified the guilty, in the absence of this union, than the punishment of an innocent person would remove the guilt of a criminal. How could Christ's death and resurrection have any more effect in taking away the sins of the elect than the sins of the non-elect, or the devils, if the elect had not stood in this vital and indissoluble union and relationship with him which we have described? Would my paying a ransom price for a property on which I never had any previous claim make the property my own? The right of redemption under the law belonged to the nearest of kin, and if our relation to Christ had not been anterior to our relation to Adam, and consequently prior to the claims of the law, Christ would not have been our nearest of kin; so in this view of the subject, though our justification required the incarnation, sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, yet the relationship of eternal vital union was and is the principal on which his mediatorial work is available to us, and in that sense we think no understanding Christian will regard the doctrine as repulsive or abhorrent.

(j) If we said too much in saying that death passed upon all that Adam embodied, will brother Pence be kind enough to tell us what part of Adam or his posterity death did not pass upon? We felt some confidence in reiterating the declaration of an inspired apostle: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5:12).” And how? If we can understand the meaning, it is this: As sin entered by one man, so death entered by one man, so death passed upon all men by one man; for that all have sinned in that one man.

(k) To all these interrogatives we answer yes. Most assuredly they were all there. The patriarchs and prophets, and all the Old Testament saints, and all the New Testament saints, all the election of grace,

all that shall ever reign with him in glory, and we sometimes even hope that the writer of this article, though the chief of sinners and the least of saints, was there; for if they were not in him, be it remembered there is no salvation out of him. They were all buried with him by baptism into death; were all crucified with him, and they all arose with him to newness of life. *God hath quickened us together with Christ*, and hath *raised us up together*, and made us sit together.

(l) Very true; but was any part of his posterity out of him when he transgressed? If so, who, or where are they?

(m) If things had not been just as they were, we do not pretend to know how they would have been.

(n) As Adam is the figure of Christ, so Eve, to our view, is the figure of the bride, the Lamb's wife. And there was a union of life between them before her formation or manifestation as his bride. That relation was not annulled by her distinct formation, for she was still the bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and she was called *woman*, because she was taken out of the man, and her name was called Eve because she was the mother of all living, and that too before any of her children were born. Even as Jerusalem, which is above and is free, is the mother of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise. Now Paul says: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Were we to suppose that when Eve had transgressed, Adam had refused to follow her into the transgression, must they not have been forever separated from each other? But Adam said she was given *to be with him*, and she gave him of the forbidden fruit, and he did eat. Apply the figure to Christ and his church; for Paul says he is speaking of Christ and the church. The church was created in Christ; she is still the bone of his bones; she is his body, his flesh, and his bones. The church in her separate formation was beguiled by the serpent, deceived, betrayed, and was in the transgression. She had no power to return to Christ, though she was no less his wife – no less the bone of his bones; for the relationship could not be dissolved, but he could go to her. Christ could and did bow his heavens and come down. He was made of a woman, made under the law. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. His Bride was previously given to be with him; for God had said it was not good for man to be alone; so, neither was it good in the sight of God that Christ should be alone. He had power to follow his Bride, by receiving the fruit at her hand, and by having her iniquities laid on him and to forever cancel them. But when Adam had followed Eve into the transgression, there with her he remained; for he had no power to redeem her. So here the figure ends. But Christ had power to lay down his life and to take it again, according to the commandment of his Father, and in his triumphant resurrection quickened his church with resurrection life and immortality.

We submit what we have written to the consideration of brother Pence, and to our readers generally. Long as the article is, we have not allowed ourself a full range of the subject, but hope we may be understood, and that some at least may be edified; and if our readers will forgive us for the tedious length of this, we will try to avoid the infliction of so severe a punishment on them next time.

Middletown, N. Y.

June 15, 1864.



MATTHEW 11:11

“He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he (Matthew 11:11).”

The request for our views on this text will be found in our seventh number of the current volume, page 55. These words were not spoken in disparagement of John the Baptist; for, of all that had preceded him, his superior had not been found, even among the prophets and patriarchs. We are not told that John was greater than any of the Old Testament saints, but that among them that are born of women, none greater than he had appeared. He was a man sent from God, and his name was John (see John 1:6); and this name was given him by the angel of God (Luke 1:13). He came in the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the messenger whom God sent before the face of the Messiah, and as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, etc. (Mark 1:1,2). He came in the spirit and power of Elias, who was translated; and he was the Elias which was to come (Matthew 4:5). He was a Baptist, and the honored administrator of the holy ordinance of baptism to our Lord Jesus Christ. All the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

“Notwithstanding” all this, “He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

There is, we think, a sense in which this characteristic (the least in the kingdom) belongs to our Redeemer himself. The term *least*, we do not understand to imply unimportant, less useful, less honored, or less in any point of real greatness; but the most humble, meek and lowly. And these lovely qualities were certainly possessed and manifested more fully and conspicuously in the person of our Redeemer, in his incarnation, life and deportment on earth, than in any of his members. He whose glory was with the Father before the world was (John 17:5); whose position was with the Father upon the Eternal Throne; who thought it not robbery to be equal with God; and who was with God in the beginning, and who was God; who is the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace; by whom and for whom all things are and were created; and by whom all things consist, whether they be principalities or powers, thrones or dominions, things visible or invisible; all are his workmanship, and all are sustained and controlled by him. But see him in his humble birth; see him in the manger; see him in subordination to his parents, serving as an humble apprentice to the carpenter’s trade; see him a man of sorrow, familiar with grief, derided, insulted, reproached, persecuted, reviled, and set at naught by men; see him in agony in the garden; see him a prisoner at the bar of Pilate and of Herod; see him crowned with thorns, scourged, spit upon, and loaded with every indignity that wicked men could invent, and led away to the horrid tortures of the cross, bleeding, groaning, dying; and in all this not one complaining or revengeful word: as a sheep before his shearers, he was dumb, and opened not his mouth. See all this, and then say, was there ever such humility, meekness and lowliness of soul, as he exhibited on earth, before or since? Who, from such infinite height has humbled himself to such a depth? Who, from such unspeakable glory has willingly descended to such ignominy and humiliation? Who, that was so rich has ever volunteered to become so very poor? Who, from the adoration of shining angels and the worship of holy beings, has consented to become the scorn and derision of wicked men and devils? Who, beside the meek and lowly Lamb of God, was ever willing to be counted of no reputation? It is our impression that our dear Redeemer, in our text, referred to his own unexampled and unparalleled humiliation. He came under the law, he learned obedience, he humbled himself, even unto the death of the cross. He assumed all our infirmities; he took on him all our sins; he bore all our reproaches; he endured the cross and despised the shame; yet, beyond all controversy, he was and is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. He who washed his disciples’ feet justly claimed that he was and is their Lord and Master.

But in the kingdom of heaven, among the disciples of Christ, whosoever manifests the greatest conformity to Christ in meekness, lowliness, in humility, is esteemed the greatest among the disciples. “When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died (Hosca 13:1).” So our Redeemer taught his disciples that the pathway to greatness was through the valley of humiliation. When his disciples displayed an ambition to be great, having failed to settle the question of pre-eminence in their discussions among themselves, they appealed to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” The reply of our Lord to this enquiry is the most clear and explicit commentary on the text proposed by brother Sellman that can be given. So far as it relates to the comparative humility and transcendent exaltation of the children of God, showing that he who is the most like Jesus in the grace of humility is greatest in the kingdom of heaven; not in self-esteem, or self-righteousness, nor in the esteem of the world, but in approaching nearest to the standard of true greatness, as shown by the example and precepts of Jesus. As, for instance, Paul, who claimed to be less than the least of all saints, and yet not a whit inferior to the chiefest of apostles, and in some respects at least greater than John the Baptist.

When the disciples asked Jesus, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven,” how forcibly did he illustrate the doctrine of Christian humility and godly eminence. “And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 28:2-4).” And further he said, “And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” By this divinely authorized standard, the more humble and child-like the disciple becomes, the greater will be his resemblance to the meek and lowly Savior, of whom he learns, and whose yoke he is called to bear. This true greatness does not consist in being more prominent in position, as John the Baptist or Paul were, for says Paul, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (I Corinthians 13:1-3).” The poor little child of God, who has no gift of tongues, who can only lisp the name of his adorable Redeemer, if blessed with humility, is childlike, lamb-like and Christ-like; he is greater in the kingdom of heaven than those who possess the most eloquent and commanding powers of oratory, or shine the brightest in the eyes of men. The vain ambition of the two sons of Zebedee and their mother, that they might occupy distinguished places of prominence and honor in the kingdom which was about to be organized excited the other ten disciples with indignation against them. Instead of elevating, it depreciated them in the eyes of their brethren, as that vain ambition always does, when displayed among Christians. “But Jesus called them unto him and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you.” No aristocratic distinctions, no despotic dominion, no lording over God’s heritage, should ever be allowed in the church of God. “But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.” That is, to perform the duties of a waiting servant; “and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant,” or (as in the margin) *your slave* (Matthew 20:26,27). Let such occupy the very lowest places, and let the humble be honored, for their child-like and unambitious disposition; for “Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” Scribes, Pharisees and

hypocrites loved the chief places in the synagogues, and to be called Rabbi; but Jesus forbids such titles to his children. May we all learn of Jesus to be humble, holy, harmless and undefiled, and suppress within us all desire for any other greatness. When we glory, may it be only in the Lord.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 1, 1864.

HEBREWS 2:1-3

Brother Beebe: If convenient, please give your views on Hebrews 2:1-3: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.”

Many of us, I fear, are neglecting this great salvation, and timely admonition is needed, and, if properly given, would, I hope, be blessed of God.

Your brother in Christ,

D. Bartley.

Laconia, Ind. January 21, 1864.

Reply: The declaration and admonition presented in our text are a deduction from the facts recorded in the preceding chapter, as implied in the introductory word, *Therefore*. A careful perusal of the foregoing chapter will convince the intelligent reader that the conclusion is just and unavoidable. God at sundry times and in divers manners spake to the fathers by the prophets; among the prophets by whom God spake to the patriarchs, Moses occupies a very conspicuous place; as that prophet, messenger or angel, by whom his laws were communicated to the tribes of Israel. The term *angels* are sometimes applied to the commissioned messengers by whom divine communications were made to the people of God. But, whether we consider the term as applicable to the prophets, or those heavenly messengers spoken of in the first chapter, as an order of beings distinct from men, and who were sometimes sent with messages from the throne of God, in either case Christ is far superior to them. As the Son of God, all the angels of God are commanded to worship him. He “Being so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” A name belongs to him at which every knee shall bow, of things in earth and things in heaven. In view of the superior excellency of Christ over all beings in heaven and earth, seated in matchless power and majesty upon a throne which is forever and ever, on which he presides, God over all, and blessed forever; his instructions are worthy of more profound reverence and unquestionable obedience than the words of holy men or even holy angels. In the third chapter we are told that Jesus, as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house.

For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after: but Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, etc. In view then of the disparity between Moses and Christ, we are to consider the declaration in Chapter 10, Verses 28,29. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who shall disregard or trample upon the authority of the Son of God? Although it be fully demonstrated in the gospel that Christ has redeemed his people from under the law of Moses, from the law of sin and death, and they can no more come into that condemnation who have passed from death unto life; yet they are under law to Christ, and ought therefore to give (not less, but) the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard; lest at any time we should let them slip. This additional obligation is insisted on throughout this epistle. See Chapter 12, Verses 25-29. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.

The obligation is upon all who have heard, that is, all who have passed from death unto life, and are gathered into the spiritual kingdom, as the spiritual Israel of God. For, "They that hear shall live." Those who have heard and so live ought therefore to give the more earnest heed to the things spoken; namely the things which began to be spoken by the Lord. Things which our Lord Jesus Christ has enjoined upon his redeemed family, things embraced in his precepts and examples, and embraced in his law which he has written in their heart; and are faithfully recorded in the New Testament. The doctrine, discipline, ordinances, admonitions, exhortations and instructions which can be clearly traced back to him, but no farther. They were not found in the Sinai Covenant, the law of Moses, or the Levitical priesthood; but they began to be spoken by the Lord. The law which had a shadow of these things was given by Moses; but grace and truth were brought by Jesus Christ. He first enacted his laws for the government of his church and kingdom, and then commissioned his apostles who heard him to teach all baptized believers to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. The whole revelation of salvation by grace, and all the counsel and purpose of God in that great salvation are revealed in and through him. All began with him, and has been duly confirmed to the saints in all subsequent ages by inspired apostles who have been commissioned by him to preach his gospel in all the world, for a witness to all nations. What began to be spoken by the Lord has been abundantly confirmed to us by his apostles, whose testimony has been attended with signs and wonders, as declared in their commission. God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his own will.

We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. We are yet in the flesh, subject to infirmities, and amid the vanities of the world, the temptations of Satan, and the popular errors and delusions of anti-christ, of which the saints are commanded to beware. We are liable, especially at times, to let some of the things which we have heard slip. The primitive disciples betrayed this weakness. They had repeatedly heard the Lord say that he was to suffer and die, and rise again on the third day, but in the trying hour they had let these declarations slip, until they were again reminded of them, and then remembered they that he had told them when he was yet with them that these things should be accomplished. And the very apostles

would have been utterly incompetent to confirm all these things to us if it had not been for the gift of the Holy Ghost whose work it was to bring all these things to their remembrance. It is important that the saints should hold these things fast at all times, and at no time let them slip for a moment: in times of refreshing; and in times of dearth and declension; in times of enlargement, and in times of persecution. The sacred charge is upon them to hold them fast; and to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and not be again entangled with the yoke of bondage.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? This *if* does not imply a doubt; for it positively affirmed, as before quoted: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." The justness of their recompense was meet to them according to the provisions and penalties of the law they were under. It provided for all who were or are under it that, if they were obedient they should live and be prospered with health, peace and plenty of temporal mercies; but if disobedient, they should be visited with sword, pestilence and famine, and be cut off and die. True the saints are not now under a conditional law or covenant that can show no mercy, but they are under law to Christ. "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2)." The law which God has written in the inward parts of his children in the new and better covenant does provide mercy; whereas Moses' law knew no mercy, and its transgressors died without mercy because the law could show none. But in the new covenant it is plentifully provided. "I will," saith God, "be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." Still the law of Christ provides a just recompense of reward for every transgression of his law. If my children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgment; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me." It is not in a legal or judicial sense, but in parental faithfulness. As many as he loves he rebukes, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth. None escape chastisements at his Fatherly hand but bastards. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" God will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, and it is not possible that any of his children shall escape his rod who neglect his great salvation; or who let slip what he has spoken.

The things which we have heard, including the laws of the kingdom of Christ with all his institutions, ordinances, precepts and examples are imperatively enjoined upon all his disciples, none of them can be violated with impunity. A just recompense of reward, according to the provisions of his law, is certain to follow every transgression, and there is no escape to those who heedlessly let these admonitions slip. A vigilant attention to what we have heard, and a dutiful obedience to the laws of the kingdom of Christ is the only salvation from the rod.

If we heedlessly let what we have heard slip in regard to the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace, we are liable to drift into the gulf of Arminianism, or if we neglect his precepts, we as a chastisement shall be filled with our own ways, as was Ephraim. But if we would escape these chastisements we must observe the rule given. "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound; they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from

his old sins. Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall not fall (I Peter 1:5-10).”

Middletown, N. Y.,
July 15, 1864.

REVELATION 14:9-11

Brother Beebe: Will you be so kind as to give your views on Revelation 14:9-11? and oblige yours in hope of eternal life,

S. R. Burgess. Girard, Ill.
January 29, 1864.

Conscious of our inability to do full justice to the subject embraced in the text named, we are nevertheless willing to present for consideration such views as we have and submit them to the consideration of brother Burgess and to our readers generally.

Immediately after the vision which John saw of the beast which rose up out of the sea, and the two horned beasts coming up out of the earth, and the image of the beast, and his power, persecution and proscription, as recorded in the thirteenth chapter, he “looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.” And he says, “I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” Then follows the text on which we are requested to give our views: “And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”

“And the third angel followed them.” Namely, the two preceding angels; the first having the everlasting gospel to preach, and the second announcing the fall of Babylon, and this third angel bearing the solemn admonition expressed in the fearful and startling words of our text: “If any man worship the

beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.” The beast described in the thirteenth chapter, whether in his dragon form, as set forth in Rev. 12:3, or as seen rising out of the sea or coming up out of the earth, or as presented in the image, the same principle of idolatry is involved in either case, and the same tremendous consequences must result. In Rev. 13:8, it is said, “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The manner of their worship is stated in verse four of the same chapter: “And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” Their admiration of his power, confidence in his miracles, signs and lying wonders, and submission to his assumed authority, and obedience to his decrees, as also their reliance on his power to save, are all idolatrous, and bestowing upon the anti-christian beast that homage and devotion which belongs only to God. This homage, whether offered to the papal beast with seven heads and ten horns, or the Protestant beast with two horns like a lamb, or to the image made by those who dwell upon the earth, in obedience to the mandate of the two horned beasts, the wickedness is the same, and the consequence equally fearful.

“And receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.” The mark of the beast appears to be that by which they who receive it are to be known as the worshipers of the beast. As those who are redeemed from the earth have their Father’s name written in their forehead, so false worshipers are marked with an imprint of character like that of their mother, a copy of which is given in Rev. 17:5. The initiatory mark of a Jewish proselyte was that of circumcision, and the initiatory mark of many of the worshipers of the beast is made by what they have substituted in the stead of circumcision – made by the hand of the priest on the forehead of the initiated, as in their wicked perversion of baptism. The mark of the beast on the forehead may also signify that external display of an anti-christian spirit which is readily seen as identifying those who bear it as the admirers and worshipers of the beast; and as the hand is the member of the body by which we work, so the hands of all who worship the beast are defiled with blood, with cruelty, with persecution and with oppression. With the forehead they give countenance to the admonitions of the beast, and with their hands they perform their works of darkness.

Whether we have a correct view of the mark of the beast or not, it is certainly a mark by which the worshipers are known by their party, for only those who can show the mark are exempt from proscription and bitter persecution, for under the turbulent power of the image of the beast no man shall be allowed to buy or sell save he that hath the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. But their special privileges, in which the worshipers of the beast may revel for a season, are limited, and the day of retribution is hastened on apace, for they “shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation,” and they “shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” These are strong and expressive words, the wrath of an indignant God unmixed and unremitting, for ever and ever. Who can describe the storms of wrath which God has laid up in store against the day of wrath for the ungodly? All nations have drank of the maddening cup of the fornication of the whore of Babylon. Exhilarated and inflamed from its intoxicating power, infatuated, besotted and raving in the delirium tremens of her accursed cup, the earth has been, and is still being, drenched with human blood. But the avenging hand of God is even now uplifted, and the day of retribution is nigh at hand. The scene will soon be changed, and they who have the seal of God upon them, and not the mark of the beast, shall shout an everlasting deliverance, and all the worshipers of the beast receive their irrevocable doom.

In view of the tremendous import of our subject, does it not become us to inquire most seriously and prayerfully, Whose image or superscription do we bear? Have we the seal of God upon us? Are we sealed with the Holy Spirit of God, with the Spirit of promise? For “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” The Spirit of Christ is holy, harmless, meek, loving, patient, forbearing and forgiving, and as many as are led by it, they are the sons of God and heirs of glory. But the spirit and mark of the beast are unholy, malicious, haughty, hateful, overbearing and revengeful.

“Lord, search my heart, and try my ways,
And make my soul sincere,
That I may stand before thy face,
And find acceptance there.”

Middletown, N. Y.,
August 1, 1864.

HEBREWS 12:22-24

Reply to Brother S. R. Burgess:

“But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

The Hebrews, as such, were brought up under the ritual and ceremonies of the Levitical law, and seemed very strongly inclined to cling to the observance of legal traditions, works and customs, from which the inspired writer labored to convert them. The whole epistle is devoted to that end. The two covenants are compared and contrasted, the priesthood of Christ, shown to be of a far superior order to that of Aaron and his sons; the one by the law of a carnal commandment, the other by the power of an endless life. But in the changing of the priesthood there was of necessity a changing of the law. “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Thus the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me (the saints) free from the law of sin and death. Being therefore redeemed from the dominion of the law and brought under law to Christ, the saints are required to obey the precepts of Christ from higher and nobler motives; and they are qualified for their new allegiance to Christ, not by fleshly or carnal ability, but by being made partakers of the same power of an endless life. Instead of being licensed to sin because grace abounds, and because abounding grace has made them free from the law, the apostle urges their obedience to Christ from that very consideration. “For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and to the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust

through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake) (Hebrews 12:18-21).”

“Not to the terrors of the Lord,
The tempest, fire and smoke;
Not to the thunder of that word
That God, on Sinai, spoke.”

“*But ye are come unto Mount Sion*” (or Zion), which place literally was the highest eminence in Jerusalem, and the place of power, where stood the royal palace of the King of Israel, enclosed by invincible towers and walls of strength; a place of safety, etc. In all respects Zion was a type of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, in her highest elevation, the palace of the great king, the center and throne of the spiritual Israel of our God. Hither, by grace, the saints of the gospel dispensation have come to worship the Lord their God in his holy hill. Not to be terrified by blackness and darkness, which even Moses could not endure without fear and quaking, but a peaceable habitation, a quiet dwelling place where those who come are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to go out no more forever. Zion, the perfection of beauty, out of which God hath shined, for God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.

“*And unto the city of the living God.*” Jerusalem in the type was the consecrated city of God, and Mount Zion was embraced and enclosed within her sacred precincts. The very name of the city signifies the vision of peace, beautifully illustrative of the church of God in her gospel splendor. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, upon the sides of the North; the city of the Great King. The glory of this city is more perfectly delineated in the vision of John, as he saw her descending from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. See Revelation 21st and 22nd chapters. It is the city of the Living God, not of some imaginary or idol god. He is the God of Life, who lives independently, being self-existent and eternal; the source and fountain of life, especially so of all spiritual eternal life; the true God and Eternal Life, in whom the life of all the saints with Christ is hidden. All other gods are dead; without vitality themselves, they can impart no quickening power to their worshipers. The God of our salvation lives, and blessed be our Rock. The city which the living God himself hath built, and in which he has set his throne, in which he will dwell forever, because he hath desired it, is truly the city of the living God; and to this city the saints are come. This city of the living God is the Heavenly Jerusalem. Contrasted with the earthly or typical Jerusalem, which like Hagar the bond-woman, gendering to bondage, being herself a slave, she can not be the mother of a free posterity; she is in bondage with her children; they shall not be heir with the children of the free woman. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free; and it is just as impossible for her to be the mother of a slave as for Hagar to be the mother of a free child. Those who are born of Jerusalem, which is above and is free, are as Isaac was; they have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father.

“*And to an innumerable company of angels.*” The term *angels* is variously applied in the scriptures; sometimes, and perhaps generally, to an order of beings superior to men, as the angels of glory, such as announced the birth of our Savior; and frequently the name is applied to the messengers or ministers of the gospel, as in I Timothy 5:21, and also the angels of the seven churches in Asia. But in this text we understand the term as applied to the spirits of just men made perfect; the disembodied spirits of the saints in glory. Although there is a definite number of these, perfectly known to God, yet the multitude of them cannot be counted by men, and therefore they are an innumerable company, and in the same kingdom or city into which the saints in the gospel church have come. They have come from the East

and the West, the North and the South, and are set down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of our God; not with the fleshly bodies of the patriarchs, for they have long ago returned to dust, and in their graves await the voice of the Arch Angel and the trump of God to raise them up spiritual bodies in the last time. The kingdom of Christ being a spiritual kingdom, cannot be inherited by flesh and blood, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (I Corinthians 15:50). Thus the apostle could speak of being absent in body, but present in spirit, with the saints. This is blessed spiritual society to those who are born of the Spirit, and whose angels do always behold the face of their Father in heaven (Matthew 18:10).

“To the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven.” This general assembly is the church of the First Born, the church of Christ, for he is the First Born. He was not the first born in his flesh, for millions were born in the flesh before his incarnation; but he is the first begotten of the dead (Revelation 1:5). And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead (Colossians 1:17). The first born of every creature (Colossians 1:15). And God has predestinated whom he did foreknow to be conformed to his image, that he may be the first born among many brethren (Romans 8:29). His church called out from all the tribes of the earth, come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. All the members of his body, the church, shall come to him in general assembly, called out from the world and brought with singing to Zion; gathered with his arm and carried in his bosom. His church is the general assembly, for all the saints are assembled within her sacred precincts. And their names are written in heaven. *“And in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them (Psalm 139:16).”* *“They are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8).”* See also Revelation 20:12 and 15. The record of the saints in heaven implies not only their personal election in Christ before the world began, but also their recognition in his gospel church, registered in and fellowshipped by the whole general assembly as the living in Jerusalem, as citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

“And to God, the Judge of all.” All the saints were arraigned before God, in his judicial character, when they stood before the bar of justice, and before the mountain that burned with fire, and there they were stoned to death, and thrust through with cruel arrows. But their Surety appeared on their behalf and paid for them the ransom price. He was delivered up to die for their iniquities, and he arose again for their justification. Now being freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, they are redeemed unto God; brought nigh to God, and find him in Christ not only their Judge, whose decisions are final and irrevocable, but also their Advocate. *“It is God that justifieth (Romans 8:33).”* Now they rejoice in him as their Judge, and appeal to him as such, for they know that it is written, *“The Lord shall judge his people. He is the Judge of all; of all beings, of all events, and of all worlds. He is the Judge of all their necessities, their supplies, their trials and their deliverances, their conflicts and their victories, and as they have confidence in him, they can freely, unreservedly and cheerfully commit their cause to him, and rest assured that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; righteousness and truth go before his face. Once they were in awful dread of appearing before him, but now his terror shall not make them afraid. Their longing spirits ardently cry out from time to time, “As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God (Psalm 42:1,2).”*

“And to the spirits of just men made perfect.” These we understand to be the same as are called the innumerable company of angels. They are the spirits of just men; men who are justified freely, fully and everlastingly, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; made perfect by that one

offering by which Christ has perfected them that are sanctified; clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness. They were *made* perfect, they did not make themselves so; for “Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord (Isaiah 54:17).” These are just men, for God hath justified them; they are made perfect, for Christ has forever perfected them. Their bodies may be moldering in their graves, but we are in communion with their spirits; for all being born of the one spirit, there is one body and one spirit, even as we are all called in one hope of our calling. One Lord, one faith and one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. It is in the spirit we commune with them; the flesh profiteth nothing.

“And to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant.” In coming to this heavenly Jerusalem or city of the living God, we come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant or testament. As Moses was the mediator of the Sinai covenant to the carnal Israelites; for they could not endure the words spoken to them, and prayed that God would speak to Moses, and through him unto them, thus making him a mediator between God and them in the dispensation of the fiery law, so in the new covenant with the spiritual Israel Christ is the Mediator, and all the saints come to him. A mediator is one who mediates between two parties and is qualified to equally represent both; equally allied, related and interested. So Christ as the Son of God on the one part, and as Head over all things to the church, which is his body, on the other, is the only divinely recognized Mediator or Daysman between God and men. “No man can come unto the Father but by me.” As there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. We have not time or space here to treat at large upon the mediatorial glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we will briefly speak of him as the Mediator of the new covenant, as it is through his mediation this covenant of life and peace exists, is made, ratified, and ordered in all things and sure. By his mediation for his people the provisions and requisitions of the old covenant are met and canceled, and taken out of the way; for “He taketh away the first that he may establish the second (Hebrews 10:9).” His canceling of the old covenant annulled our marriage with Moses, that by the new covenant we might be lawfully married to Christ our risen Savior, who as the Head and Husband of his church is fully qualified to fulfill all the provisions of the new covenant to the honor of his Father, and perfect safety and salvation of his church. This covenant is in him, through him, and by him. He is the Surety of it, and as Mediator of it stands responsible for the fulfillment of all its promises. “I will be their God, and they shall be my people; I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more.” Indeed, all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, yea, and in him Amen, to the glory of God by us. It is in him, through him, and by him as our Mediator that Jehovah is our God, and certainly it is only through him that we are redeemed unto God and recognized as his peculiar people. Through no other mediation is it possible that God should be merciful to our unrighteousness; there was no mercy in the law. “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy,” and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; but in the provisions of the new covenant under the mediation of the Son of God, “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Psalm 85:10).” His mediatorial fullness covers and embraces all his official relations to his people as Prophet, Priest and King; Shepherd, Bishop, Elder Brother, Husband, Head, Father, Way, Truth and Life; Leader, Ruler, Savior and Judge. We are not come to Moses to mediate for us, nor to Aaron, nor are we left to the mediation of men, or to attempt the work for ourselves. From all these we are come away, and are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

“And to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” Answering to the figures of the ceremonial law. “For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled

both the book and all the people saying, This is the blood of the testament (or covenant, which means the same), which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9:19-22).” “But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament (Hebrews 9:11-15).” Thus in coming to Christ as the Mediator of the new covenant, we come to the blood of sprinkling, which being the blood of atonement, by which we are purged from dead works and purified from all defilement, it speaketh better things than that of Abel. The voice of Abel’s blood which had been shed by the fratricidal hands of Cain, called from the ground for righteous retribution upon the murderer. But the blood of Christ speaketh better things. It speaks of atonement, of pardon, peace, reconciliation, redemption, cleansing, purification and justification; yea, and of victory through the blood of the Lamb. Thus speaketh the blood of sprinkling to which the saints have come. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace be multiplied (I Peter 1:2).” “Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:22).” The sprinkling of the blood of victims sacrificed under the law, upon the books and the people, was to consecrate them ceremonially to the Lord. And the sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb upon the lintel and doorposts of the dwellings of the Hebrews was to them a peaceful assurance of their redemption and deliverance from wrath. The destroying angel had no power to smite them. Even so the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all guilt, and saves from all wrath.

From all these considerations the apostle urges his solemn admonition, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.” If indeed we are come to mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to all these gospel privileges, we should endeavor to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called.

Middletown, N. Y.,
August 15, 1864.

ISAIAH 2:2-4

Brother Beebe: Please give your views on Isaiah 2:2-4. We live where we can have the pleasure of hearing the gospel preached but once a month; and even then I often have to stay at home: but if I can have your valuable paper to read, it is richly stored with fruit that is sweeter to me than honey, and I am often made to rejoice in God my Savior, for his goodness and mercy in calling poor lost sinners out of darkness into his marvelous light, for

He takes my soul, e'er I'm aware,
And shows me where his glories are.

Yours in Christian bonds,
Barbary Bruce.
Perry County, Ia.
August 4, 1864

Reply: We will submit a few remarks for the consideration of sister Bruce, and our readers generally on the text proposed, in the order in which it is written.

And it shall come to pass. All divine prophecy is thus marked in the most positive and emphatic language, declaring from the mouth of God things which shall come to pass. They must and shall be accomplished because God has so ordained, decreed, and declared. In the absence of God's absolute predestination of events, the prophecies of the scriptures could be no more reliable than the prognostications or auguries of heathen magicians. The very fact that God, by his holy prophets, has declared the end from the beginning is an irrefragable demonstration of the doctrine of his absolute predestination of all things. It is therefore infidelity to dispute that doctrine; for it is a denial of his government. God has at sundry times and divers manner spoken to the fathers by the prophets; and he is of one mind and none can turn him. He speaks the word and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done.

In the last days. God, in his infinite wisdom, has a time for the accomplishment of all the orders of his throne. Nothing can disarrange the order of events. The fullness of the time must come before the fulfillment of the prediction of the Savior's advent could take place; and were it not for the wise and immutable arrangement of the order of events, worlds might jostle against worlds, and all events so clash as to defeat the counsel and purpose of God. The time specified for the fulfillment of the prophecy of our text is *in the last days*, by which we understand primarily, the last days of the Jewish organization including the days in which God hath spoken to us by his Son (see Hebrews 1:2). The last days of the nationality of the Hebrews. Which last days embraced from the coming of John the Baptist to the destruction of the temple and dispersion of the Jews to the four quarters of the globe. It was at this time the things in our text recorded were accomplished, as we shall presently attempt to show. Still as the entire history of Israel was figurative of the church and kingdom of Christ, we look for corresponding events to be fulfilled in the last days of the church of God among the Gentiles, or on the earth.

That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, etc. The church and kingdom of our Lord is called his *house* first because it is his residence. He dwells in Zion. "God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved." Here, saith the Lord, will I dwell forever, for I have desired it. Second, Because it is the home of his family, the place of their birth; of their abode, comfort and protection. They are of the household of God and have a birthright inheritance in the House of the Lord forever. Third, Because the term is used in the scriptures to mean a seed or posterity, as the House of Israel, the house of David, etc. Fourth, Because it is the anti-type of the Temple or house consecrated to the Lord in the old Jerusalem. Fifth, Because the materials of which it is composed are brought from the forests and dark quarries of nature, and being quickened, are built up a spiritual house, or as timber is framed, so are the saints fitly framed together and built on Christ as their foundation and chief corner stone. And lastly, because they are God's building; and the place where his honor dwelleth (See Hebrews 3:2,4,& 6). But this building is called *the mountain of the Lord's house*. As Daniel predicted of the stone which was taken from the mountain

without hands, which he interprets to mean the kingdom which the God of heaven should set up, should wax great and become a great mountain; breaking in pieces the nations of the earth; so the church of God is called Mount Zion; Jerusalem which is above, etc. It is like a mountain firmly established and immovable. Her locality or position is *in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills*. Observe the mountains and hills are plural, but the top is in the singular number. Where shall we find such a place; a plurality of mountains and hills, having but one top? The several tribes of Israel were often called mountains, and the principle families of these tribes were called hills: as Levi and the family of Aaron; Judah and the family of David. All these mountains and hills melted at the presence of the Lord at the advent of our Savior Jesus Christ. They were to remain until he came, then the mountains should depart, and the hills should be removed (Isaiah 54:10 and Jeremiah 4:24). “I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.” “The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? Ye mountains that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs? Tremble, thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob (Psalm 114:4-7).”

The top or highest elevation of all the mountains of Israel is found in the person of the Messiah. He forms the climax; he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high. In his eternal Godhead he is infinitely above all the mountains, and families of the earth; but in his mediatorial character he has taken on him the seed of Abraham, and identified himself with his people. As the promised Messiah, he was to rise out of Jacob, and preside over Israel. The prophets of the Lord in rapturous visions saw him coming upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills; and in holy delight exclaimed, “Let the inhabitants of the Rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains (Songs 2:8, Isaiah 42:11).”

In him then who is the exalted King of Israel; whose elevation is above the clouds, higher than the heavens: greater than Solomon, higher than Agag, before Abraham; superior to David and in all things having preeminence, was the mountain of the Lord’s house to be established. Not in the flesh of Abraham, nor in the covenant of circumcision; not in the law of carnal commandments, nor in a worldly sanctuary, but in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, the church of God was to be established. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, all his members were predestinated in the fullness of the dispensations of times to be personally and experimentally gathered together in him, and come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). This is, be it remembered, an establishment of God himself. Not subject to any uncertainty, nor liable to any change of position or elevation. Quickened together with Christ; the church or mountain of the Lord’s house is raised up together with and in him in heavenly places. And being risen together with Christ, they are to seek the things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. O what amazing grace is this! that we should be taken up out of the horrible pit, and miry clay, and be so exalted as kings and priests; our life hid with Christ in God; and our house, an everlasting habitation established in him who is the High and lofty One that inhabits eternity.

And all nations shall flow unto it. This has reference to the gathering in of the Gentiles. God has a people in all the nations and kindred of mankind. Christ has redeemed them with his blood, and therefore, “The great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come and worship the Lord their God in his holy mountain, at Jerusalem,” which holy mountain is established in Christ Jesus our Lord, for He shall gather his sheep with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. They shall not be forced coersively against their inclination. They shall be a willing people in the day of Christ’s mediatorial power. He will give them a new heart, a new will, new desires, and in the gospel present irresistible attractions: so that being melted by his love in their heart, they shall flow; like the flowing of water to the great ocean,

so shall they flow unto the mountain of the Lord's house; to find there a joyful, safe and sure abode in the house of the Lord forever, where they may inquire in his holy temple.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. Many people, or a multitude which no man can number, redeemed from every people under heaven, quickened by the same Spirit, moved by the same impulse, animated by the same love, and qualified by the same preparation of heart to enjoy the same spiritual privileges, shall express the same disposition to return to Zion with singing and everlasting joy. When thus prepared by grace to enter into the mountain of the Lord's house, they will not feel selfish, or desire to go alone; they will say, *Come let us go.* They desire that all who love the Lord may participate with them. The psalmist was glad when he heard this appeal: "...when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Whether the tribes go up: the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord (Psalm 122)." (Read the whole Psalm.) It is not regarded by them who love the Lord as a degradation. They do not go down to the house of the Lord. From the highest pinnacle of earthly greatness or grandeur, it is an infinite elevation to go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord; which is established in the top of the mountains, high above the hills. John, when favored with a view of this heavenly Jerusalem, was carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, where he saw the church adorned as a bride prepared for her husband (Revelation 21:10). It certainly is not natural for streams to flow upwards; nor is there any power of nature that can turn sinners to God. But the water of life which Jesus giveth is of a kind and quality which is ever springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14). When thus inclined to go up to the mountain of the Lord's house, the heaven-born child is filled with wonder and amazement, and he has many inquiries to make, to which he can find no satisfactory answer, only in the school of Christ. He must inquire in the holy temple, if he would learn the mysteries of redeeming grace and sovereign love. The God of Jacob will teach us of his ways. Not only of the way in which he saves them; but of his ways in which he leads them. Jacob's God found him in a waste howling wilderness, and he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. "As an eagle stireth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him (Deuteronomy 32:11,12)." So the Lord teaches and leads his people. Jesus says to them, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls (Matthew 11:29)." He is just such a teacher as the trembling children want, for he is meek, his terror will not make them afraid; he is lowly and will condescend to men of low degree. He knows the feelings of their infirmities, and will succor them when tempted. He will give them wisdom and will not upbraid them. His ways are past finding out by all the wisdom and study of man; but still his secret is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. He will teach them his ways.

And we will walk in his paths. When under his tuition to his house, we turn our back upon all our former paths. What we before esteemed as gain, we count as loss; yea, verily, we count all things as dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. We desire not to invent or mark out, or pursue ways of our own; nor have we any confidence in the ways which men invent and teach; but we desire above all things that we may walk in his ways, in the footsteps of his flock that we may find where he feedeth, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon.

For out of Zion shall go forth a law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. The way in which all who love God should walk is pointed out by his law. We are not to do as we feel; but as he says. If our own impulse and feelings were a safe and sufficient guide, we would need no other, but it is not so. We cannot be his disciples except we do whatsoever he has commanded us. The only rule for our faith and

practice is found in his law which emanates from his throne in Zion. Not from the traditions of men; for they make void his law. It is not to be obtained from schools of men, but from Zion the school of Christ, where his children are taught by his word and by his Spirit. Neither doth his word proceed from men, who use their own mouths and say, The Lord saith, when he hath not spoken. From Jerusalem alone goeth forth his word, the proclamation of which by his great commission must begin at Jerusalem.

(To be concluded in our next number.)

Middletown, N. Y.,
September 1, 1864.

OFFICIATING WITHOUT ORDINATION

Dear and Much Esteemed Elder Beebe: In the “Signs of the Times” of the 15th installment I notice a letter over the signature of “J. Soady” in which he desires to call your attention to a tour from which he had just returned, made among the Old School Baptists of Ekfrid, C.W. He paints his route in glowing colors all the way till he arrives at his destination in Ekfrid; also what occurred between himself and John Butler, of whom I wrote you when he (Butler) came among us. From said letter you may not understand why he mentions the Old School Baptists there and J. Butler administering the ordinance and preaching in a school house. To give explanation and clear up the mystery are the reasons of my writing you this communication.

The said John Butler, an Englishman, came to Canada and united with the New School Baptists, in London, C.W. He is by trade a tailor. He is a gifted and well read man. He traveled and preached in this and the adjoining county. There is in this neighborhood a New School Baptist church, and having no preacher at that time, they hired him for a year. Some of our members heard him preach and recommended him to the rest. He came and preached for us one day, suited us well; and finding that he and the New School could not agree, he left them and desired to unite with us. Some amongst us were urgent to receive him. He came before the church, and to our astonishment, he could not relate one word of the dealings of God with his soul. Some of the church were for rejecting him; others believed that he could not preach such sound doctrine without experience, although he could not give any verbal relation of it. Indeed, I was willing to receive him myself, believing that he would be a help to me in the gospel in my declining years. So he was received and preached amongst us several years. His residence being in London, he preached more frequently to the Lobo branch of the church. The church contributed to his family support, and when he got established he preached doctrine foreign to us, and to the views we entertain of scripture. Ascertaining that some found fault he, on a Lord’s day, in the meeting house to a large audience, broke out violently against those who opposed him, calling them “Reprobates, proud persecutors, that they would be damned and doubly damned if they rejected the doctrine which he preached.” We called him to account; had several meetings respecting the matter, but he remained inexorable. The Lobo branch of the church would resign if Butler was

not excluded. He, however, resigned himself, and began to preach in said school house. None of the church members followed him, He announced some time ago that he would on such a day administer the ordinance of baptism, It appears that Butler sent for this Soady, and he (Butler) baptized Mrs. Gibbs, as stated in Soady's letter. Three persons named Rawles and Gibbs (two English Baptists, and Mrs. Gibbs) compose his church. Butler was never ordained, although he solemnly administers the holy ordinances of the gospel. He intimated to me once whether Elder Beebe would ordain him. I told him he might if we desired him. He is naturally a talented person, but it is to be feared not the person we took him to be, proving so in many things since he left us. I highly disapprove of J. Soady's letter. It is a mere bombast. The branch of the Thames is a cove where I baptized two women when you were with us in 1857. "Going from house to house, eating and drinking with gladness of heart," would remind a person of a second Pentecost. These statements I well know are all false. You would confer a favor by giving your views, at your earliest opportunity, of any officiating (like Butler) without ordination.

Ever faithfully yours,
Thomas McColl.
Wallacetown, C.W.
July 23, 1864.

Reply to Brother Thomas McColl:

The order of the gospel of Christ is, in the estimation of all regular Old School Baptists, of equally vital importance with that of the doctrine held and contended for, and of that order no portion or point is more essential than that which relates to the gospel ministry. The character, standing, gifts and qualifications of the ministers of Christ are defined by the apostles with more exactness than those of any other members of the household of faith; and where these characteristics, gifts and qualifications are lacking the church of God is forbidden to recognize any one, under any circumstances, in that capacity. In I Timothy 3:2-7, and Titus 1:5-9, the indispensable marks of an approved minister of the Lord Jesus are distinctly and clearly drawn, and those who possess these qualifications Paul instructs and authorizes Titus to *ordain* in every city. And the reasons assigned for these explicit rules are stated in Titus 1:10,11. "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake." An unruly person, in a religious sense, is one who is not governed by the rules of the gospel; one who repudiates the rules and order which Christ and his apostles have given for the government of the house of God. Those who take their own course irrespective of the authority of Christ in his church are denounced as unruly, and their preaching is *vain-talking*; vain because it is not sanctioned by the word and spirit of the Lord, and therefore shall not profit God's people. Their mouths must be stopped in the church of God by a faithful adherence to the divine rule, which will reject them from the countenance and fellowship of all orderly churches and Christians. Such unruly talkers and deceivers, while their labors are vain in building up the church or edifying the saints, may and do exert a powerful influence in subverting whole houses and teaching things which they ought not. And their influence is pernicious, for it causes divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine or rules which the church of Christ has received. Hence, they are to be marked and avoided by all orderly Christians. See Romans 16:17. The gospel or New Testament rule to be observed in receiving and recognizing ministers, as understood and practiced by our Old Order of Baptists, is first: They must be regularly admitted to fellowship and membership in the church. By giving a satisfactory evidence that

they are born of the Spirit and taught of God, then on profession of their faith in Christ duly baptized by a gospel administrator, who at the time of administering the ordinance is himself sustained by the authority and fellowship of a gospel church. Christian baptism is the first command binding on believers, and by obedience to this command they acknowledge: and profess allegiance to Christ as the Head of the church and King of saints. It would be just as unruly or disorderly for a man to preach before being baptized as to receive the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper before baptism. The rule given by Christ to the church is a perfect rule, and we must be governed by it or we are unruly; and that rule applies to the order of our obedience as well as the duties which it requires. Before Aaron and his sons could officiate in the priest's office they were required to be washed, anointed and clothed in their priestly garments. See Exodus 28 and 29. Such was the *rule*, and it would have been *unruly* and *vain* if they had presumed to approach the altar without first observing the rule. "And no man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron (Hebrews 5:4)." "Follow me," saith the Redeemer, and he, in setting the example, was baptized before he began his public ministry, And when Saul was informed of his calling to the gospel ministry, it was said to him; "The God of thy fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord (Acts 22:14-16)." See Also Chapter 9. Hence, we hold that no unbaptized man, even though we knew him to be a subject of grace, is to be recognized as a gospel minister nor allowed to preach in our churches while living in disobedience and neglect of this institution. Nor are any to be admitted to membership in the church only by baptism and profession of faith, and consequently they are not entitled to any church privileges until regularly admitted to fellowship and recognized as members.

Secondly, The character, qualifications and gifts of a member who is to be recognized as a gospel minister is to be judged by the church. Christ has warned his disciples to beware of men who come to them in sheep's clothing, etc. And the apostle John commands to "Try the spirits whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world (I John 4:1)." When duly tried by the church and tested by the rule (I John 4:6), and satisfactory evidence obtained that they are of God, they are to be allowed to exercise their gifts in the church, supported by the fellowship of the church, as the candle is supported by the candlestick. And when sufficiently proved, they are to be solemnly set apart to the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them according to Acts 13:1-3. This was the apostolic order, and we have the apostles for our example. None are qualified to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper until they have been set apart by fasting and prayer, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. It is as essential that the apostolic form be observed in the ordination of ministers as in the baptism of converts, that disorder and confusion may be avoided. All things should be done decently and in order. There is an order to be observed in the house of God, and all who repudiate that order are unruly, disorderly, and their course tends to confusion.

We, as Old School or Apostolic Baptists, hold that baptism, to be valid, must be administered to a believer by a regular ordained Elder, who at the time of administering is recognized as such, and sustained by the fellowship of the church of Christ. The administrator acts as a servant of Christ, and by his will as a servant of the church. Those therefore who have been immersed irregularly by unqualified persons are still regarded by orderly Baptists as unbaptized. Even if a man has been ordained and formerly stood in the fellowship of the church of God, if when administering the ordinance he is not sustained by the fellowship of the church, his administration is invalid and null, and the candidate must be regularly admitted to fellowship and baptism by an orderly church and baptized by a competent

administrator before he or she can be recognized as a member of the church, or entitled to the privileges and fellowship of the church.

We have written the foregoing in reply to the enquiry of Elder McColl on the questions submitted to us by him. Of the circumstances named by him, we of course leave the church who has knowledge of all the circumstances of the case to judge, and hope they may judge in the fear of the Lord, and according to his word, and act accordingly. “Blessed are they who do his (Christ’s) commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (Revelation 22:14,15).” None may enter the church or city of God but by her gates, and in obedience to the commandments of Christ her King, nor have any a right to her peculiar privileges but such as do his commandments. Her stakes cannot be moved, nor can her cords be broken. And those who are without her gates God will judge. May we observe strictly all her landmarks and keep within her sacred walls. Any irregularities in regard to her order or institutions will produce confusion and disorder, and involve the saints in trouble. All who appreciate her privileges will cheerfully observe her order. They will enter in by her gates and not attempt to climb up some other way, lest they be regarded as thieves and robbers. (See John 10:1.)

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1864.

ISAIAH 2:2-4 (Concluded)

And he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people. He who is thus to judge the nations and rebuke the people can be none other than the Lord, whose law shall go forth from Zion and his word from Jerusalem. He is the king who shall reign in righteousness, whose princes shall rule in judgment. His name is “Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever.” The government shall be upon his shoulder; He shall reign King of kings and Lord of lords. All power in heaven and in earth is given unto him; and he shall rule in the midst of his enemies. The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces as a potters vessel. (Psalm 2:8,9; Revelation 2:26,27.) “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31,32).” Not only shall he judge among the nations, and decide who are and who are not his people; but he will judge of their standing, state and condition, plucking up, casting down, and utterly destroying such as despise and disown his government and oppress his people. He will judge when their cup of wickedness is full; and when to launch the bolts of his wrath for their extinction. He will judge and arbitrate their disputes, and decide all their controversies; and turn the wicked into hell with the nations that forget God. But in a

special manner shall he judge his people, and avenge them of their adversaries. Vengeance belongs to him; he will repay.

And shall rebuke many people. And at his rebuke, the nations shall melt like wax before the flame. “The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth (Psalm 46:6-10).”

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. By comparing this text with Micah 4, in which the prophecy is given in almost the same words; and from the context of the latter, we infer that this part of the prediction relates to the people of God under the peaceful reign of Christ, and when all nations of Jew and Gentiles, endowed by the spirit of his holy religion, should display the meekness and temper of the Lamb, and exemplify the spirit of the angel’s song, “Peace on earth, and good will towards men.” For notwithstanding the malicious and blood-thirsty spirit of the nations of the earth, when the mountain of the Lord’s house was established in the top of the mountains; or when the gospel church was organized, and the continuance and prevalence of that spirit waxing worse and worse, from that period to the present, it is nevertheless true that those who have come into the kingdom and under the government of Christ have ceased to learn carnal war. The spiritual nature of the kingdom, the purity of her laws, and the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all her subjects forbids that Christians should fight, or shed the blood of their fellow men. It is demonstrated in the scriptures that nearly all the blood that has ever stained the earth has been shed by those who have professed to fight by the direction and authority of God. But it is equally true that all the human blood that has ever been shed under a religious pretense has been shed by those who not only are not the subjects of Christ; but by those who are the most violent and deadly enemies to Christ and his people, with perhaps the exception of what was shed by Peter when he cut off the ear of a servant of the high priest, for which he was severely rebuked by his Lord and Master. How is it possible for one possessing the spirit of him who went about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, raising the dead, and who even laid down his life for the salvation of his enemies, who when he was reviled, reviled not again; to assault a fellow man with intent to kill, plunder or injure him; when it is positively declared that if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. “And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:27).” Can any man follow Jesus by going in an opposite direction from that in which he walked? In short: can we stir up the spirit of discord, strife, malice, and revenge, can we stain our hands in the blood of our fellow men and in so doing follow him who commands us to love our enemies, and do good to those who despitefully use and persecute us? Let all who profess to be the disciples of Jesus think seriously on these inquiries, and answer each to his God.

However many there may be who profess godliness while their feet are swift to shed blood; we are compelled to believe “there is no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:18),” even though they are so much infatuated as to believe they do God service by the indulgence of their cruel passions.

In the change wrought by grace in the hearts of God’s people, they lay aside all malice and convert their instruments of war into implements of husbandry; their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and apply their physical and mental powers to the legitimate and original purposes for which they were given, to till the earth and procure bread by the sweat of their face.

Micah says, “They shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.” How desirable is such a state of things. Each under his own vine or fig tree, enjoying a peaceable possession of his own labor; without invading the conceded equal rights of others, or fearing any aggression of his own rights. But especially in regard to their religious rights and privileges; for the prophet predicts that in the prevalence of this state of things, as dictated by the spirit of the gospel, and under the reign of Christ as the Prince of Peace, that “All people will walk, every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.” Thus clearly showing that the people of the Living God, while enjoying for themselves the inestimable privilege of worshipping their God without molestation, are not at liberty to deny the same liberty of conscience to their fellow men; who walk every one in the name of his god. The saints having neither the right nor the desire to compel others are therefore not the keepers of other men’s consciences. If they were responsible for the sins of others, and were authorized to dictate the religion of others in the manner that Cain attempted to force his religion on Abel, or old Nebuchadnezzar his on the Hebrew children, or the papists upon non-conformists in the dark ages, or the New England Puritans upon the rest of mankind in general, then they would require to retain their swords and spears, racks and dungeons.

In the third chapter of Micah, the heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel who abhor judgment and pervert all equity, are charged with building up Zion *with blood*, and Jerusalem with iniquity. In doing these abominations, “The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money. Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.” How fully has this state of things been realized, not only in the last days of national Israel, but also in those of these last days, in which those of the modern anti-christ have assumed a supervision of ecclesiastical matters. For Peter predicted that, as there were false prophets among the people of Israel, *even*, or exactly so, there should be false teachers among those who profess to be the church under the gospel dispensation, “who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (II Peter 2:1-3).”

But God will not leave himself without witnesses. Those of the nations redeemed from this delusion shall cease to build up Zion with blood; with cruelty and lies, and in the Mountain of the Lord’s house, they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and under the peaceful government of our Lord, they shall learn war no more. “Happy is that people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord (Psalm 144:15).”

Middletown, N. Y.,
September 15, 1864.

LUKE 11:9, 10

Brother Beebe: I am an enquirer after the right way. Will you please give me your views on Luke 11:9,10, “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it

shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.”

Yours, in hope of eternal life,
J.C. L. Miller.

Reply: The gracious encouragement given in this text to pray, and the assurance of the answer of prayer, is too plainly written to require much labor or argument by way of explanation. Yet plainly as the subject is stated to the enlightened child of God who honestly enquires after, and desires to know and walk in the truth as it is in Jesus, it is like all other scriptures, dark and obscure to the natural man who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: and even the saints may be perplexed by the perversions of ignorant or designing men who handle the sacred word of God deceitfully, and darken counsel by words without knowledge. Those who, in defiance of heaven and contradiction of the express testimony of the scriptures, preach a conditional and work-mongrel doctrine of offers and proffers of grace, indiscriminately made to all mankind, often repeat the text under consideration as though it had been addressed alike to all, and represent the Savior as saying to carnal, graceless and dead sinners that they may have eternal salvation by asking for it; that the Lord has made the terms so easy as to bring the salvation of sinners within the reach of all men, and so cheap that all may secure by purchase an interest in the kingdom of God. But, if such a theory were true, would not salvation be attainable by works? If the sinner must do something to secure his salvation, however little that something may be, or however easily performed, the doing of it would be an indispensable condition, and his salvation or damnation would rest on his compliance with the terms; but such we know is not the case; for God has said of all who are saved, “And their salvation is of me, saith the Lord.” “By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.” If salvation be of God, it is not of men; and if by grace, then it is not of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. The apostle informs us that all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, Yea, and in him, Amen, to the glory of God by us. This being the case, to be interested in them, we must be in Christ as the branch is in the Vine. There are no gospel promises out of Christ, but unto the members of the body of Christ, who were chosen of God in him before the foundation of the world, are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1:4). For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

In the chapter from which our subject is taken, one of his disciples said unto him, “Lord, teach us to pray,” etc. “And he said unto *them*,” that is, to his disciples, one of whom had asked for this instruction, “When thou prayest, say, Our Father,” etc. None but the children of God can, in truth, call God their Father. If he is indeed our Father, it is because our spiritual, immortal or eternal life, was with him from everlasting, and because he hath of his own will begotten us by the *word* of his power; and we are consequently born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word God, which liveth and abideth forever. To such, and only to such, gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These are the children of God, and God is their Father. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8:14).” “Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his (Romans 8:9).” To be a son or child of God, and entitled to the privilege of calling God our Father is to be begotten and born of God, and to possess the Spirit of Christ; and but by that Spirit, and through that Christ alone can any man have access to God; for Jesus expressly declares, “No man can come unto the Father, but by me.” All his children are taught of God and every one that is taught of God cometh to Christ; while no man cometh unto Christ, except his Father which sent him

draw them. It is, therefore, preposterous to pretend that Jesus was teaching any others to pray, but such as were by a spiritual birth qualified to worship God in Spirit and in truth, by praying with the Spirit and with the understanding also; for God is a spirit and can only be approached by the spirit, through Christ Jesus our Lord. We know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. To such as are born of God, led by the Spirit of God, and are followers of Christ is the distinguishing appellation, *disciple* of Christ given in the scriptures, for except we obey and follow him we cannot be his disciples, but “Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” To his disciples Jesus said,

And I say unto you. Are any so dull as to believe that this form of words means that he saith this to all mankind? Can these words without violence be applied to those to whom he had said, Ye shall seek me, and ye shall not find me, and ye shall die in your sins, etc.? “I say,” tis Jesus speaks. It is the voice of him who called the world into being, who speaks the word and it stands fast; who commands and it is done. There is power and majesty, grace and salvation in his word, for he says, “The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life.” And when the word goes forth out of his mouth, it shall not return to him void of the word whereunto he hath sent it. Nor can his word miscarry. What he says to you does not mean somebody else. Well, what does he here say to his disciples? “Ask, and it shall be given you.” The disciple in *asking*, virtually acknowledges his need of that for which he asks, and his dependence of God to supply his needs. He acknowledges that the name of Father is a hallowed, or consecrated name expressive of vital relationship, and that he has confidence in his Father which is in heaven, that he is able and willing to supply all that he is led by the spirit of prayer to ask for. And the faith of the Son of God in the heart of the disciples lays hold of the blessed assurance that what he is so led to ask for shall be given to him. Not that all that our fleshy lusts may desire or prompt us to ask for is pledged to us in this sacred text; for we sometimes ask amiss, for things to consume upon our lusts, and then we ask and we receive not. God in great mercy to us withholds such things as would be injurious to us. But what we are taught by Christ to ask, in spirit and manner and form as expressed in the prayer in the context, from the second to the fifth verse of this chapter, in the spirit of that submission which says, thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. When looking to God, day by day for daily supplies of temporal and spiritual support and subsistence, and when cherishing the same spirit of forgiveness to our enemies that we ask God to bestow on us. “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespass. *But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses* (Mark 11:25-26).” This last quoted scripture may explain to us why many of our prayers are shut out; especially when we are desiring that God should crush our enemies, and lavish his gifts on us and on our friends. “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, *and pray for them which spitefully use you and persecute you:* That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: etc. (Matthew 5:44-45).” If God forgives us, only as we forgive those who trespass against us, what will be our fate? Do we mark iniquity against our neighbor, brother or fellow being, and ask God to blot out our transgressions? How vain are such prayers! Do we ask God to be merciful to our unrighteousness and remember our iniquities no more? Then let us not seek revenge on those we deem to be our foes. The word and spirit of our God must teach us what to ask for, how to ask, and in what spirit and in what name to approach our heart-searching and rein-trying God, and thus directed we shall ask, and God will hear, and we shall receive all that we ask for, for the Spirit of truth and holiness will not lead us to pray for any things that God will withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Seek, and ye shall find. Seeking not only implies a desire to find a cherished treasure, but also such qualifications as blind or dead men do not possess. To seek is to look or to search for something that is hidden; and in order to seek we must have life, and sight, but until quickened by the Spirit we are both dead in sins, and blind to everything of a spiritual nature. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and that is the very first thing the children of God are commanded to seek for. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things (temporal mercies) shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:33).” All that we require to seek is embraced in the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God. These we need, for under no other government can we be happy or at home, and in no other righteousness can we be holy and acceptable to God. But as the Kingdom of God is spiritual, the natural man cannot see it, or receive it; for it is only spiritually discerned. In that blessed kingdom we should be but aliens and strangers unless qualified for fellow-citizenship with the saints, by the righteousness of God. To seek for some popular religious establishment, called a church, and our own righteousness, requires no new birth, no circumcision of heart, of ears, or of eyes; for the world will recognize its own. But to seek successfully the Kingdom over which the blessed Jesus presides, and the flaming righteousness of God, without which we can in no wise be saved, requires that we shall be of him in Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. This familiar figure presents the prayers of the saints, as knocking at Mercy’s door. As the weary traveler would gain admittance in the house for rest, food and comfort approaches the door, and knocks for admittance, and as the child would come in to his father’s house and mingle with the children, and with them participate in the provisions and comforts of the family, so the heaven-born child of God seeks for the church of God, and approaching the door of the Sheepfold, (for he would not climb up some other way) he knocks, or gives the signal; saying perhaps in the language of the psalmist, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” This kind of knocking never fails to receive a happy response, “Come in thou blessed of the Lord.” “Why tarry thou, arise and be baptized,” etc. Or if we apply this figure to our knocking at Mercy’s door, the result is certain, for God himself has promised to open the door to all such. This is attested by all the inmates of the house of God. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What child of God has ever been turned away empty when asking supplies at the throne of Grace, with the spirit and with the understanding, and in the name of Jesus? Not even Jonah when in the belly of hell, was unsuccessful in seeking his God with his face turned towards the holy temple at Jerusalem. And when we knock at the door of Mercy, how consoling is the assurance, given in the text, “To him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

“Enough, my gracious God,
Let faith triumphant cry,
My heart can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die.”

The subject affords great consolation to the humble, tried and trembling children of God, who feel that they have nothing in their hands to bring as an oblation or offering to God, to procure his favor, but unworthy to pronounce his sacred name. Hungry, thirsting, naked, destitute and helpless, Jesus bids them come; approach his mercy seat, come boldly to the throne of grace, to ask for mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.

“Poor tempest-tossed soul, be still,
My promis’d grace receive.
‘Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.”

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1864.

MARK 15:38

Brother Beebe: The Lord has laid his afflicting hand upon me in removing my companion, and I am left to struggle through this unfriendly world alone. But his promise is, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.” I have witnessed the faithfulness of this assurance; for he has been a present help in time of need; but I feel very unworthy of his mercy. Dear Brother, all the preaching I have is through the “Signs of the Times.” I wish you would favor me with a short sermon on Mark 15:38. “And the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.” I requested your views on a passage of scripture last year, but did not receive them. Brother Beebe, pray for me, that I may be resigned to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

Elizabeth Brice.
Junius, N.Y.
March 13, 1864.

Reply: We have many more applications made to us for our views on the scriptures than we are able to comply with, sometimes because we have no satisfactory views to present, and sometimes for want of time to write, or space to insert such views as we have. We feel a pleasure however in receiving the applications of those who are searching after the truth, and in doing the best we can to edify and enlighten our readers to the extent of such ability as the Lord may bestow on us; and truly, without him we can do nothing.

The subject proposed by sister Brice for consideration is full of solemn and thrilling interest to all who hope for salvation through the atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The miracles wrought by our Savior in the days of his flesh gave unquestionable outward demonstration of his Messiahship; as Nicodemus frankly acknowledged, “We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him (John 3:2).” So also the amazing display of divine power in the convulsion of nature when Jesus was crucified caused even his murderers to cry out in astonishment, “Surely this was the Son of God.” The quaking earth, the rending rocks, the opening graves, the rising dead, the darkened skies, as well as the rending veil; appealed most irresistibly to the intelligence of mankind, in vindication of the divine character and commission of the Redeemer. While the faith of the children of God looks not on the things which are seen, but on things which are not seen; the credentials of the Messiahship of the Son of God, to the world lying in wickedness, were made tangible to the natural intellect of men who are destitute of the vital principle of faith by outward and visible things. The faith of those who have the faith of the Son of God does not live on the visible things which are seen and comprehended by natural men, but they by that faith endure as seeing him

who is invisible (Hebrews 11:27). Jews, legalists, and Arminians require a sign, or visible evidences; but the faith of the Son of God is to all who possess it the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. As an exposure of the deep depravity of fallen man, the miracles were performed that their true state and condition might be demonstrated. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:24). "That is, they would have had no exposure or conviction of their sins; but now they have no cloak for their sin.

It is worthy of our serious reflection that Christ frequently, in his contentions with the unbelieving Jews, referred to the demonstration that should be given of his identity as the Son of God when he should be put to death; as, for instance in John 8:28, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he," etc. This saying was so fully verified that they were constrained to acknowledge: "This was the Son of God."

But among the fearfully grand and convincing evidences given at his crucifixion, or when he was lifted up, we are called now to consider that of the veil being then and there rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Without any reference to the sacred character or figurative significance of the veil, the remarkable phenomena of the parting, rending or separation of the veil, by an unseen power was of itself astounding, and the mystery was deemed worthy of classification with the rending of the rocks, opening of the graves, rising of the dead, and darkening of the mid day. But we are persuaded that there is in each of these wonderful displays of divine power a lesson of spiritual instruction to the children of God, far, infinitely far, beyond what filled the hearts of the carnal Jews and Romans with such consternation and fear.

The temple was itself a divinely recognized emblem of the House or church of the living God; and all its parts were designed to represent some corresponding part, place or thing of or in the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. While the darkness, which prevailed from the sixth to the ninth hour, set forth the eclipse of the Sun of Righteousness, when Jesus bowed his head in death and entered the dark dominion of death and the grave, the opened graves and rising dead showed the bringing of life and immortality to light; the rending rocks, the breaking up of the legal dispensation; the abolition of death and destruction of him that had the power of death, so the rending of the veil signified the removal of the wall of partition which had concealed the most holy place from the view of the temple worshipers. In the epistle to the Hebrews, a description of the temple is given, and the signification of the several departments. At the ninth chapter we read, "Then verily the first covenant [that of the old dispensation] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands,

that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (Hebrews 9.1-11).” From what is here presented explanatory of the figurative design of the first and second veils of the temple, we learn that the veils were designed to separate, first the outer court worshipers from the holy place consecrated within the first veil for the priests of Israel to perform the *divine service, of the worldly sanctuary*. But within the second tabernacle, curtain or veil, was concealed from the gaze of the people the most holy place. None but the high priest, and even he not without sacrificial blood, was allowed on pain of instant death to go within this veil; and that but once a year, in consecrated garments, with hallowed blood, bearing the names of the tribes for whom he officiated engraved on his breast-plate, and with golden bells between the pomegranates of his garments, to sound while he appeared before the mercyseat, and between the cherubims of glory, to signify that he lived to represent and intercede for them within the veil. Thus signifying that the way into this holy place was not as yet made manifest. The first veil or tabernacle must first be fulfilled in all its jots and tittles before the way into the glories of the gospel could be made manifest. But in Hebrews 10:8,9, we read, “He saith, Sacrifice and offerings and burnt offerings, and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which were offered by the law. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

By the offering of this one sacrifice, which was accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ at the time when the veil was rent, the obstacle which concealed the way of life and salvation from our view, was effectually removed, and the intervening veil being rent in twain from the top to the bottom, all the glory which it had for ages concealed was at once made manifest. The Ark of God appeared, the Mercyseat was clearly seen, the cherubims of glory, with all the consecrated furniture of the holiest of holies is no longer hidden from our faith. Now in the gospel, the veil of the covering which was over all flesh is taken away, except from those who still read Moses, or look to the law, or to their own legal works for acceptance with God; for to all such the veil still remains to this day untaken away. But all those who have had a view by faith of their crucified Lord, and have felt the sovereign efficacy of his atoning blood, and are clothed in his spotless righteousness, can say with the spouse, “The keepers of the walls took away my veil from me,” and they all with open face, (having the veil removed) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. The impending veil removed, life and immortality is brought to light, the heavenly Jerusalem appears, the king of glory mounts his mediatorial throne, death is destroyed, hell is vanquished, Christ is victorious, the church of God is safe. Only through the death of Christ could these triumphs be achieved; it was therefore meet that the veil should be rent, and the way into the most holy disclosed, when Jesus put away the sins of his people by the sacrifice of himself. By himself Jesus enters the holy place not made with hands, even into heaven itself, and having obtained eternal redemption for all his members: they with his dead body arise; for he hath raised them up together, and made them to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The faith that now beholds the sacrifice of Calvary, looks also within the veil; and reads the title clear to mansions in the skies.

This mystic veil was not rent from the bottom to the top; for the work did not begin on earth: it was not performed by us: but it was rent from the top to the bottom.

'Tis thy own work, Almighty God,
And wondrous in our eyes.

(To be continued)

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1864.

ABSENCE OF THE EDITOR

Owing to the absence of the editor, who is on a tour to the London Tract and Salisbury meetings, the editorial commenced in our last issue will not be continued in this, but, providence permitting, it will be in our next.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 1, 1864.

MARK 15:38 (Concluded)

“And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom (Mark 15:38).”

In addition to what we have written on the figurative import of the veil of the temple, and its being rent in sunder, we will offer a few thoughts in regard to its application directly to the sacred person of our divine mediator. The most profound and glorious mystery presented in the whole volume of inspired wisdom and truth is that of God manifested in the flesh. And so vitally important and fundamental is this mystery that the apostle John has denounced as anti-christian every spirit that denieth that Christ is come in the flesh; while Paul, by the same spirit, affirms that “Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up unto glory.

The fleshly body of our Redeemer, which was made of a woman, and made under the law, is very appropriately called in scripture a veil, or tabernacle, within which dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The eternal Father, with all his attributes and perfections, was embodied in him, and in him so completely hidden that no man can come unto the Father but by him. While he is in the Father, the Father is also in him, and so entirely so that all who come unto God by him must come by and through the new and living way which God has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. That flesh in which the Godhead dwelt, like the curtains of a tabernacle, concealed from human perception all the glory of the invisible God; and he was only seen in the fashion of a man and in the form of a servant. His flesh veiled the glory of his eternal Godhead from human scrutiny. Neither Jews nor Gentiles could see any beauty in him to admire or to attract. To men he was as a root out of dry

ground; and we hid, as it were, our face from him. Men could see his fleshly person as the Israelites could see the external curtains of the tabernacle in the wilderness, or the veil in the temple intervening between them and the ark, the mercy seat and the cherubims of glory. Men knew him, or supposed that they knew him, as the son of the carpenter; and regarded him as a despised Nazarene. But no man knew him in his true character save those to whom he was revealed by the Father. "Whom say men that I am?" They entertained a variety of opinions; but none of them the right. "But whom say ye that I am?" was demanded of the disciples, from whom the veil had been removed. Simon Peter declared the faith of the saints correctly, but he had not learned it of flesh and blood, but it was revealed to him by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the veil of the temple then pointed to the flesh of the Son of man, and that veil concealed the glory of the holiest place of all from the outer court worshipers, so the flesh of Christ conceals from the understanding of all natural men the light of immortality which he alone hath; for he is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, whom no man hath seen nor can see, whom no man can approach unto. Indeed it was not lawful for any to look within the veil while it remained, only the high priest, even so the law of God forbids a revelation of the unsearchable riches of Christ, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, to any of the sons of man until all the requisitions of the law are fulfilled, and the veil lawfully removed. In applying the rending of the veil to the redemption of the children of God, we shall see that as the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom so the letter and the spirituality of the law of God so far as it related to the family of God were separated. The righteousness of the law was fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; while as a law of commandments, having dominion over God's people it was taken out of the way, and as a separating wall or partition, it was no longer to obscure the way of life and salvation from the heirs of immortality. The trembling, guilt-stricken Israelite conscious of his uncleanness, with his hand upon his mouth, dared not to look within the veil. He knew full well the terror of the law. And when Moses, as the bearer of the holy law, came down the mountain from the presence of God, the carnal tribes could not steadfastly look on his face for it shined with insufferable glory. But when God removes the veil of the covering which was upon all flesh, it is by the presentation of a new and living way into the most holy place. 'Twas death to the carnal Israelite to look within the veil. But the way into the holiest of all is in the gospel found to be a new and *living way*. Not only is Christ as the way a living Christ; but those who by and through him approach unto God, instead of death are delivered from death, quickened and made alive, and come boldly to the throne of grace. They draw nigh unto God, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith by this new and living way which God has consecrated for them through the veil, that is his flesh. The rending of the flesh of the Son of God has opened the way of life and salvation for all who come unto God by him. Neither can any other than those for whom he was pierced be saved in this way; for it is *consecrated*, set apart, and appropriated to them alone who shall be the heirs of salvation. But it is a blessed thought that this consecration of the way to God by Christ includes all who feel their need of just such a Savior, and truly desire to be saved in and through this consecrated way; while all who look for salvation or access to God by any other way will find that in the end of their way are the ways of death.

This is a *new*, as well as a living and consecrated way. Not new to God; for known unto him are all his works from the beginning. But it is *new*, first, in distinction from the ceremonial law; in which carnal men who were born in Abraham's house, or bought with his money looked for remission of sins and acceptance with God by the deeds of the law, and through the flesh and blood of victims which were offered continually on Jewish altars. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God. The carnal sons of Jacob who had never known the law

only in its letter, had no idea of any other way to God, or to draw nigh unto God than through the blood of bulls, goats, heifers and the flesh of such offerings as they were presenting; therefore the way through the veil of his flesh, who was made flesh and dwelt among us was new, opening a way to God and into the holiest of all which the law could not present, and that was never made manifest while as yet the old tabernacle remained.

Secondly. In an experimental sense; for those who come unto God in this way never had any conception of this way until it was revealed to them. Hence when by the light of the quickening spirit of God they see the purity of the law which, as a dark and gloomy veil is upon them, they try to approach God by their prayers, tears, reformations, and resolutions, and failing to advance they sink in hopeless despair, give up all for lost; and verily think that even God cannot save them without tarnishing his justice; but when this living way is revealed to them, it is altogether new. A new light from the eternal throne of God reveals it; and a new life implanted in their hearts perceives it, and a new faith, as the fruit of that new life lays hold firmly upon it, they find themselves brought to God in this new, living, consecrated way. They are in Christ, and Christ is in God. They are one with Christ as Christ is one with the Father.

But, our sister may ask, how is this to be understood as being through his flesh. As we are identified with Christ by receiving of his fullness and grace for grace, identified with him in that spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father and was given to us in the Son, so he has fully identified himself with us in taking on him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." The relationship is reciprocal; he takes on him the seed of Abraham, and imparts to them that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested. In giving to us this immortal life, he bestows on us the righteousness of God, without which we can not be saved; and in taking on him our flesh he takes on him our infirmities, carries our sorrows, bears our griefs, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Our flesh is his flesh, and he is not ashamed to call us brethren; and within his flesh is life, and the life is the light of men; the life and immortality of the body, the church. Through this relationship the consecrated way is opened. The highway is here and the way, and it is the way of holiness; no lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; for it is consecrated through his flesh for the wayfaring man; though fools shall not err therein. By this way all the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with joy upon their head, and sorrowing and sighing shall flee away. This immortality or life of God, which Christ is to the body, his Church, shall triumph over and finally swallow up the mortality of the seed of Abraham, and death shall be abolished, and these mortal members shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying which is written shall be brought to pass, that death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but, thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1864.

ROMANS 13:1, 2

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation (Romans 13:1,2).”

This solemn admonition was given by the divinely inspired apostle “to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints (Romans 1:7)” and we presume all who fear the Lord will admit that it also applies to the same description of the people in all places and throughout all time; and from the fearful declaration that “they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation,” we are impressed with the terrible magnitude of the admonition. Perhaps there has never been a time when a clear and scriptural understanding of these words was more greatly needed by the people of God than the present. There is certainly at this time much diversity of sentiment, arising probably from a reprehensible carelessness in reading and lack of serious investigation of the subject. We propose in this article to make a careful examination of the text, and we ask of our readers to adopt our conclusions only as far as they are sustained by the words and spirit of our God.

First. What are the higher powers which God has ordained, and to which every soul is required to be in subjection on pain of damnation? Webster gives to the word *power* no less than twenty-five distinct definitions, many of which are totally inapplicable to the manifest meaning of the word as used in our text, but among his definitions is that of authority to rule or govern, which is evidently the sense in which the word is used by our apostle. Accepting this definition as clearly demonstrated by the context, we pass to enquire:

Secondly, for the source of all legitimate authority to bear rule, sway or government over the children of men. The popular theory of the wise and learned of our day is that all power to rule is derived from the people ruled. This may be so in all republican governments; for it is upon this theory that all such governments are based, but the popular sentiment, “*Vox populi, vox Dei,*” is not in harmony with our text. The voice of the people is not the voice of God, it is frequently the very reverse. Even the people of Israel in the wilderness murmured against the Lord, and against Moses, and at Sinai entreated that they might hear his voice no more. The apostle John says, “We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” According to our text there is no power, that is, no authority but of God. The inspired apostles recognized no authority, civil or ecclesiastical, but of God. God is the only source of legitimate power to govern. The power to govern must come from God; must be established by an ordinance of God, who only has the right to enthrone or dispose monarchs or rulers according to his sovereign pleasure.

We cannot construe our text as meaning that all the pretensions of men to rule over their fellow-men are sanctioned by ordinance of God, and that every soul is therefore bound or required to submit to their wicked usurpations. By what ordinance of God was Cain authorized to domineer over the conscience and worship of Abel? By what ordinance of God was Nebuchadnezzar authorized to compel men to worship the golden image which he had set up in the plain of Dura? Who gave power to the pagan, or to the papal beasts to reign over the kings of the earth, or to cause all men to worship the beast or to receive his mark? Who gave them a right to drench the earth with the blood of non-conformists? By what express or implied ordinance of God was Oliver Cromwell empowered to enforce his puritanic dogmas by the sword, in Europe, or the descendants of the European puritans in New England, by prisons, tortures and death? If our text will warrant the conclusion that all powers of every kind are to be respected as ordained of God, and to be obeyed implicitly by all men, then were

the apostles themselves guilty of disloyalty in refusing to obey men in authority who had strictly forbidden them to preach Jesus; and the three Hebrew worthies were very wrong in refusing to worship the image which the king of the Chaldeans set up; and Daniel exposed himself to the damnation of our text for refusing to obey the decree of Darius, king of the Medes and Persians. Our revolutionary fathers were by the same rule guilty in rebelling against the king of England.

But it is beyond all successful controversy clear that the admonition in our text relates exclusively to the powers that God has by ordinance established on earth, and all others are by the apostles repudiated as usurpations, and not powers or authorities instituted or approved of God. Christ himself instructed his disciples that they should come in collision with, and be arrested and brought before kings, rulers, and councils in which he would sustain them in their disobedience to such usurpations. We pass to consider

Thirdly. What are the higher powers, or authorities, to which we are commanded to be in subjection? This enquiry can only be satisfactorily answered by reference to the record of what God hath said upon the subject, we will therefore copy from the scriptures some of the ordinances of power and authority which God has instituted on the subject.

It should be observed that the text speaks not only of power, but of powers, as referring to various grades of authority with which he has invested the children of men, so that *every soul* of all the family of mankind has his own superior in power to whom he or she owes allegiance.

The first investment of power or authority from God that the scriptures speak of is recorded in Genesis 1:26, “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth;” also in verse 28, “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over everything that moveth upon the earth.” Here was clearly an ordinance of God giving authority to man over the earth and all the animal creation.

2. In Genesis 3:16, “Unto the woman he said and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” This ordinance of God is very distinctly recognized throughout not only all the Old Testament scriptures, but also in the New Testament, and in the order of the gospel church, wives are admonished in I Peter 3:1,6, “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husband,” etc. “Even as Sara obeyed Abraham calling him lord; whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well.” “That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed (Titus 2:4,5).”

3. The next investment of ruling power is what we call patriarchal, in which the father of every tribe had dominion over his posterity as long as he lived. This ordinance of God is found in the judicial and ceremonial law of Israel, and also in the Sinai covenant, or decalogue; and the apostle brings down this ordinance of God, and incorporates it in the other of the gospel church, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise (Ephesians 6:1,2).”

4. Primigenial power, or authority, was given by an ordinance of God to the first born son in every family over the younger members of the same household, as God said to Cain, “And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him;” that is, over Abel. This law or ordinance was held in force

among the Hebrews, and is still in force in many European states; but we have no mention of it among the rules laid down for the observance of the gospel church.

5. By special enactment of God the relationship of master and servant was instituted and ordained of God. See the prophetic anathema pronounced by Noah on Canaan, the son of Ham, and grand son of Noah. “And he said, cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant (Genesis 9:25-27).” This prediction as fully indicated the servitude of Canaan and his posterity, as it did the blessings of Shem and of Japheth. But in Leviticus 25:44-45, we have a record of the ordinance of God upon the subject in language too plain and unequivocal to be mistaken by intelligent readers of the scriptures. “Both thy bondsmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bond men and bond maids. Moreover the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondsmen forever. But of your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one another with rigor.” Observe, even the children of Israel when they had become poor, and indebted, might be bought and sold, for a limited period, that is, until the next succeeding Jubilee, to satisfy the demands of the creditor. The Israelite, his lands, his wife and children were all legally sold for his debts, but at the appointed Jubilee all were restored; for like the children of God, whose inheritance is secured to them in Christ, so that they cannot be deprived of the possession and enjoyment of it only for a season, it must revert to them at the time of their spiritual Jubilee. Even during the bondage and servitude of the bankrupt Israelite his relationship is not to be obliterated, and his bondage must not be like that of chattled property; for Israelites might not rule one over another with rigor. By an absolute ordinance of God, as clearly written as that of any other ordinance of the Bible, it was ordained that the heathen round about the Hebrews, and the children of the strangers in their midst might be bought, sold, and even ruled with rigor, and transmitted for an inheritance to posterity to be their bondsmen and bondmaids forever. By this ordinance of God the owner of the bondsman or bondmaid is vested with power or authority to rule over them, and to what extent will be seen, “And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money (Exodus 21:20,21).” In the decalogue, in two precepts of the ten, the divine legislator distinctly recognizes the right of property the master or owner has in his man-servant or maid-servant. “But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.” “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s (Exodus 20:10 and 17).” Very many other scriptures in the law and the prophets equally pertinent and confirmatory, may be adducted if required to show that the relationship of master and servant is as clearly an ordinance of God as that of husband and wife, and that such relationship is very distinctly recognized by the apostles in the gospel church, and that the Christian obligation and duty of the servant to obey his master, and the duty of the master to his servants, are fully provided in the laws which govern the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some very modern commentators have said this institution has passed away with the types and shadows of the old dispensation! But not a particle of proof do they, or can they, bring to that effect from the Bible. If it has passed from the law then with it must have also passed away the other precepts of the decalogue. “Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not

kill, thou shalt not commit adultery.” And if it did pass away it must have been re-enacted, for it is as fully embraced in the precepts of the New, as in the Old Testament. “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free (Ephesians 6:5-8).” Inasmuch as this duty is enjoined on the servant by the Lord, he cannot disobey the lawful commands of his master in the flesh, without disobedience to God by whose ordinance he owes this service to his master. “Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ (Colossians 3:20-24).” “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain in godliness: from such withdraw thyself (I Timothy 6:1-5).” What a terrible exemplification we have of what the apostle has here written, in modern abolitionism who by teaching otherwise have stirred up all the evil passions of men of corrupt minds, to strife, envy, railings, and rivers of blood. “Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things (Titus 2:9,10).”

Can any one tell how the servant by his obedience to his master in the flesh is to adorn the doctrine of God his Savior unless that doctrine enjoins on him fidelity and obedience to his master? The whole epistle to Philemon is a confirmation of our position. “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward (I Peter 2:18).” Down to the final overthrow of the beast and the false prophet, as recorded in Revelation 19, the institution shall continue, though rivers of blood may flow for its extinction; for in that day John says, “I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great (Revelation 19:17,18).”

6. The governments of judges, governors, kings and potentates of the earth with every grade of magistracy are institutions of God, but all inferior and subordinate to the government of our Lord Jesus Christ, “For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell (Colossians 1:16-19).”

The duty of the saints in reference to the civil powers of the earth is plainly enjoined in the scriptures especially in the New Testament. First of all they are exhorted to make supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may

lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty (I Timothy 2:1,3). The religion of Christ, like the wisdom that cometh from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy; and the disciples of Jesus are commanded to live, as far as in them lies, peaceably with all men. That they may so live they are exhorted to pray God to govern our governors, rule our rulers, and give us such earthly governments as shall not involve us in strife or subject us to persecution. Paul charged Titus as a minister of Christ to “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men (Titus 3:1,2).” Our allegiance to Christ as King of saints does not release us from any obligation to those who are in authority over us in temporal matters, but it does require, as in our text, that every soul shall be subject to the higher powers. That the laws of Christ do recognize as institutions of God all the various grades of power and authority vested in men, we have shown, and the saints are commanded to respect and obey those powers as rendering obedience to God. They being his ordinances, we cannot disobey them without disobeying God himself. God commands that children shall obey their parents, because the power or authority of the parents is higher than that of the children. Servants, for the same reason, are commanded to obey their masters and to honor them in all things; failing to do so, they rebel against God. Citizens are commanded to obey magistrates, governors, kings, and all who hold higher power, and their neglect to do so is disobedience to God. But in all obedience due from them, they are to remember that there is no power or authority but of God. If, therefore, rulers shall require of the ruled to do what God has forbidden to steal, lie, rob, or commit murder, they are to obey God rather than men; for no man has authority from God to require of their fellow-men what God has forbidden. Should parents command their children to steal, lie or blaspheme, or should masters command their servants to worship idols, or transgress any of the laws of God, they are justified in disobeying such unlawful commands. They are not to recognize, respect or obey any power, authority or dominion that is not of God. Every soul is in subordination to a still higher power. The king or potentate who may occupy the very highest place of power on earth is commanded to be in subjection to the still higher power of God, so that every soul is equally bound to be in subjection to all the powers above him, whether it be the wife, the child, the servant, the citizen, the ruler, the king or potentate.

If kings or earthly rulers could meet the responsibility of their people’s transgressions against God at his bar, then might they be empowered to domineer over their consciences. But God has given them no such power, but holds every individual personally amenable for himself. He has therefore commanded us to render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and to God the things which belong to God.

The most important consideration presented in our text is that, “Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God” and is therefore a transgressor, not only of the authority of men, but also of God’s ordinance. The child who disobeys or dishonors his parents, the servant who disobeys the lawful commands of his master in the flesh, the citizen who is disloyal to the wholesome civil government under which God has cast his lot, is a transgressor of God’s law and shall receive to himself damnation, or as we presume the word may be rendered, condemnation. Men in the exercise of such authority as God has invested them with must be honored and obeyed on pain of condemnation. Their condemnation is not only by the laws of men, but confirmed by the law of God, whose mildest penalty is everlasting damnation.

“For rulers, (they who administer the rule which God has given) are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good and thou shalt have the praise of the same, for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon

him that doeth evil.” The temporal judgments and wrath of God are executed or administered to evil doers by these ministers of God whom he has appointed and empowered for that purpose. “Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also, for they are God’s ministers attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor; owe no man anything but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law (Romans 13:5-8).” No parent, master, king or ruler has a right or power from God to demand, as a minister of God, any more than that which is the fulfilling of the divine law. “For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:9-10).”

In the foregoing we have confined our remarks to the obligations of loyalty in the civil department of governments, omitting for the present to treat upon the subject of ecclesiastical government, the laws and institutions of the house of God, and the obligations of all the children of God to walk in all the ordinances of the gospel kingdom, and to submit to the administration of all the laws of the spiritual kingdom as administered by the apostles and ministers of Christ whom God has authorized to take the oversight of his flock. In our next we will resume the subject.

We have purposely avoided allusions to the present political affairs of this country, not because the subject is inappropriate or unimportant, but from a consciousness of the excited state of the public mind and peculiar sensitiveness manifested too frequently, even by professors of our faith when the divine rule is brought to bear against any prejudice they may have imbibed against some of the institutions of power which God has ordained. We only ask that the article may be candidly examined in the fear of the Lord and in the light of the scriptures of truth, and that all the saints may lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N. Y.
December 1, 1864.

ROMANS 13:1, 2 (Concluded)

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, etc. (Romans 13:1,2).”

In resuming the subject of the subordination enjoined by the apostles upon “every soul,” as we proposed in our last, we will now speak of the principalities in heavenly places; “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold

wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord (Ephesians 3:10,11).” As in our former article we called the attention of our readers to the various institutions of power or authority ordained by God for the punishment of evildoers, and for the protection of the just, in the civil, social and secular department; we propose to devote this article to the powers which be, as institutions of God, for the government of the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the organization of the gospel church as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ every institution of power is of God, as we propose to show, so that none can be disregarded by the saints without disobedience to God, and any claim of power or authority in any department of the church which God has not given, is usurpation, which cannot be respected without disobedience to God. In setting forth these principalities and powers we begin with:

First, The King. Of him Isaiah prophesied saying, “Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment (Isaiah 32:1).” As the “King of Righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is the king of Peace, and Priest to the Most High God,” our Lord Jesus Christ presides over all the affairs of his church and kingdom, the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Savior (Hebrews 7:1-2; I Timothy 1:17). “The only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords (I Timothy 6:15).” His power and regal majesty he received from the Father. “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Hebrews 1:8,9; Psalm 14:6).” “He that sitteth in the heavens” has said, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession (Psalm 2:6-8).” In his assumption of his Mediatorial throne, as preached by Isaiah 61:1-3, his inaugural proclamation is published thus: “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the weak; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.”

Of the perpetuity of his kingdom, dominion or government we are assured that his “kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him (Daniel 7:27).” It is called “The everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:11).” “The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies (Psalm 110:1,2).” “I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations, and the heavens shall praise thy wonders. O Lord, thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.” “Then thou spakest in vision to the Holy One and saidest, I have laid help on one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people, I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him; with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.” “He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation, also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth, my mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven (Psalm 89:26-29).” From

these scriptures we are assured that the government and kingly power shall endure as the days of heaven; he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet (I Corinthians 15:25).

Second. His reigning power embraces all the power of earth and heaven, as he said to his disciples, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18).” This universal and unlimited authority was given him of the Father as he said in that most solemn appeal, when he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee; as thou has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him (John 18:1,2).” His power is not derived from men; but is infinitely superior to all the powers of the earth, “And he hath on his vesture and his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:16).” Hence all earthly principalities and powers are put under him, and he is exalted “Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:21-23).” This unlimited power embraces his power in providence in governing and controlling all things in heaven and earth, and also his power or dominion in, over, and through the church which is his body.

Third. His reigning power over all things to the church embraces his power to redeem, quicken, justify, and glorify all his members; to protect, sustain, deliver and comfort them in all their pilgrimage on earth, and exalt them to their mansions of unfading glory. He alone is endowed with power to reign in, and rule over his body, the church. No other power to legislate is known in his kingdom. All laws in his church, to be valid, must bear his royal seal. Nor are any ordinances to be known or observed in his kingdom but those which he has ordained. The keys of death and hell are in his grasp. He openeth and no man can shut, and shutteth and none can open, and he holds the stars in his right hand, and can at any moment command more than twelve legions of angels to execute the sovereign orders of his throne.

Fourth. In the organization of the gospel kingdom, Christ has given authority to his princes to rule in judgment (Isaiah 32:1). Not to make laws but to *rule in judgment*, that is to interpret his laws, and apply them as the only divinely authorized rule for the government of the subject of his spiritual authority. Jesus said to his apostles, “Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28).” To qualify the apostles for the discharge of this important work, they required a greater amount of power than that which was given to their brethren. To them the King gave the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, that whatsoever they bound on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever they loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven. By the keys, we understand the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost. In their commission he commanded them to teach baptized believers to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; and lest any precept, ordinance or rule might be forgotten, he promised to send the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, who, when he came, should bring all things to their remembrance. And as, without this key, they were utterly incompetent to give judgment with infallible certainty that their decisions were ratified in heaven, he bade them tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from heaven. As all power is of God, it must come from heaven. Therefore, “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4).” Their ability to sit in

judgment, to bind and loose, as God would approve and ratify in heaven, was the power with which they were to be endowed from heaven, when filled with the Holy Ghost, and speaking only as the Spirit gave them utterance, they could not fail to bind and loose according to the will of God. Consequently their decisions are final and conclusive, admitting of no appeal to any higher tribunal. As the apostle John declares, "We (the apostles) are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (I John 4:6)." As these authorized apostles judge and speak as the spirit of truth dictates, all who profess the same spirit of truth in their hearts will hear, and be governed by their decisions. They know that, as the authority of the apostles is of God, they cannot reject the apostles' decisions, instructions and admonitions without involving themselves in disobedience to God. Thus next to the King, the apostles occupy the highest position of power or authority in the church of Jesus Christ, and let every soul in the spiritual kingdom be subject to them as the higher power; knowing that their power is of God. All that is approved of God in doctrine, discipline, ordinances and order, faith or practice is found in their decisions and instructions to the church of God; and all the saints are as imperatively required to reject all that the apostles have not enjoined as they are to observe and obey all that they have enjoined.

Fifth. Paul, as one of the enthroned judges, has given us a list of smaller gifts which God has clothed with less authority than that of the apostles or judges. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues (I Corinthians 12:27,28)." Compare this with Ephesians 4:11,12, "And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets, and some, evangelists and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints," etc.

The next grade below the apostles in authority in the church are called prophets. The prophets under the old dispensation were holy men who spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost, or by whom God spake to the fathers (Hebrews 1:1). In the gospel church Paul speaks of the gift of prophesying as a higher than ordinary gift for preaching and exhortation. "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understanding all mysteries, and all knowledge (I Corinthians 13:2)." Again, "Follow after charity and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying (I Corinthians 14:1-5)." The apostle evidently gives a decided preference to the gift of prophesying, and recommends that it be desired rather than other gifts; especially from the consideration of its being more useful in edifying the church of God. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them (Acts 13:1,2)." These prophets were certainly very eminent ministers of the gospel, who being separated to the work whereunto the Holy Ghost had called them, went forth preaching the word in the synagogues of the Jews (see verse 5). These were endowed with authority or power, which was respected in the churches of the saints.

Sixth. The next grade of importance and power is that of teachers, or as stated in Ephesians 4:12, "Evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." An evangelist is, according to Butterworth, a bearer of good tidings; and Webster says, a preacher or writer of the gospel, who is not the pastor of any

particular church. But Paul enjoined on Timothy, who was at the time pastor or bishop of the church of Ephesus, to do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry (II Timothy 4:5). There certainly is a distinction between the gift of preaching the word and that gift which qualifies for the pastoral office. There are those who preach the word to the edification of the saints, who seem very deficient in those pastoral qualifications which are requisite for taking the oversight of the church of God. But in either case, the preacher, or the pastor, must be called to the work as was Aaron, and invested with divine authority to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. Although the pastor, or bishop, is not to be a lord over God's heritage, yet is he to take the oversight of the flock, and he is under a solemn charge to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine (II Timothy 4:2)." "These things command and teach. Let no man despise thee (Titus 2:15)." "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine (I Timothy 5:17)." From these and other portions of the word we see that God has given power or authority to pastors and teachers to rule in the church, and that their authority, being of God, must be respected by all the saints. But it is to be remembered *that they have no discretionary power, not a particle of authority outside of the law of Christ*. With all authority they are commissioned to teach the saints to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them, but no power of God, or from God, to teach for doctrine the commandments of men. They are to rule by applying authoritatively the divine rule which Christ as Head over all things to his church has given. No apostle, bishop, elder, prophet or evangelist has any legitimate power in the church of God beyond that; all beyond is usurpation and disobedience to it is rebellion against God. With this distinct understanding of the ruling power vested in the ministers of Christ whom he has authorized to take the oversight of the flock, we will next consider the obligation of the saints to respect their authority.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation; Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever." "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you (Hebrews 13:1,17)." While the ministers of Christ are to apply the divine rule for government of the church they are themselves held under strict responsibility to Christ for the manner in which they discharge their responsible duty, and they are to be remembered and obeyed. No Christian can release himself from the obligation, the instructions, warnings, reproofs, admonitions or rebukes which Christ has commanded them to administer in his name, according to his word, without disobedience to Christ. Jesus said to his commissioned ministers, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me (Luke 10:16)."

In the church, as in the world, every soul is commanded of God to be subject to the higher powers; and to recognize no legitimate power, in the church or in the world, but such as God has instituted and ordained for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them who do well.

The apostle John, in instructing the saints by what standard to try the spirits, has said of the many anti-christs which were already in the world, "They are of the world; therefore, speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (I John 4:5,6)." Let us then carefully and prayerfully try ourselves by this standard, that we may know beyond the shadow of a doubt what manner of spirit we are of. Are we adhering steadfastly to what the inspired servants of God have spoken, or are we listening to what the world approves? And in our connection, communion and fellowship with others, do they hear what God, by the mouth of his servants, has spoken; or do they speak of the world? We cannot serve God

and mammon. “Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table and the table of devils (I Corinthians 10:21).”

Middletown, N. Y.
December 15, 1864.

CLOSE OF VOLUME 32

With this number of our paper we close the almost incessant labor of thirty-two years, in which time a generation has come and gone. What changes have marked these flowing years. What multitudes of our early associates have finished their mortal course and gone the way of all the earth would require volumes to record. The pleasure we have enjoyed in the constant correspondence we have held with the thousands of our brethren throughout the wide range of our extensive Circulation, the assurance of friendship, fellowship and sweet communion has been very great. The kindness in which our feeble efforts have been received, and the forbearance with which our weakness and imperfections have been overlooked holds us under lasting obligations to the thousands of our readers. The generous sympathy tendered to sustain us when the continuance of our publication was threatened by adverse circumstances was seasonable and substantial, and we cordially return our grateful thanks for the contributions received in the time of our embarrassment. The various anti-christian institutions of which we have constantly warned our readers have culminated as we anticipated, in a sea of blood and the end is not yet. What scenes of trial, distress or persecution yet awaits those who still desire to walk in the footsteps of the meek, lowly and loving Savior, we must wait to see. To us all the elements of nature seem highly charged with the spirit of violence, and who may be called to resist unto blood, striving against sin during these days of tribulation is not for us at present to know. The severe conflicts through which we are now passing will probably serve, like refiner’s fire and fuller’s soap, to purge and cleanse our ranks of false and nominal professors: “for the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” If these days are not even now actually upon us, they cannot be far off: and if we have not mistaken the signs of the times, we have special need to “Watch and be sober,” to call mightily upon the Lord to support and sustain us by his power and grace, and in due time bring us forth from the furnace like gold that has been tried in the fire.

The opposition which we have encountered in the publication of our paper has been varied and potent; but having received help of God, as we trust, we have been thus far sustained. Whether our publication can yet be dispensed with without loss to the lovers of truth is a question to be decided by our patrons. We propose to continue, if permitted, and on the same terms as at present, namely, one dollar a year if paid in gold, or its equivalent in paper currency. Although at the time of writing this, two dollars and thirty cents (in paper, except it be on Canada banks) is only equivalent to one dollar in gold, still we propose for the present to receive subscriptions at two dollars per year, strictly in advance. If paid in

advance, we can lay in our stock for the year, at present prices, which may be doubled before the end of the ensuing year.

As we shall publish but a limited number of extra copies of the next volume, those who desire to secure the whole volume on the above terms should send in their orders immediately. Those who decline to continue their subscription for the next year should be sure and let us know immediately, as we cannot afford to loose several numbers before we hear from them.

Those who order their papers to be continued or stopped should write their names and post office address in a plain hand; and those who desire to have their post office changed must be particular to give us the name of the post office at which they have been receiving, as well as of that of which they wish to have them hereafter directed.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 15, 1864.

THE NEW YEAR AND THE NEW VOLUME: RETROSPECT OF THE PAST

On entering upon the labors of a new year, after having spent just one half of our life in connection with the publication of this paper, we are reminded of the amazing goodness of God in sustaining us through so many years of conflicts, trials and discouragements which we have encountered, and which by his grace abounding we have been enabled to overcome. Truly, the goodness and mercy of God has followed us all our days, and as we have obtained help from him, we continue to the present a living monument of his sustaining power and grace. And now at tile commencement of the new year, and of the thirty-third volume of our publication, we would gladly set up an Ebenezer to the praise of God whose mercies to the chief of sinners endure forever.

It would not be inappropriate at this time to review the history of our Journal, and the circumstances of its commencement, the difficulties it has encountered, the course it has uniformly pursued, the embarrassments it has survived, and the prospects of its future. But of all this many of our present readers are informed. Still, as a generation has passed to its final destiny since we issued our first number in 1832, we will be excused for saying that for some years before this paper was presented to the public, great innovations upon the ancient faith and practice of the Baptist church had been introduced and were spreading with fearful rapidity throughout our churches, and as new and Strange policies and inventions were inaugurated which the world admired, worldly minds were attracted, and worldly converts were nominally added to our profession until many more were the children of the

bond woman in our ranks than of the free. Thousands who have always hated and despised the doctrine of divine sovereignty in the salvation of sinners, and the order and ordinances of the house of God, as held by the apostles and primitive saints when they saw these prominent landmarks of the kingdom of Christ being rapidly superseded by humanly invented institutions, and the heresies of anti-christ and doctrines of men preached and taught for doctrine under Baptist patronage, came in upon us like a flood, until every distinguishing characteristic which had formerly identified the church of Christ as a *little flock, and as a poor and afflicted people trusting alone in the name of the Lord*, were being hurriedly obliterated. Following hard upon the heels of *Fullerism* came a perfect avalanche of organized institutions claiming the flattering but false title “Benevolent,” among which were Baptist State Educational Societies, with theological machinery for preparing pious young men for the ministry, Missionary Societies to supply work for their humanly qualified ministers, Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Sabbath School Unions, with many other inventions of the same kind, all of which being popular in the world and profitable in a pecuniary point of view, especially to those who managed the machinery, soon brought a severe trial upon those who desired only to follow in the footsteps of Christ and his apostles. Such were denounced as enemies to the progress of the gospel, opposers of all that was good, and charged with covetousness because they withheld their contributions, which were continually demanded for the salvation of the heathen and evangelizing the world. Those who could buy membership in any or all of these church and world establishments for dollars and cents, without pretending to any knowledge of the work of the Spirit in quickening the dead, and occupy the most exalted positions of honor and power to direct their working for an additional price, soon so swelled the ranks of what then claimed to be the church of God as to render communion and fellowship with the living children of God impossible.

At the time this paper was proposed there were many papers published by the new order or school of Baptists in various parts of the States, but those oppressed brethren who stood aloof from the popular doings were comparatively so few and far between that no one seemed to believe there remained enough of them on the American continent to sustain a periodical; even at the low price of one dollar per annum. After much consultation with brethren, we ventured to issue a prospectus which, like the barley cake in the dream of the Midianitish soldier, was seen to tumble into the enemy’s camp, producing great confusion, and we were published by all the New School papers, and in the minutes of many of their Associations, and the people warned to beware of us, and of our forth-coming paper. The opposers of our proposed paper, overdoing themselves in their effort to frown us down, published extracts from our prospectus, showing that the “Signs of the Times” would contend for the cardinal doctrine and order by which the church of Christ had always been distinguished, and would oppose the “Mother Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions,” including those before named; and they also were sufficiently short sighted to give our terms and post office address. Had they designed to use their influence to aid us, they could in no other way have done us more efficient service, for their violent opposition reached many thousands who otherwise were inaccessible to us, and like us, supposed themselves alone in opposing the delusions which were prevailing.

A few, and but a few, who stood with us at the commencement are now living; nearly all have been called from their labors, but those who have preserved the old volumes of the “Signs” will not need to be informed of the violent opposition through which we have been brought. Simultaneously with the advent of this publication, a general meeting, or convention of the Old Order of Baptists throughout the United States, was by a circular called to meet at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., which was held September 28, 1832. We attended, and there met and became acquainted with brethren from many States, whose views were in harmony with our own. We published an address prepared by order, and

approved by that meeting in which we took a firm and united stand upon the platform on which the church of Christ was organized in the apostles' days, and refused to fellowship the new order of things.

From the commencement of our labors as editor and publisher of this paper, as our readers and hearers will witness, we have not ceased, from the pulpit and from the press, to warn the people of God to beware of the spirit of fanaticism, priestcraft, will-worship and general opposition to the plain simple teachings of the word and Spirit of our Lord. The admonitions of the apostles that "Evil men and seducers should wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," we have not failed to reiterate constantly. The specious pretensions of our adversaries that they by their modern inventions were to convert the heathen, evangelize the world and hurry on the millennium, we denounced as delusion, because in contradiction of divine testimony; and we have ventured the prediction more than thirty years ago, that their delusions would culminate in bitter persecution, and their millennium would produce a sea of blood. That our apprehensions were not unfounded, and that our fears were just, we have lived to realize a full demonstration. But alas! the end is not yet. The very elements which caused a separation of the Old and New order of Baptists more than thirty years ago have been all the time being developed among the other religious orders, in the production of sectional jealousies and strife between the North and the South, leading the way, several years in advance, for the fratricidal war now raging with more than human violence. Whatever other causes for our national calamity may be involved, certain we are that the anti-christian spirit which divided nearly all the religious orders except the Old School Baptists, has been the most turbulent and belligerent the world has witnessed since the days of Cain, for it has been indefatigable in stirring up the worst passions of men to deeds of blood. We are still in an enemy's land; the world, the flesh and Satan are still at open war against truth and holiness, and we still seem to require the columns of the "Signs" through which to maintain a correspondence with the scattered, meek, lowly and peace-loving followers of the Lamb of God.

We therefore enter upon our new volume under the conviction that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. We need to speak often one to another words of comfort, encouragement, instruction, admonition, and if need be, words of reproof, in Christian love, meekness and humility.

For the utility of the "Signs of the Times" we are indebted to our numerous correspondents whose communications have been productive of edification, instruction and thereby of fellowship in the Spirit. The circulation of our paper throughout the country, so far as we have mailing facilities, has searched out many of the Lord's hidden ones, who have from time to time acknowledged the heartfelt joy they have felt in reading the epistles of love published in our columns.

We are aware that the advance in the nominal terms of subscription will greatly reduce our circulation, and require the continued efforts of those who desire its continuance to procure paying subscribers. The terms are only nominally increased, for in reality the two dollars now required are not equal to one dollar in specie or the equivalent of specie, while almost every article required in printing and publishing are much more than doubled in cost, and the heaviest articles required, such as printing paper, type, etc., are three times greater than formerly, and still rising.

We do not propose to make any change in our manner of conducting the publication, but hope to be able to make it a welcome visitor to those who know and love the truth. Some new and valuable contributors are expected to supply interesting and profitable articles which will be duly appreciated by our readers.

We shall send this number to some who have not ordered it, and whose term of subscription has expired, but after the issuing of this, we shall strike off those who have directed us to do so, and others

who are now in arrears, and from whom we have no recent intelligence; and should we by mistake drop the name of any who wish it continued, we on being so informed will reinsert them.

Middletown, N. Y.

January 1, 1865.

THE SABBATH

We have been strongly urged by some two or three of our readers to give our views on the Sabbaths which were enjoined on the people of Israel “throughout their generations.” One of the number has desired us to give a reason why it was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. We have frequently expressed our understanding on the subject in the past volumes of the “Signs,” and still retain only such views as we have frequently given on the subject. Other brethren have also from time to time written and published in our columns their understanding in perfect harmony with our own. Having no new light to give, we would decline writing further upon the subject, were it not that those who now urge us have not the files of our former volumes to refer to. Feeling bound to give such views as we have on all scriptural subjects when called to do so, we will briefly repeat that we have no reasons to give for changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. We search the scriptures in vain to find any such change made by divine authority. Human laws are liable to change; they may require to be modified, amended, or abolished altogether; but it is not so with the law of God. Heaven and earth may pass away, but no jot or tittle of God’s law can change until all is fulfilled.

Those who profess at the present day to regard the Sabbatical law as binding on the Gentiles are responsible for changing the day specified in the law. We may address to them the interrogatory of the apostle: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye hear the law?” If the Sabbatical law is binding on us at all, we are bound to observe it as it came from the mouth of God, lest we may be charged with the hypocritical Pharisees of making void the law of God by our traditions. But the law commanding the observance of a legal Sabbath was never given to the Gentiles at all. For about twenty-three hundred years from the creation of the world, not a word is recorded to indicate the existence of a Sabbath day; nor in all the record of crime which provoked the deluge which destroyed the old world is the violation of a Sabbath mentioned. Nor from the beginning of the world to the present day is there a charge recorded in the scriptures against any but the descendants of Jacob for transgressing the law of the Sabbath day. The first mention of a Sabbath is found in Exodus 16:23, in which the institution was so new to the children of Israel that they went out to look for manna on that as on other days.

In Exodus 20:8-11, the institution is embraced in the ten commandments given to a people whom the Lord God said he had brought out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, etc. In Exodus 31:12-17, Moses was commanded by the Lord to speak to the children of Israel saying, “Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doth *any* work therein, that

soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord; whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore *the children of Israel* shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath *throughout their generations*, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.”

This Sabbath was a sign and a covenant between God and the children of Israel wherein they were sanctified or set apart from all the families of mankind forever, throughout their generations, extending from the date of the giving them this law in the wilderness until the time of the summing up of their generations, as in Matthew 1 and Luke 3. Where can we find this or any similar sign given to the Gentiles? As a covenant, Moses declares that it was not only not given to the Gentiles, but that it had not been given to the patriarchs, their fathers. Hear him! “And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep and do them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.”

If this law had been given also to the Gentiles, in what respect could it have sanctified, or distinguished Israel from the rest of mankind? If it were also a sign to the Gentiles, what did it signify, as God had not brought the Gentiles out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; nor consecrated them for the Sabbath of rest. If it were given to the Gentiles for a covenant, what were its stipulations? What promises did it record for, or guarantee to them? None whatever.

Israel in and throughout their generations were the type of the spiritual Israel, or the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in its gospel organization. The laws, ordinances, and ceremonies enjoined on the carnal, or fleshly, Israelites including meats, drinks, holy days, new moons and Sabbaths were a shadow of things to come. As saith the apostle, “Let no man therefore judge you in meats, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ (Colossians 2:16,17).”

All these institutions, in their legal observance by that fleshly but typical people, but cast the shadow before of the body of Christ, which body is his church (Ephesians 1:23). Hence as signs they signified those things which were to come, and as a covenant, they described that Christ whom God has given for a Covenant unto his spiritual people.

The Sabbath of the law, as a sign to Israel, signified a coming rest. As the Israelites rested from manual labor on the seventh day, were forbidden to gather manna, or to kindle fire, or to think their own thoughts, or to speak their own words; they nor their sons, or daughters, nor their man-servants, nor maid-servants, nor the stranger within their gates, on pain of death, so it signified a day of spiritual rest unto the people of God under the gospel dispensation. Then the carnal Israelites should have fulfilled their typical record, and the gathering of the people should be to Shiloh, not to Moses, and when he should no longer be a Jew who was one outwardly in the flesh; but he should be a Jew who was one inwardly, and circumcision that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Turn to the third and fourth chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews, and you will find a complete and perfect application of the type to its special anti-type, of the shadow to its appropriate substance. The spiritual Israelite when circumcised in heart and spirit, becomes a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ceaseth from his own works, as God did from his when he had created the world and rested on the seventh day, and blessed and hallowed it. Even so, says the inspired apostle, “We which have believed do enter into rest.” While of them that do not believe, God has sworn that they should not enter into his

rest, or his Sabbath, for Sabbath is rest. And God, by the mouth of his prophet, has declared that the wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, which continually casteth up mire and dirt.

Instead of the Sabbath of the law being given to pre-figure another day of the week to be substituted in its place, and used by Gentile “Clergymen” for vending their Babylonish merchandise, its spiritual significance points to the day which was ushered in when Jesus arose from the dead, having finished transgression, and made an end of sin: when he had redeemed his people from the wrath, the toil and labor of a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. That is the day which the Lord has made, by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings. The rising of that Sun that should never again go down, and who should secure to his redeemed, quickened, believing children that rest which remaineth to the people of God; and which was never found anywhere but in our Lord Jesus Christ, whose rest the prophet of the Lord said, “Shall be glorious.” As in the sign or type given to the children of Israel, the six days of labor, in which all their servile works should be done, represents the legal dispensation under which the carnal tribes were held under a covenant of works, an endless routine of rites, and carnal ordinances which could never make the doers of the service perfect. The seventh, or Sabbath, foreshadowed a full and perfect release from the law of commandments, ordinances and unavailing works, and an entrance into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Weary and heavy laden with their own fruitless works, the imperfection of which continually drew down on them the curses of the law, quickened souls are called by the great law fulfiller to come unto him and are assured that they shall find rest to their souls. Instead of the yoke of Moses, which was a yoke of bondage to them, they are to put on Christ’s yoke, which is easy, and bear his burden, which is light, and learn of him, who is meek and lowly in spirit, and find rest to their souls. They are no more under the law, but under grace: redeemed from the law which was written on tables of stone, and brought under the law of Christ, under the power and dominion of the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, and free from the law of sin and death. Dead to the law which could not give life, and by the obedience of which no flesh can be justified in the sight of God, they are delivered by the body of Christ, that they might be lawfully married to him who has risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God, not to Moses. The hand-writing of ordinances are blotted out, and the law of commandments nailed to the cross, with all its meats, drinks, divers washings, new moons and Sabbaths, and the law of the spirit of immortality written in their hearts, and in their inward parts recorded, as the royal law of liberty. This hallowed rest is God’s holy Sabbath to all who believe and have entered into it, and ceased from their own works as God did from his.

This holy Sabbath of rest to the people of God was not only prefigured under the law by the seventh day Sabbath, but also by all the Sabbatical days and years in which the children of Israel and their lands, their cattle, their servants, their strangers within their gates were to rest. It was also set forth by the land of Canaan, in which Israel rested from the fatigues of the wilderness; and also, as we have seen, it was signified by the day in which God rested from the works of creation.

The law of the legal Sabbath commanded total abstinence from servile labor. No manna was to be gathered on that day, no fires to be kindled, no going out of their tents was allowed, an unbroken rest was commanded, and the penalty for any violation of this law was death. But let the reader observe that none but the Israelites and their households were capable of either keeping or of desecrating the legal Sabbath, or could be subjected to its penalties, so under the gospel dispensation, none but the people of God, who are quickened and have the faith of the Son of God (without which it is impossible to please God) can enter into spiritual rest, to keep or desecrate the spiritual and anti-typical Sabbath of the Lord our God. As the carcasses of the unbelieving Israelites fell in the wilderness, and they could not enter into rest because of unbelief, so falls the carcasses of God’s children in the wilderness because that in

their flesh, or carcasses, there dwells no good thing, no faith, for faith and confidence in God are not fruits of the flesh, but of the Spirit. “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (I Corinthians 15:50).” With the mind of Christ, which is in the Christian, he serves the law of God, enters into rest, and hallows the holy Sabbath of the Lord his God, suppresses his own thoughts, listens not to human reason, but delights in the revelations of the spirit of truth and holiness. To think their own thoughts, or to speak their own words, or to make any provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof is a violation of the law of Christ, and they who are guilty of such desecration of the Sabbath die short of the promised land, for they cannot enter rest because of unbelief. “For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace,” or Sabbath, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8:6,13,14).”

The Christian knows from his own experience that all his doubts, fears, carnal reasonings, and unbelief, which hinder him from entering sweetly, calmly, confidently into his Sabbath of spiritual rest arises from his fleshly nature, for with his mind he serves the law of God, but with his flesh, the law of sin. And when the law of his members brings him into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members, he cannot enter into rest. He breaks his Sabbath, he is pelted with stones, he dies, that is, his carcass falls in the wilderness. But, though his carcass or body is dead because of sin, his spirit, or the new man, is life because of righteousness. To rest in Christ, his faith must triumph over his fears and doubts, his unbeliefs; but when his flesh predominates, he is led by the flesh; he dies and his carcass falls.

There is also a fleshly propensity in the Christian, when dreary and cold and hungry, and starving for spiritual life, joy, comfort and food, to attempt some expedient of human origin for relief; to supply present light and warmth, he would gather sticks, kindle a fire, compass himself with sparks, and attempt to walk in the light of his own fire, and warm himself by its heat, but this is Sabbath breaking, and this shall he have of the Lord’s hand, he shall lie down in sorrow (Exodus 35:3; Numbers 15:32,36; Isaiah 50:11). Or if to satisfy his craving appetite for food, he shall go forth contrary to the word of the Lord to seek supplies of manna, he shall find none (Exodus 11:27).

The gospel Sabbath of rest to the people of God requires that we shall discard all confidence in the flesh and trust alone in God, resting on his oath and promise, confiding in his wisdom, power and grace. Being perfectly satisfied with his dealings with us, casting all our cares upon him, waiting patiently and submissively the openings of his providence, and in whatsoever condition we may be, therewith to be content, knowing that all things are working for our good, and that our light afflictions which are but for a season, do work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the things that are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. Those therefore who have the faith of the Son of God which overcomes the world and which relies unwaveringly on the power and providence and grace of God are Israelites in a spiritual sense, and the gospel Sabbath is to them what the ceremonial Sabbath was in the type to the carnal Israelites: God’s sign and covenant with them. As a sign it signifies to them that God is their Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble, that the Lord is their Shepherd, they shall not want; and as a covenant, it secures to them all the promises of God which are in Christ Jesus; yea, and in him Amen to the glory of God by us.

Let then the Scribes and Pharisees of the age quarrel and strive about their days of the week, their new moons, their meat, drink and legal Sabbaths; they have only the shadow, or what once was a shadow of things to come, but as the things to come of which they were the shadow have now come, our faith

embraces the substance, and we will not debate with them about the shadow. It is enough for us to know that the inspired apostles have decided that the Jewish Sabbath was only typical of spiritual rest. Those who would perpetuate the observance of the shadow now virtually deny that the substance has come, as do the Jews who continue the other rites and sacrifices of Judaism deny that the true Messiah has come. But when any of God's quickened children are allured and led astray in these things, we remind them of the apostle's words in Galatians 4:10,11, "Ye observe days, and months, and times and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."

Those who observe a legal Sabbath, whether on the seventh or the first, or any other day of the week, clearly indicate that they are not under grace, but under the law, that they are not come to Mount Zion, but are trying to approach the Mount Sinai, and that they are strangers to that Sabbatical rest which remains for the people of God. But although both parties are manifestly under the curse, being of the works of the law, yet they who observe the seventh day are far more consistent than they who substitute another day. Those who contend for a first day Sabbath tell us that the first day has been substituted for the seventh in honor of the resurrection of Christ, but when, where, or by whom the change has been made, they have never been able to tell.

Middletown, N. Y.
January 15, 1865.

ISAIAH 45:7

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things (Isaiah 45:7)."

Our esteemed brother, Elder George Cottrell of Ohio, has requested our views on the above text, especially on the *creation of evil*.

Preceding this text, the prophet by the word of the Lord reproved the people of Israel for their propensity to idolatry, and after showing the vanity and extreme folly of trusting in the works of their own hands, presented a powerful contrast between the gods which are made and worshipped by men, and the true and living God who created and upholds all things by the omnipotence of his power and wisdom of his counsel. In drawing the contrast, God by his prophet shows first what their idols cannot do: they cannot save their worshipers, nor afford them the slightest aid, they cannot see, hear or feel, nor can they move themselves, and one of the most important deficiencies is that they cannot declare beforehand events which shall come to pass. And as there are no predestinating idols, so there are no predestinarian idolaters. After showing the vanity of idols, the peculiar attributes and perfections of the true God are very clearly declared and demonstrated by his wonderful works in the creation of the world, by his providential government of all worlds, all beings and all events. "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient time the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." In illustration of this, he calls their attention especially to the case of Cyrus, whom he had raised up, and whose right hand he had holden, or strengthened, to subdue nations before him, to loosen the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates of Babylon. To whom also he said, I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight, and break in pieces the gates

of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. Even this heathen prince was raised up by our God for Jacob, his servant's sake, and Israel, his elect, and called by his name and surnamed by the Lord of whom he was ignorant. Of Cyrus he saith, "I am the Lord and there is none else: there is no God besides me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me; that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me. I form the light, and I create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." While heathen mythology supposes a god to preside over each of the several elements of nature, one to control whatever is good, and others to direct the evils, the Lord Jehovah declares himself the only wise God, reigning in the heavens alone, and swaying the sceptre of universal control over all things. All holy beings are moved by him, and devils and wicked men restrained by the supreme power of his might. God makes known, as in the case of Cyrus, from the rising of the sun to the far distant west, and from the rivers to earth's remotest bounds, that there is no other God ruling in the armies of heaven, and over the inhabitants of earth. How grand and magnificent are the evidences and exemplifications of his eternal power and God-head, as presented in the context, in connection with which the declaration in our text must be considered. "I form the light." Of the formation of light no finite mind can attain to an adequate conception, nor do we perceive in it any formation. We have been astonished to learn from the sacred record of the creation of this world, that God spake the word and it stood fast; he commanded, and it was done. "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." And God separated the light from the darkness; and the light he called day, and the darkness he called night. Could any other than the true God have performed this? So also in the spiritual application of the word. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." By the formation of light we not only understand that God created it in the natural world, but gave it form when he embodied the fullness of it in the great light which he suspended in the infinity of space, and bade it pour forth its fullest radiance on the earth, to rule the day, and by the shadow of the intervening earth he created the darkness, which he called night, thus separating the one from the other, and claiming both as creatures of his almighty power. The moon and stars he also made as reflectors of the light of the sun, and for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years (Genesis 1:14).

In the new, or spiritual, creation *light* and immortal life are synonymous terms. This light emanates from God who dwells in the eternal refulgence of his own supreme glory. The formation of light and immortality of eternal deity is by revelation brought to the view of our faith, only in him who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person: the image of the invisible God. For in him was life, and the life was the light of men. He is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light; the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings; the light which came to Zion when the glory of the Lord had arisen upon her. In the infinity of the glorious gospel of the grace of God, in the spiritual firmament of his church hath God set a tabernacle for the sun which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof (Psalm 19:1-6). This light of immortality shines in the hearts of God's children because God has taken his abode in them, and has made them the children of the light. Like the moon, the church of Christ when her light is come, or when out of Zion the perfection of beauty God is pleased to shine, she reflects this light, as a city set upon a hill whose light cannot be concealed. So also are the members of Christ and ministers of his word and truth, the children whom God has given to his Son, for signs and for wonders, and they are twinkling reflectors of the light of the Sun of Righteousness, as stars in the right hand of

him who holds the keys of death and hell. God forms this spiritual light in all who are born of his Spirit, and in all its variety of forms in which it shines upon his chosen Israel.

And I create darkness. Darkness is simply the absence of light. In the natural creation, the earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the great deep until God formed the light, so darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people, until God said, Let there be light! Then leaping forth from his chambers, the Sun of Righteousness sprang into the firmament of his church, scattered the sable cloud, dispelled the horrid gloom, and scattered round his kingdom the refulgence of celestial day. This is the day which the Lord hath made and over which he is the great ruling light. But how does God create darkness, or absence of light? In nature it is simply by the revolution of the earth, by which earth's shadow falls upon us, and the light is hidden from our eyes, then with us it is night, wherein the psalmist says, "All the beasts of the forest do creep forth." So when earth, or earthly things, are suffered to separate between us and the Sun of Righteousness, we also walk in darkness and have no light. In the fifteenth verse of this same chapter it is said, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." It is his beams that form our light, and if he hides them from us, we are left in darkness, and it is thus all our darkness is created.

I make peace and create evil. By *peace and evil*, we understand his providential judgments in dealing with his people, and with the children of men: presiding in power and majesty over all the works of his hands. He makes peace in silencing the raging elements of nature, as when the Redeemer commanded the tempest to be still, in providence when he curbs the angry passions of princes, kings and potentates of the earth. "Come," says the psalmist, "behold the works of the Lord; what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire (Psalm 46:8,9)." And in the kingdom of the saints, he is our peace. The Prince of Peace, who has reconciled us to God, and made peace by the blood of his cross. Experimentally God's children learn that all their spiritual peace and comfort cometh down from God our Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. "There is no peace to the wicked, saith your God." But, "Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." All the peace which Christians can enjoy in time or in eternity is made by him. In the world, says Jesus to his disciples, ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. But our brother desires us to dwell more particularly on the *creation of evil*. We are aware of the difficulty arising in the minds of God's little ones upon this subject. That God is a being of infinite perfection, spotless purity, who cannot look on sin with approbation, is as he has revealed himself unto them; but how he at the same time can be the creator of evil is hard for them to conceive. There is a mystery of Godliness and a mystery of iniquity in both of which God will be glorified. We all readily admit that God is the sole creator of all things that exist in heaven, earth and hell. And in his creation he has presented to our wondering eyes an endless variety. We can hardly conceive of any being or thing now existing that has not its opposite. The serpent and the dove, angels of light and angels of the bottomless pit, light and darkness, heat and cold, good and evil: and is there anything existing that God has not made? He has created all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. In all the creation God has made nothing that can bear a comparison with himself. His creatures are not gods. None of them possess as creatures his peculiar attributes or perfections. Yet all things are and were created for his pleasure, and he is above them all, and will bend them all to his government. In the sublime language of Job, "He stretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo these are parts of

his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand (Job 26:7,10,11,13,14).”

But the term *evil* as used in our text we understand to mean judgments, calamities, afflictions and chastisements which are sent upon the children of men. They come not up out of the ground, nor do they fall upon us by chance. God’s careful providence watches over us, and no evil can come nigh our dwelling except meted out in weight and measure, time, duration and result, by the unerring wisdom and power of God himself. As it is written, “Is there evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?” Job said, “Shall we receive good from the Lord, and not evil?” That is, shall we receive prosperity, and not adversity, pleasure and not pain, joy and not sorrow? Wars, famine, and pestilence are evils, which come and go at God’s command. And persecution and oppression are under his control. Men are used by him as his sword and his hand; devils and wicked men are restrained or suffered to vent their malice, as God ordains. And under this conviction we are instructed to pray God to, “Lead us not into temptation, but to deliver us from evil,” and to shield us in the day of evil. As in our text light is contrasted with darkness, so is evil contrasted with peace. “I make *peace* and create *evil*.” By withholding peace and bringing evil upon them, that is. The Israelites received evil at the hand of the Lord for their rebellion and idolatry when he sent fiery serpents into their camps, and when he caused their enemies to triumph over them. And so in his dealings with his children, sometimes he sends on them fiery trials, deep afflictions, sore temptations which disturb their peace, and bring labor, sorrow and grief upon them for the trial of their faith, and as chastisement for their faults.

“*I the Lord do all these things.*” This is consoling to the afflicted saints who have confidence in God. They know what he appoints for them is best, though it may call them to pass through flames or floods, for they know that all things work together for good to them, and they are led to say, “It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good;” for so said Eli, when the Lord brought evil on him and upon his sons.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1865.

THE LAW

The Law: We proposed in our last to notice some remarks of brother Tufts concerning the *moral law*, which are found on the first page of that number. Not however in a spirit of controversy, for we have been pleased and edified in the series of articles which he is now supplying on I John 1:6,7. But in his last article we confess, as did Peter in regard to the writing of Paul, were “some things which are hard to be understood;” especially by those who like ourself, are “dull of hearing.” Those points which are the most obscure to our mind were first, what is called the moral law, said to be created by the fingers of God, and to constitute a part of the nature of man, – begotten of Adam, and transmitted though him to his posterity; and still of binding power over believers who are under the law to Christ, etc. The terms *moral* and *moral law*, as they are not found in the scriptures, cannot be defined by any scriptural rule of interpretation. We must enquire of Webster, Buck, Paley or some other recognized lexicographer for the meaning, as used by theologians; but unhappily for the enquirer, these authors do not fully agree in their definitions, and if they did, their authority is not quite sufficient for Old School Baptists who

are accustomed to appeal “to the law and to the testimony.” That man was created under law to God, and as a creature of God, subject to his authority, appears fully demonstrated by the fact that he sinned; and sin is a transgression of the law. But if the law which Adam transgressed was begotten of him, and constituted a part of himself, then his transgression, we would think was a sin against himself, and not against God. We will not contend that the law under which man was created was born of God; but we must, until otherwise instructed, contend that that law proceeded from God who alone possessed a law-making power; and so being God’s law or rule of government over man as his creature, the transgression of it was a sin against God; and subject to the penalty provided in that law for the transgression of it. If we have correctly understood the apostle, this law by which is the knowledge of sin, and the penalty of which is death, is called “the law of sin and death.” All mankind being in Adam, and as brother Tufts justly remarked, being Adam, were in the transgression. The very first transgression was that of all mankind. Hence, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. We do not perceive how this law was begotten of Adam. It proceeded from the legislation of God himself. The Sinai covenant, or the laws of God dispensed to Israel, were not given to add anything to the force of the law which we in Adam had transgressed; for from Adam to Moses death already reigned. “The sting of death is sin.” “Sin is the transgression of the law.” “And the strength of sin is the law.” Hence it is written, “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Death passed on all men, before the first son or daughter of Adam was born, even on them who are not yet born. The law which was given to Israel by Moses, was added, or entered that the offense might abound. “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment, or law, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.”

Although this law of sin and death was not born of God as was the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, yet the apostle says it was spiritual: “For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin (Romans 7:14).” Therefore if this is the law which our beloved brother calls the moral law, it was not begotten of man, who is carnal, because it is spiritual. And that which is carnal cannot beget that which is spiritual.

That God spake to Adam through this law, we will not dispute; but whether so or otherwise, God did talk with him in the garden in the cool of the day, we must so believe, for so it is expressly written.

That the spirituality of the law is concealed in its letter from the understanding of the carnal mind of man, we fully believe. But when the sinner is quickened by the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, its spirituality appears. It comes then in its spirit, not merely in its letter. Paul says: “I was alive once without the law.” Not without the letter of it; for he was brought up under its letter, a Pharisee of the strictest sect. “But when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.” “And the commandment which was ordained unto life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful (Romans 7:9-13).”

This law holds dominion over a man as long as he liveth, or until it slays him, as it did Paul; but its dominion can be extended no further. “For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married

to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye shall be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we shall bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (Romans 7:1-6).”

Christ has redeemed his people as well from the dominion as from the condemnation and wrath of the law, or it would not allow us to be one flesh with the risen Savior. That in which we were held in matrimonial bonds must be dead to us before we can be thus identified with him that is raised from the dead. Christ came under the law to redeem his people from the law. In doing this, “He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” This seed of Abraham is the body which was prepared for him, as his own body in which he bare the sins of many, in which he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, abolished death and brought immortality to light. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to promise. Ye are then “Buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4).” “For the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea though we have known Christ after the flesh,” (as under the law) “yet henceforth know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (II Corinthians 5:14-17).” Thus married to, and one flesh with, the risen Jesus. Moses is dead, and Joshua leads. We are raised up together with our risen and living Husband, and made to set together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Crucified with him, dead with him, buried with him by baptism into death, quickened together with Christ, raised up together, living in his life. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:1-4).”

This law of the Spirit of life is born of God, it is spiritual for it is in Christ Jesus. It is a ruling, reigning and governing law, not written on tables of stone, but in the hearts of the saints, who are also in Christ Jesus, and born of God. Married to him that is risen from the dead, and they twain are one flesh. They are no more under the law, but under grace. Can the bride, the married wife of the Lamb, any longer transgress the authority of her old dead and buried husband? Must the living members of the risen Jesus still be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order that they may be saved? Has she any desire to dig up and submit to the government of that former husband, who never had anything but bondage and curses for her, now that she is one with the living husband, who never curses but always blesses? Now can the believer who is cut off from the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, and known no more after the flesh, transgress a law that has no dominion or authority over him? “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith (Galatians 3:2)?” “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1).”

The reader will perceive that the greatest portion of this article is in harmony with the views of brother Tufts, but there are some points to which we desire to call his attention, that he may make them clear, if

correct, and yield them if they cannot be sustained by the scriptures of truth; for we are sure he does not wish to contend for anything that will not bear the strictest scrutiny.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1865.

EPHESIANS 4:8

Penn Yan, N.Y.
Dec. 29, 1864.

Will Elder Beebe please give his views on Ephesians. 4:8: “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” Who were the captives? Your reply will oblige an enquirer after truth.

Hanna Miller.

Reply: – The apostle evidently referred to the prophetic declaration to Psalms 68:18, in which the faith of the inspired psalmist anticipated the glorious triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ over sin, death and hell, in the perfect and complete redemption of his people. The spirit of Christ, which was in the holy prophets, not only signified the sufferings which he should endure, but also the glory that should follow. They not only predicted that he should be put to death in the flesh, but also that he should be quickened in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. Bearing the weight of all the iniquities of his people, which it pleased the Father to lay upon him, he sank down into the embrace of death and the grave; being delivered up for the transgression of his people, but he was raised again from the dead for their justification; and having finished transgression and made an end of sin, it was not possible that he should be longer holden by the pains of death, for he had power as well to take up his life, as he had to lay it down, for this command, or authority, he received of the Father. The mighty work of redemption which devolved on him, as the mediatorial Head of his church, is frequently set forth as a conflict and victory. As a mighty warrior he comes forth from his chambers, rejoicing like a strong man to run a race. His way was obstructed by the sins of all his members, which like towering mountains reached up to heaven; calling aloud for retributive vengeance. The holy law of God gave irresistible potency to sin, and demanded that “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” And the eternal, immutable and inflexible justice of God forbids that the sinner should escape his dreadful doom until every jot and tile of the law should be fulfilled. In entering the field of conflict laden with all the crushing weight of the sins of all his people, he is seen traveling in the greatness of his strength, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save. The day of vengeance was in his heart, for the year of his redeemed had come, and therefore was he red in his apparel, and all his garments stained like him that treadeth in the wine fat.

The sublime majesty of our conquering Hero, in the opening of the campaign, is strikingly portrayed in the prayer of Habakkuk 3: “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran, Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light, he had horns coming out of his hand; and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood and measured the earth; he beheld, and

drove asunder the nations; the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.” His “Bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw thee, and they trembled; the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: as the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thrash the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation, with thine anointed; thou woudest the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck, Selah.” “Thou didst walk through the sea with thy horses, through the heap of great waters. When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself.” The power of earth and hell were marshaled for the conflict. Hell is enlarged, she stirreth up her dead, and every opposing power is put in battle array. But still the unfaltering conqueror rides forth in majesty, with his sword upon his thigh, and his arrows go forth as lightning, and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The terrible conflict rages. The sword of Jehovah gleams in the heavens, it awakes against the man who is the fellow of the God of Hosts. Deep waters gather, they come into his soul, and all their billows pass over him. The dreadful hour draws nigh. “Father, save me from this hour!” Yet for this hour came he forth into the world. The cup is presented to his lips. But Oh, his soul recoils, his agonizing sweat like drops of blood fall upon the ground. He prays, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass!” Could that have been, then the great work of salvation must have failed. But hear his words of submission, “Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” “It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief.” Death in his most terrible form enters the field; the bloody cross is reared. The fearful cloud darkens in wrath, the pains of hell take hold on him! Death strikes! The heavens darken! The sun is pale and dim, ceases to shine. The presence of the Father is withdrawn, and the gloomy darkness of death involves the quaking earth. The expiring victim writhes in the dreadful struggle. How goes the battle now? Death seems to triumph. Christ as a captive is laid in the chains of captivity, is laid a prisoner in the grave! The pillars of the heavens tremble, the rocks are rent, the graves are opened, and the startled dead awake. But is all lost? We verily thought this victim was he that should have redeemed Israel; but now alas! the deep waters of death have gone over his soul. He is baptized, (not sprinkled) in death. But, “Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall arise.” O Death, I will be thy plagues! O Grave, I will be thy destruction! Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. The triumph of death is short, the victory of the grave is but for a moment: for your victim shall swallow up death in everlasting victory. The resurrection morning dawns; and now O Death, where is thy sting, and Grave, where is thy victory? Death who had never been despoiled of a victim before, the grave which in all preceding ages guarded well its charge, is now spoiled. Death yields up her mighty dead. The grave, though guarded and secure as men could make it, is spoiled; for it was in this, the Idumean road, the mighty Savior was to travel in the greatness of his strength. It was thus through death he was to destroy death and him that had the power of death. It was thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Now having abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; as our God, he has gone up with a shout, and with a sound of a trumpet. “Whom the heavens must receive until the restitution of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began.” He hath ascended up on high. For, “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” (Acts 5:31) “According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every

name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” (Ephesians. 1:19-23) Thus when he ascended up on high, as the divinely recognized head over all things to his church, all spiritual gifts were included in him as God’s unspeakable gift to the church. “Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.” And of the gifts which were given, and which he has as the head of the church received, the apostle says, “And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.” And he also informs us what he gave them for, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians. 4:10-13)

We have briefly referred to the conflict in which our Lord was engaged, and to his ultimate triumph over his captors; but as sister Miller particularly enquires, Who were the captives? We will offer a few thoughts in reply to that particular enquiry.

As the idea of captivity necessarily implies captives taken and held as trophies, we are here to understand a previous and subsequent captivation.

Of the previous captivity mentioned in our text, we understand that in which sin, death and hell had captivated and held in chains of darkness all the chosen people of God, for whose deliverance God sent forth his only begotten Son. In their legal standing we are told that they were carnal, sold under sin. God’s chosen people, whom Christ came to redeem, were called captives, and were in a state of captivity, and lawful captives too. For having been captivated by sin, death reigned over them, and they were all their lifetime subject to bondage. But Christ was anointed “to proclaim liberty to captives, and to open the prison door to them that were bound.” (Isaiah. 61:1,2) But “Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered? But, thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered.” (Isaiah. 49:24,25) The legality of our bondage was settled by the strength of the law, which said, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” thus consigning us as sinners to the dominion of death, and death reigned over us, and in bondage also to sin, sin having dominion over us, and sin reigning over us unto death. Such was our captivity to sin and death confirmed also by the law of God, that we could not possibly be delivered from our captivity until the utmost demands of the law were canceled, and our captors taken captive and led into captivity.

By the subsequent captivity, we allude to the personal captivity of our Redeemer. He was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, and, as we have shown, he as bearing our sins, was numbered with the transgressors: led as a lamb to the slaughter, consigned to the dominions of death, and imprisoned in the grave until his triumphant resurrection in which we are in our text and context told that “He led captivity captive.” That is, he captured the very powers that had captivated his people, and had held him as their Surety in captivity, until the time of his resurrection. “Having spoiled principalities and powers,” (the principalities of sin and death, both of which had held regal dominion,) “he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” (Col. 2:15) The mighty principalities and powers which had reigned unrivaled from the entrance of sin into our world were conquered and led into captivity by the great Captain of our salvation, who said to John, “I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I live forever, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” Completely subjugated and put under him, neither hell nor death can possibly extend their power beyond the limits he has fixed for

them. He has destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The former captivity of his people is now a captive to our conquering King. Sin is vanquished; hell is subdued; Satan is held in a mighty chain, and his works are destroyed.

“Deep in the shades of gloomy death
The mighty prisoner captive lay;
The almighty captive left the tomb,
And rose to everlasting day.

See how the Conqueror mounts aloft,
And to his Father flies;
With scars of honor in his flesh,
And triumph in his eyes.”

Middletown, N. Y.
March 1, 1865

DEUTERONOMY 34:7

Elder Beebe: Sometime last summer I asked you to give your views on Deuteronomy 34:7, and you gave notice in the next paper, that you would attend to it; but it must have escaped your recollection. You will oblige me by giving your views on that text now.

Isaac C. Garrison.
Cheviot, Ohio,
February 28, 1865.

Reply: The text reads thus: “And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.” This may seem a very short obituary for so eminent a servant of the Lord; but we would commend its brevity to the attention of those who write obituaries for the “Signs.” Should this example meet with favor, it will greatly relieve us, and silence the murmuring of many who object to our filling so large a space of our paper with prolix eulogies of their dead. There were many things remarkable connected with the death and burial, as well as the life, of this distinguished servant of God. He was born in Egypt, and at a time of violent and cruel persecution; his preservation from the fury of the tyrant when but an unconscious infant was truly wonderful; his home in the royal palace of him who had sent forth the murderous decree to slay him, and his being adopted and succored by Pharaoh’s daughter until he came to years, shows the perfect control our God has over the wrath of men. But in his death it is remarkable that he died in the land of Moab, and was buried there by the Lord, and his sepulcher no man could ever find.

Regarded only as a natural incident, it was remarkable that Moses, at the age of a hundred and twenty years, should have retained his strength and faculties unimpaired up to the time of his death. But wonders of still greater magnitude were prefigured in all the history of this man of God, and we believe

that every incident of the life and death and burial of Moses is full of spiritual instruction for the people of God. We have not time or space, nor is it needful in answering the enquiry of our friend, to dwell upon the figurative import of more than what is set forth in our text.

First, that he was a hundred and twenty years old when he died.

Second, that at that age he was unimpaired in vigor and perception.

In the figurative import of our subject, Moses personates the law, as holding dominion over the people of God until its dominion over them is annulled by their redemption from its power by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who having risen from the dead, succeeds and supersedes the law, as Joshua succeeded and superseded Moses in leading the tribes of Israel into the promised land. Although Moses and Aaron, representing the Jewish law and priesthood, were sent to lead forth the oppressed Hebrews from Egypt, and to conduct them in their meanderings in the wilderness, they could not conduct them into the promised land. Aaron died at Mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom (Numbers 20:23), and Moses, as we have seen, at, or near Mount Nebo, in the land of Moab, thus signifying to us that neither the works of the law, nor the sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood, can bring the children of God into their promised gospel inheritance of rest.

The age of Moses, to our mind, only expresses the idea of his being full of years, and points to the continuance of the law and the prophets until John; or the introduction of the gospel dispensation. As a prophet, Moses himself said to Israel, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he saith unto you (Acts 3:22) (See also Deuteronomy 18:15)." The hundred and twenty years fulfilled the measure of days which God allotted to Moses, and figuratively signifies the amount of time that God's redeemed children must be held under tutors and governors, differing nothing from servants though heirs of immortality.

It is a happy consideration to the children of God that Moses was not allowed to pass over Jordan, and into the promised land. It is true Moses, from Mount Pisgah, was allowed to see the land afar off, even as the law anticipated the glory of the kingdom of Christ. But if Moses had followed the Ark of God through Jordan into the land of promised rest, it would have signified that the law should still hold dominion over the saints under the gospel dispensation. But Jordan was to the Hebrews then what gospel baptism is now to those who believe and have entered into that rest which remains for the children of God. But we will pass to the consideration of the second part of our subject.

Second. His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. Taking Moses, in our text, as representing the law, as we feel warranted by the example of Paul (II Corinthians 3:13,17), in the piercing eye, and undiminished force of Moses to the very end of his ministry, we have a striking illustration of the keen perception of the law in taking cognizance of the thoughts and intents of our hearts, and its natural force in holding delinquents until the utmost jot and tittle of its demands are canceled.

The eye of the law of God was not dim when from the first transgression in the garden, through the vista of succeeding ages it could see and testify of the coming of the great law-fulfiller, and with sufficient natural force, hold him responsible for the transgressions of all his members. In all its types and predictions, the undimmed eye of the law was steadfastly fixed on him who should come, as in the volume of the book it was written of him, not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them; to do and suffer all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. And when the fullness of time had come, and God sent forth his own Son, who was made under the law to redeem them that were under its dominion and curse, the eye of the law was quick to recognize him, and to testify of him. And when the last great struggle came on, although, to follow the figure, the law had attained its hundred and twentieth year; old as it was, and about to yield its dominion to our spiritual

Joshua, yet its eye could distinctly see all the iniquities of the people of God as laid on him, and with infallible accuracy summed up the crushing aggregate, and exacted the last jot and tittle at his bleeding hands.

Nor was its natural force abated! The nature of the law was inexorable and its force irresistible; stronger than the foundations of the universe were its inflexible demands, for although heaven and earth shall pass away, not a jot or tittle of the law could fail till all was fulfilled.

But perhaps the omniscience, and the omnipotent force of the law has been more clearly taught, and more sensibly understood by the children of God, in their own personal experience. When the commandment or law came, sin revived, and I died.

Reader, hast thou known the searching scrutiny and almighty power of the divine law in thine own case? When first quickened by the entrance of divine life, did you not indulge a hope that the law was blind, or that the eye of the law was at least dim, to the enormity of thy guilt? Did you not flatter yourself that it would be lenient with you, and in pity overlook what you in ignorance had done? Did you not propose in your mind to compromise the matter by doing the best you could, in hope that the law would accept that, and not exact a perfect and perpetual obedience, such as you could never attain unto? But no good resolutions, no penitential sighs, no ardent prayers, no flowing tears, nor overflowing grief could dim the eye of the law. It looked into the deep and hidden recesses of your heart, the secret chambers of your soul, and dragged into the broad glare of light such depravity and guilt as you had never dreamed were lurking in your nature. You found that you could hide nothing from the piercing eye of God's holy law. Guilt-stricken and in despair, you laid your hand upon your mouth, and cried in deep conviction, Guilty and unclean!

Nor, in your case, was the natural force, the force of that law whose nature was holy, just and good, which is exceeding broad, and invested with the authority of God himself, in the least degree abated. It still possessed all the force which it displayed when its thunder tones made Sinai tremble to her base, the mountains skip like rams, and the hills like lambs. You died. All your legal hopes gave up the ghost; for you could not meet its stern demands, nor hide from its searching gaze, and never will you be permitted to forget that the eye of the law was not dim, nor its natural force abated.

The reason assigned why Moses and Aaron could not go into the promised land, was because of the smiting of the rock from whence water came forth for the salvation of Israel. Paul said, "And that rock was Christ (I Corinthians 10:4)." If then the apostle could recognize in the smitten rock a type of Christ; we may reasonably conclude that Moses and Aaron in the same connection represented the law and the Levitical priesthood, and the application of the figure is seen, when he who is the Rock of our salvation was smitten by the law; and from him as the fountain of living water, the river of life gushed forth. But the law could hold dominion over God's redeemed people no longer; it could pursue them no further. Not because of any inefficiency in the law to execute its legitimate or natural functions; for its eye was not dim, nor its natural force abated. Like Moses in the figure, retaining all his powers and strength of vision until he died, so the law remained in all its force until its demands were fulfilled. And then, in full force and vigor, it died. It died in all its relations to the Israel of God, the same as Moses' power and dominion ceased to the Hebrews when he expired on Mount Nebo. Moses was succeeded by Joshua, whose name and work made him the special type of our spiritual Joshua, or **Jesus**. Both names signify a Savior. Now then, we see that Moses could not bring the chosen tribes to rest; to that promised land which prefigured the gospel kingdom of Christ. But Jesus our spiritual Joshua, or leader, having received from the rod in Moses' hand, the stroke due to our transgressions, having fulfilled all the demands of the law and justice of God, has finished transgression, and made an end of sin; has

brought in everlasting righteousness. He has redeemed his people from the dominion, as well as from the curse of the law; and they are now dead to the law by the body of Christ, and the old husband to whom they were bound being dead to them, there remained no legal impediment to their marriage unto him that is risen from the dead, that they should henceforth bring forth fruit unto God. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:1,2).”

“Israel rejoice, now Joshua leads!
He’ll bring your tribes to rest;
So far the Savior’s name exceeds
The ruler and the priest.”

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1865.

GENESIS 3:22,23

Elder G. Beebe; Dear Sir: If you have light on the subject, and time to write, and space for publication, please give your views on Genesis 3:22,23, especially on the latter part: “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken.”

Ephraim J. Pemberton,
Rushville, Ill.
December 21, 1864.

Without claiming any extraordinary light on the true figurative import of the words of this text, we will venture to give such views as we have on the subject, hoping they may serve to enlighten those who are anxiously inquiring after the truth, and, if nothing more, lead them to a close examination of the Scriptures.

We do not understand the account given of the creation of the world, the entrance of sin, the fall of man and the early propagation of his seed, etc., to have been written as a mere history of events to gratify the prying curiosity of men in the subsequent ages of the world. The book of Genesis is not a record of facts noted as they transpired and so transmitted to posterity, like all profane history, but written by Moses more than two thousand years after the creation of the world. As Moses wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we infer not only the sacred truth of what is written as the testimony of God himself, but also that the sacred import of the record is, like all other parts of divine revelation, the opening of the mouth of God in parables, and the uttering of dark sayings, and all designed to be made plain in due

time to the expanding understanding of the children of God by the same Spirit which inspired Moses to write. Instead then of reading it as a mere literal history of events, we regard every line and every word as the inspiration of God himself, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which are to be fulfilled in the fullness of the dispensation of times. A clear understanding of these early records will show to the divinely instructed pupil in the school of Christ a perfect and beautiful cluster of types pointing to Christ, and the salvation of his church and people, in which the two parallel mysteries, godliness and iniquity, are strikingly developed. Had we the ability, the time and space, we would review the whole record from Genesis 1:1 to the text on which we are now requested to bestow our attention, but we must let it suffice for the time, to express some thoughts on the expulsion of man from the garden of Eden, and some things therewith connected. First, God in his triune relation as Father, Word and Spirit, not as three Gods, but the only true and living God, revealed in creation, providence and grace, created the world by the Word, for, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God (Hebrews 11:3)." "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (Hebrews 1:1,2)." This accounts for the plural form of the pronoun: "Let us make man in our image." And in our text, "Behold, the man is become as one of us." Christ is declared to be the image of the invisible God, and the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory (see Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3), and Adam is the figure of him that was to come (Romans 5:14). Man was not, as we understand, directly the image of the invisible God, but was made after that image, a facsimile, a figure, a type of Christ; "after our likeness." Not like God in infinity, immortality or deity, but as a figure of the dominion of Christ over all created things, having dominion over the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, fishes of the sea and every creeping thing, etc. Nor do we understand that his created elements or perfections were like the uncreated attributes of his Creator, for then he could not have fallen, but the likeness and image was confined to his being the figure of him that was to come, that is, of Christ. Not only as lord over the animal creation, but also as the head of a posterity which God had created in him, also in his identity with his bride, and finally in all that is recorded of him in the Scriptures; he was the first Adam, Christ the second Adam. But let us not mistake, for that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural, but afterward that which is spiritual, as seen in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was of the earth earthy, his antitype is heavenly; the first was natural, the last spiritual; the first was made a living soul, the second is a quickening Spirit.

Second, the first estate of man. "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Here in an earthly paradise, which is also figurative of the church or garden of the Lord, man in his primeval rectitude was placed by his Creator, surrounded with every comfort for the eye and for the taste, all planted by the Lord God himself, and growing luxuriantly without the labor of man, and all perfectly adapted to the condition of man in his original purity, yet man was natural, and the garden natural, and all their surroundings were natural. In this consisted the adaptation, for if the garden and its trees, its plants and fruits, had been spiritual, they could neither have been pleasant to his sight nor good for food. As a natural man he could not see or discern spiritual things, nor could his natural and earthly nature have subsisted on spiritual food, yet Adam, being natural, could and did prefigure Him that is spiritual; and so also did the garden and trees, plants, rivers, etc., being natural, prefigure the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this garden was found every tree and everything that was pleasant to the sight, or good for food, or that could contribute

to the support and comfort of man in his then present condition, but of these we propose to notice two trees which are particularly mentioned, and to show what they particularly represented.

1. The tree of life is mentioned, which was in the midst of the garden. This tree was among those of which man had permission to eat freely, and so long as he continued to eat of it, and obeyed the command of God to touch not, taste not and handle not the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it was to him the tree of life, for without transgression he could not die. The figurative allusion points to the tree of life, of which Christ is the Root and the Offspring (Revelation 22:2,14,16), the type being natural and the antitype spiritual.

2. The tree of knowledge of good and evil, being the only tree or thing in the garden that man was forbidden to touch or taste, is appropriately called the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for man without touching or tasting it could not have known evil, any more than we could have known sin except the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet." But in partaking of it man became a sinner, and with his transgression death entered and passed on all the unborn posterity, which, being in him, were involved in the transgression, and consequently to the knowledge of evil. This tree, we understand, was designed to represent the law of God, the transgression of which brings guilt, condemnation and death to the offenders. In support of this position we assume, and shall endeavor to show, that the law of God answers to this figure, beyond all doubt or controversy.

It is a tree of knowledge of sin; of evil. "The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law (I Corinthians 15:56)." Where there is no law there can be no transgression, for sin is the transgression of the law. Hence it is written, By the deeds of the law no flesh living shall be justified in the sight of God. In perfect agreement, as we conceive, with the application of the figure were the circumstances connected with the giving of the law at Sinai. Three days before the descent of the Lord to proclaim his law he commanded Moses to sanctify the people of Israel, and to admonish them to come not up to touch the mountain on pain of death. "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live (Exodus 19:12,13)." And after Moses had faithfully given this charge, and the time appointed had come, the Lord called Moses to him and again sent him down to repeat the solemn warning: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down; and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee; but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them." (Exodus 19:21-24; compared with Hebrews 7:18-21) How remarkable the coincidence when we compare the charge given to Adam (Genesis 2:17) and the charge given as copied above concerning Mount Sinai. The law of God, as given to Adam in this figure, and as reiterated in its covenant and perceptive form by Moses, clearly shows that no man can approach unto God by the law, for it could not give life, or righteousness should have been by it, but it is the ministration of death. An apostle tells us that the law is not made for a righteous man, and again that the law entered that the offence might abound, and that sin might appear exceeding sinful. So we see that man while in innocence could have no knowledge of evil, and consequently could not by comparing know good and evil, or good from evil.

Third. We now propose to show that Adam in partaking of the tree of knowledge, as in every other incident recorded of him, was the figure of him that was to come. Eve, who was created in Adam, and a

part of himself, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and called woman, because she was taken out of the man, living in his vitality and existing in his flesh and bones, bore the same natural relationship to him that the church of God does of spiritual relation and identity to the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. For we are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. And as Eve was the bride, the wife of Adam in this figure, so the church of God, which was created in the second Adam, was and is the bride, the Lamb's wife, his body, his flesh and his bones. In this presentation of the figure let us trace the analogy in a few particulars. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression (I Timothy 2:13,14)." Was it not even so in the application of these words to Christ and the church? Might not our apostle here add, as in Ephesians 5:32, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church?" Certainly Christ in identifying himself with the transgression of the church was not deceived. Well did he count the cost; well did he know that in bearing the sins of his people he must die, and for that very purpose came he into the world, and was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Well did he know that to redeem his church unto God he must be made sin for her, that he must bear her sins in his own body on the tree. Now hear what Adam said when arraigned in judgment, and imagine his words as uttered prophetically as from the lips of Christ, the second Adam: "The woman whom thou gayest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Some have fancied themselves wise enough to tell us what were the thoughts and design of Adam in using these nineteen words, instead of frankly acknowledging the truth in a single word. Some have concluded that his object was to charge the blame on Eve, or on the Creator himself, for having given him such a wife, but we confess that our line is too short to reach the thoughts and intents of Adam's mind; but whatever they were, we read in them a prophecy of the Husband of the church of God. "Thine they were, and thou gayest them me." For what purpose were they given him? This is the will of the Father, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing. And, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24)."

Now let us consider the circumstances of Adam's complicity with his wife in the transgression. How stood the case? Did not Adam tell the truth in saying that God gave him the woman to be with him as a companion and help-meet for him? God had said, It is not good for man to be alone; I will make him a help-meet for him. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man; and Adam said, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The design of God that she should be with him, as a help-meet for him, and that through them to people this world, is too apparent to admit of contradiction, and the type with equal clearness applies to the spiritual Adam, and Jerusalem, which is above, and is free, and the mother of all the promised seed, designed to people the new heaven and new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Shall we now indulge in vain speculation, and suppose Adam, being not deceived, had refused to follow Eve into the transgression? What then? Eve is involved in sin, she must be driven out of the garden alone and forbidden to eat of the tree of life; a separation final and everlasting must have followed. Adam in innocence could not go with her, Eve in transgression could not return to Adam. Suppose again, when the bride elect of Christ, beguiled by the old serpent, had fallen under the curse of the righteous law of God, the heavenly Bridegroom had resolved to let her go. An indissoluble union must then have been broken, a purpose of the immutable God must have failed, and the Bridegroom and the bride irrecoverably put asunder. Did

Adam love his guilty bride? Did Jesus love his fallen and law-condemned people? Though Eve could not return to Adam, Adam could go to her, and such was the strength of his love, stronger than death, it was the only alternative. Rather than part, he plunges with her into death, that the union may be perpetuated. And hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth. God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Thus far, then, the figure bears in its application to Christ and his church. Truly, “He hates putting away.” Once more: How was Adam involved in the transgression of Eve? Simply by receiving at the hand of his erring wife the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which we have taken to represent the law, and eating thereof, and by doing this came legally under the penalty of that law, and irrevocably doomed to die on that selfsame day, and do we not see the application of the figure to our divine Redeemer? He lived and reigned above the law that his people had transgressed, but to carry out the eternal purpose that, where he is, there his church shall be also. He bowed his heavens and came down. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. At the hand of his church he receives the fruits of the tree, or law; he who knew no sin is made sin for us, that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. His children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise takes part of the same. His people are transgressors, he is voluntarily numbered with the transgressors, and the iniquities of all his people are laid on him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. Partaking of the fruit of the law, he dies, but being in this so far superior to his type, he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. Adam the first could go no further than to involve himself in the condemnation under which his beguiled and deceived wife had fallen; he could share with her fate, but had no power to redeem or to deliver her.

Fourth. We come now to that part of the subject on which our correspondent desired us to write, as stated in Genesis 3:22, which we propose to consider in connection with the two succeeding verses of the same chapter.

1. We will offer a few thoughts on the import of the declaration of the Lord God in relation to the changed condition of man in consequence of having eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.” The figure was now complete. Adam, who, according to the express purpose of his creation, was to be a type, likeness, figure or image of his Maker, of Christ, of him that was to come, of “one of us,” had now attained to the perfection of that imagery, not only as the first Adam, the head and embodiment of his natural posterity, a perfect figure of the second Adam, who is the head and embodiment of the spiritual seed, in whom also was the life and substance of his bride, but now, in eating of the tree which prefigured the law, Adam, who knew no sin or evil before, is made sin for her. While in a state of innocency what could even Adam know? But now, in receiving at the hand of his wife the fruit of the tree, the law, by which is the knowledge of sin, or of evil, the law being the ministration of death, he came to a knowledge of evil, and thus more perfectly the figure of Him that was to come; the figure of him who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners; of him who knew no sin, yet for the sake of his church became sin, by being made under the law, and by the assumption of all his people, who thus by following his bride in the transgression secured the purpose for which she was given to him, namely to be with him. Thus the man became as one of us in that particular, that is, by his knowledge of good and evil, the type of him who should bear his people’s sins in his own body on the tree. We cannot perceive that Adam’s knowledge of good and evil made him like his Maker in any other sense than that of being the figure of him that was to come, in actually coming under the curse and penalty of the law, for even

of good and evil his knowledge could not approach the infinite knowledge of the supreme God. The “one of us” we understand was and is the man who is the fellow of the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 13:7).

2. Man’s expulsion from the garden was a consequence resulting from his connection with the tree of knowledge of good and evil. “And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.” The evil which Adam knew, in consequence of eating of the tree of knowledge, was a pollution of his nature, and the sentence of mortality; death. “For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” This sentence placed Adam and his posterity beyond the reach of the tree of life. Christ’s coming under the law and bearing the sins of his people involved the necessity of his death in the same day, or dispensation, in which he was made of a woman, made under the law. In fulfillment of this figure, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate, that is, without the gate of Jerusalem, which figuratively signifies the same as did the garden of Eden. Here, perhaps, the figure ends, for Adam could not redeem himself or his bride. He had no power to raise from the dead or deliver himself, his bride or his posterity from the sentence of the law which consigned him to death. The tree of life in the midst of Eden, which was accessible to man as long as he remained in the garden, to agree with this whole cluster of figures, was natural life. As long as he remained in innocence and abstained from the forbidden fruit of the law, the tree of life secured to him that life which he had, and all the comforts adapted to his condition as an innocent man. He required no other, and indeed was not capacitated for the appreciation of spiritual life; that capacity he could not have without being born again, for the Scripture declares that that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural. And again, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit,” etc. And, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Now the sentence of death being upon Adam, and all his race in him, demanded his expulsion from the garden in which was the tree of life. The reader will observe that though the tree of life in the garden represented the natural life which man then possessed, yet it was figurative of the tree of spiritual, immortal or eternal life, which is found only in the midst of the paradise of God.

3. Prohibited now from the tree of life, and condemned to die, we see man totally divested of all power to put forth his hand. He could not take of the tree of life to shield himself from the execution of the sentence which had passed on him, and on all mankind in him. From the hour in which he was driven out of the garden neither he nor any of his race have had power to perpetuate their natural lives one moment beyond the bounds which God has set. The days of man are as the days of an hireling, so that he cannot pass the bounds.

4. But viewing the tree of life, as figurative of that tree of spiritual life of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the root and offspring, we have one of the most clear and positive presentations of the total inability of man to raise himself from a state of condemnation and death, either by the law or the gospel. Not by the law, for he is condemned already by the law, and the wrath of God abides upon him; nor by the gospel, for he is driven out from the garden in which that tree is planted, and the way to it is kept by cherubim and a flaming sword, which turneth every way, meeting him at every possible point. How utterly hopeless are all the efforts of men to put forth their hand. The cherubim, or spirit of the holy law, watches every movement with untiring vigilance, and the flaming sword meets them at every turn. Nothing that the hand of man can perform, no offering that in their hand the sons of men can bring, can gain for them access to the tree of life. Nothing short of the way of holiness, the new and living way which God has consecrated for his people through the flesh of our Redeemer, can open to any man the gates of salvation. Christ is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man hath seen, or can see, whom no man can approach unto. He is the Way, and the Truth, and Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by him. Nor is there any possible evasion of this

truth. He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. The way of the tree of life is securely kept; no fowl knoweth it, the vulture's eye hath not seen it, nor hath the lion's whelp trodden it.

In connection with the foregoing, it may be well to consider the destination of fallen man, as long as he shall remain on earth. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man," etc. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." How changed is the condition of man! Expelled from the garden which God had planted and blessed, where every comfort grew spontaneously that he could possibly need or desire while in a state of innocence, but now having become a sinner, and fallen under the curse of the law which he had violated, the productions of this garden were no longer suited to his condition, and even the outer world or earth into which he was cast was unsuited to his condition until God, for his sake, had pronounced a curse upon it. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Now doomed to encounter the thorns and thistles, and in sweat and labor, in toil and sorrow was he doomed to seek his subsistence from the earth out of which he was taken, until his wearisome days of labor and sorrow should be accomplished, and then his earthly body should sink back into the bosom of the earth still groaning under the curse which for his sake was laid upon it. How strikingly in all this is the present condition of his fallen progeny portrayed! Fallen man doomed, as a righteous judgment of God, to seek and labor and sweat and toil to procure support and happiness from the earth, and forbidden and prohibited from putting forth his hands to take of the tree of life. Is it then surprising that the propensities of man are all drawn to the earth? Not only is he toiling for the support of his earthly body, but also for the comfort of his earthly mind. All his conceptions of a religious nature are also worldly, earthly, sensual and devilish, and as such they are always work-mongrel, and in his alienation from the tree of life he can conceive of no higher order of religion than that which he can attain to by his works, and works, too, which must perish and finally be consumed, when the earth and all the works thereof shall be burned up.

Lastly. As Eve and all the kindred of the earth are embraced in the earthly Adam, and all die in him, so all the church and seed of Christ are quickened in the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven. In Romans 5:14, we read that after the similitude of Adam's transgression he (Adam) is the figure of him that was to come, that he is in the similitude the figure of Christ, who has now come. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence [not offenses, but a single offence] of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded to many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification. For if by one man's offence [or as in the margin, by one offence] death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one [or by one offence] judgment came upon all men to condemnation [that is, upon all the posterity of the one man]; even so by the righteousness of one, [or as rendered in the margin, by one righteousness] the free gift came upon all men [that is, all whom he represented] unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Thus in the transgression of the first Adam, whereby he involved

all his natural posterity in sin, guilt, condemnation and death, the inspired apostle could see a similitude of redemption and justification to life of all the seed of Christ by his righteousness.

We have extended our reply to our correspondent to a great length, but venture to hope that we have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge. We have felt unwilling to give such views as we have on the single verse proposed, believing that we could make ourselves better understood by taking the general range of the whole subject. If our prolixity shall render what we have written dull and uninteresting to some, we hope that some at least may read it with profit and edification.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 1, 1865.

MATTHEW 13:38

In reading the letter of sister Hannah Shields, which will be found in this paper, we have felt inclined to offer some remarks explanatory of the parable from which the text at the head of this article are copied. There has been, especially in some of the Western and Southern States, much speculation, controversy and confusion which has involved some of our brethren on the subject of what has been denominated the “Two Seed Doctrine,” and to the extent that some churches and associations have been rent asunder and many loving hearts have been pained in witnessing the alienation of feelings engendered by the injudicious and intemperate discussions which have been indulged in by those who have taken part in the strife. What we allude to transpired many years ago; of late years we have heard but very little on the subject. Our present object is not to provoke a renewal of the controversy by any means; but simply to give what appears to us to be the very clear and manifest meaning of the parable. To avoid ruffling the feelings of any who may feel sensitive on the subject, we will in this article carefully avoid, as far as possible, a description of the positions formerly taken, the arguments employed, and the parties most prominent in the debates. It is very possible that all parties may have erred to some extent at least, either in their views, or in the spirit and temper which they evinced. Nor dare we claim that what we may write shall be without fault. We only ask that our views be carefully considered and received only so far as manifestly sustained by the scriptures of truth. We shall studiously avoid giving anything like a banter to any who may fail to entertain the same views that we hold; for the reason that we are unwilling to open our columns for debate on the subject. The interruption of harmony in years that are past is perhaps a sufficient reason why we should guard against a recurrence of a similar evil.

The words on which we are about to comment were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ in reply to the enquiry of his disciples concerning the parable of the wheat and tares, which he had just before spoken (among other parables) to the multitude. When he had sent away the multitude to whom it had been addressed, and “went into the house,” his disciples requested him to “Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. And he answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man, The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels,” etc. We do not attempt to explain the parable; for our Lord has himself explained it; but

our object is to elucidate as far as we may be enabled the explanation which he has given. And in doing this we propose to notice his declarations.

First. The field is the world.

Second. The good seed are the children of the kingdom.

Third. The tares are the children of the wicked one. And in connection with these three propositions we shall have occasion to notice by whom, in what manner, and for what purpose the good seed are sown by the Son of man: and also the enemy by whom the tares were sown, and when and how, and for what purpose.

First. The field is the world. That is, the field of the parable, or the parabolical field; the field is used in the parable to mean the world. But the term *world* in the scriptures is variously used, sometimes in a general or literal sense, to signify the natural heavens and earth, and all things which they contain. At other times the same word is frequently used to signify only the human family, including both Jews and Gentiles. And again at other times its application is restricted to either all the elect of God, Jews and Gentiles, or all the non-elect, both Jews and Gentiles, as in I John 2:2, and I John 5:19. The world in this case intended is the world which answers to the field, into which the Son of Man has sown the good seed of the children of God. Is there any conceivable sense in which the precious, incorruptible seed has been sown in the world only as it has been implanted or sown in the hearts of the Jews and Gentiles, which are redeemed from the kindred of the earth? The natural elements of the material world, earth, air, fire and water, cannot be intended; for it is not in them that the Son of man has sown the good seed; for that seed being the children of the kingdom is not of this world. Nor can this field mean all the animal world; for in no part of the animal creation is the incorruptible seed sown, but in the children of men.

The *world* answering to the field of the parable is then the world of mankind; not of the beast of the field, or the fowls of the air, for “his delights were with the sons of men, before there were any fountains abounding with water, or ever the highest parts of the habitable world were made.”

That there was no distinction in the nature or condition of the race of mankind in their relation to Adam or to the earth, is so fully declared in the scriptures as to require from us but very few words. The apostle has demonstrated that all the world of mankind are in their nature alike, and there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Understanding then that the world of mankind are the field of our parable, we pass to consider:

Second. “The good seed are the children of the kingdom,” that is of the kingdom of Christ; of heaven. This cannot mean the children of the flesh, nor the fleshly nature of even the children of the kingdom.

1. Because that Christ is not the sower of our fleshly nature, he is a spiritual Head, and his seed are not of this world, even as he is not of this world. His kingdom was chosen and set up in him, and its subjects are the “seed that shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30).” This generation is “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people (I Peter 2:9).” Not peculiar in our natural organization or origin; but in our spiritual relation to Christ. “Being born again, not of corruptible [that is fleshly] seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass (I Peter 1:23,24).” The grass, or flesh is not born of the incorruptible seed, which the Son of man soweth; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and is born of corruptible seed, and therefore likened unto grass; the seed of which was not sown by Christ, as the Son of man.

2. Because that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; it cannot therefore be that seed which is the children of the kingdom of which Christ was speaking. The inspired apostle declares most positively that, “They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:8).” And the same apostle shows the incapacity of the children of the flesh, or the seed of the earthly Adam to inherit the kingdom. “Now this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (I Corinthians 15:50).” And our Lord himself has said, “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” This should settle the point. If flesh, or that which is born of the flesh, as the seed of the flesh cannot inherit, nor even see the kingdom of God, how can the distinct relationship be in the flesh?

3. We would rest the argument on the testimony already presented if it were not that some have seemed to understand and to apply the parable of the wheat and tares to some supposed distinction in the natural creation or procreation of the two seeds, in the earthly Adam. Elder Parker, if we have understood him, held that all the children of the kingdom were sown in their natural creation in the first Adam, and they only were originally created in him; and that all the children of the wicked one were afterwards added to the conception of Eve by the Devil.

If that were the case, and if this parable were intended to illustrate that doctrine, it would prove quite too much for Elder Parker’s purpose; for if the children of the kingdom were sown by the Son of man in the natural creation of the earthly Adam, they would not require a second birth; for in that case the children of the kingdom would be developed as such in being born of the flesh. Whereas God has informed us that those to whom Christ has given power to become the sons of God were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. The parable cannot be so construed as to represent the Son of man as sowing the good seed twice; first in the natural, and afterwards in a spiritual birth.

But this matter is put to rest by the sweeping declaration of Paul in the midst of Mars Hill. “God that made the world and all things therein,” etc. “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation (Acts 17:24,26).” All were created in Adam, all fell in him, all die in him. And of those of his race whom God has chosen to salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, we are told that they “were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Ephesians 2:2).” The awful depravity of all the natural progeny of the earthly Adam is set forth in striking language, “There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together [mind that, *they are together, not apart*] become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:10-18).” Should any one attempt to argue that this description does not include those whom Christ came to redeem; that the children of the kingdom were not in their earthly nature so vile as these, then they must encounter Paul again in verse 9 of the same chapter, “What then, are we better than they?” Whose damnation he had just said was just. “No, in no wise.” If Paul and all that were at that time in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints (Romans 1:7) were in no wise better by nature than those of whom Paul says “whose damnation is just;” where shall we find in the earthly nature of man any development of the good seed sown by the Son of man. Certainly not in Paul himself, for he himself testifieth that in his flesh was no good thing. We will pass to the third general division of our subject.

Third. “The tares are the children of the wicked one.” But, in what sense are we to understand this relationship to consist? Certainly not in their nature; for the scriptures make a wide distinction between the nature of men and of devils. All men are of one nature, as we have already proved; all descended by natural generation from the first Adam: were all made of one blood and all were by nature alike children of wrath. All men have their original formation of the dust of the ground, and all by one decree must return to dust alike. All mankind are, as we have shown, but the field into which the good and bad seed is sown. Devils are not composed of souls and earthly bodies, like men. Adam was made a living soul, but such was not the record of Satan. The relationship must therefore be understood as of a spiritual nature, not by the order of generation which is peculiar to the children of men. The Devil is the spirit that works in the children of disobedience; and it is impossible in the nature of things that spirit should beget matter or anything out of its own nature. The tares in our parable then are the production of the Devil in those who have received of his spirit. When Jesus said unto the murderous Jews, “Ye are of your father, the devil (John 8:44),” he proved it by showing that they were actuated by his spirit which they possessed, for he admitted at the same time that they were Abraham’s seed, that is according to the flesh; but he denied that they were the children of Abraham in the spirit which they had received from the wicked one. What proved them to be of their father the Devil was that the works of their father they would do. The spirit and faith of Abraham would recognize Christ; but the spirit of Satan would go about to kill him. The father of that wicked spirit in them was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. “When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it.” The spirit of murder, of falsehood, and of opposition to Christ was the child in them of which the Devil is the parent; hence these reasons are urged in confirmation of his declaration that they were of their father the Devil. How else could they be at the same time the children of Abraham, and the children of the Devil? Their earthly nature, or flesh, was the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; but not in that spiritual sense in which Abraham was the father of the children of promise. They were Jews outwardly in the flesh, in the letter; but not in the spirit, whose praise is not of men but of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ was himself of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh; but that did not constitute him the Son of God, for he was the Son of God before Abraham existed in the flesh. “Before Abraham was, I am.” The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God. So, on the other hand, these Jews being the children of the flesh of Abraham, or of Adam did not constitute their relation to the Devil. So also we may say of all the children of God; this relationship is purely spiritual, “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God,” whether they be of the circumcision or of the uncircumcision. “For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision;” for if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and we may also infer, if any man have not the spirit of Satan, he is none of his. In all cases in the Scriptures where men were called serpents, vipers, or children of the Devil, it has been in reference to the spirit which they have received of Satan. John says, “Cain was of that wicked one [the same wicked one who sowed the tares] and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous (I John 3:12).”

In this last text we have a clear illustration. Abel was righteous and a child of God, had received the spirit of God, and by that faith which John says is born of God, offered a more excellent offering. Cain was of that wicked one, and therefore “slew he him;” clearly manifesting the spirit of murder, of false religion, and persecution, which emanates from the wicked one. Yet Cain and Abel were brothers, and of the same parentage in the flesh. The spirit of murder, fanaticism and falsehood in Cain was born of the Devil; but in his nature he was the first born of Adam and Eve. While Abel, his brother, born of the same parents after the flesh, possessed the spirit of truth and righteousness which is born of God.

Fourth. “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.” By the Son of man our Lord Jesus Christ is intended. The good seed is that spirit of life and immortality which was with the Father, and was manifested (I John 1:2) which was given to the saints in him according to the divine record. “And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.

1. Presuming that none will deny that Christ in his incarnation is the Son of man, we shall not occupy much time or space in proving what we think none will deny. He claims not only to be the Son of man, but also the Son of God. While in his flesh he was the Son of man, and seed of the woman, in his divine nature as the Immortality and Quickening Spirit of his body and members, he is the Son of God, the *Word* which was with God in the beginning, and the Word which was God; by whom and for whom all things are and were made. This Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and revealed his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Taking on him not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, he made his advent to our world as the child born, the Son given, whose name is “Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” Of him the holy psalmist sang in prophecy, “He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:6).”

2. The good seed, the spirit of immortality, was given to all the saints of God in him, as the natural life of the human family was given them in the earthly Adam. It is therefore contrasted with that corruptible seed by which the life of the first Adam is transmitted to his posterity, thus the saints, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass,” etc. “That which is born of the flesh,” and all flesh is as grass. Grass which springeth up out of the earth, and is corruptible and perishable, soon decays, and goes back again to the earth. But that incorruptible seed which is by the Word of God, liveth and abideth forever; for it is that life of God which was in the Word; and of which the Word has testified, saying, “I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” Peter informs us that the good seed which is by the Son of man, or by the Word of God, who was made flesh, and in whom was life is developed by the new birth of the children of the kingdom. Will any one say that the new birth develops in us anything but the spirit of immortal life by which it is begotten? Jesus says, “That which is born of the Spirit.” Then it cannot be matter; it cannot be flesh; it is spirit, and it is the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord which makes its possessors free from the law of sin which is in their members; that is, in their flesh. This seed being not only uncorrupted, but absolutely incorruptible, produces in its development the spirit of Christ, the spirit of truth and holiness. John, by inspiration, draws the line of discrimination between the two seeds, the children of God and the children of the devil. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for *his* [that is God’s] seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God,” that is, not born of God. “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him (I John 3:9,10,15).” The distinction is this: they who are born of God have eternal life in them; and this eternal life in them is the production of the incorruptible seed, which remaineth in them, where the Son of man has implanted or sown it; and its legitimate fruits are love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc., against which there is no law; and as, where there is no law there can be no transgression, so where this incorruptible seed remains, there can be no sin. We do not mean that that nature which is born of the flesh cannot transgress, or sin, for John said, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in

us.” Our earthly nature is not the production of the good or incorruptible seed, for it does not live and abide forever; it is called the old man, which is to be put off with its affections and lusts; but that good seed which the Son of man soweth, produces the life of Christ in us, and is therefore known in distinction from our old man as the new man, which after God (not after Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness.

But should argument fail to prove our position, we have but one further appeal to make. Reader, have you been born again of uncorruptible seed by the Word of God? If so, what are the developments of that birth? Has it produced in you a life which you never had before? Has it been manifested by the fruits of the Spirit, such as joy, love, peace, gentleness, goodness and faith; and brotherly kindness, etc.? Has it produced in you any other than spiritual emotions, holy desires, ardent love to God, to his people, to his precepts, his laws and his ordinances? Surely the Word and Spirit of God are in unison.

Lastly. He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man. We have seen that the enemy who soweth tares is the wicked one, and the production of that evil seed is the spirit of devils in the children of men; for devils can only propagate their own kind. The spirit of the wicked one begets the spirit of falsehood, persecution, murder, and all that is anti-christian; and it is the business of the devil and all his emissaries to sow tares even among the wheat; but we may rest assured there is none but the Son of man that can sow the good seed. He only hath life and immortality dwelling in the light; therefore no other one can implant that life and immortality in the field, or in the sons of men. The incorruptible seed must be by him, for he is the Word of God. He is the Everlasting Father of all his chosen generation; there can be no intermediate parentage; all who are born of God are born of the incorruptible seed which none but the Son of man can sow. He does not say in his exposition of the parable, He that *soweth the good seed*; but he that *soweth*. The work is still progressing, and he is still sowing the precious seed, and will continue to sow until the handful of corn is sown in the earth, the fruits whereof shall shake like Lebanon. In conclusion, we will add a few remarks on the closing verses of Christ’s explanation of the parable.

The harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels. Already those who are born and taught of God can see the angels, or messengers of the Son of man appearing to gather out of his kingdom. The children of the wicked one, who have lodged in the branches of the tree, are like briars and thorns intermingled with the wheat. Not only his commissioned ministers who in preaching that gospel which nominal professors and graceless hypocrites could never bear have been thus engaged; but the angels of his wrath, with the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, are pouring them out, and in the accomplishment of their commission, we feel a confidence that all of God’s people shall come out of Babylon, and all the devil’s tares will leave Christ’s kingdom; for every plant that our Heavenly Father has not sown or planted shall be rooted up. “His fan is still in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff shall be burned.”

In the parable the servants asked if they should gather up the tares? Their inquiry was in reference to the tares sown in the field which is the world or mankind. This they were forbidden to do; lest in their bungling attempts to exterminate heretics, hypocrites, and the children of the wicked one they should root up the good seed also. But he will see to it that all who have got into his kingdom without his grace shall be expelled without his favor.

But when the end shall come and with it the harvest spoken of, the church of God shall shine in her primitive glory, as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father. That day is surely near at hand. Let us watch and be sober, and “Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

One word to sister Shields. There is no controversy that we know of among Old School Baptists on the scriptural doctrine of *two seeds*. That a seed shall serve our Lord Jesus, and be counted to him for a generation; and that there is also a generation of vipers, and seed of evil doers, who are called the children of the wicked one: but that this distinction in our fleshly natures is disputed.

In regard to preaching the gospel on funeral occasions, and on all other occasions when a congregation is assembled, and willing to pay a respectful attention to the administration of the word, we had understood it to be our duty to so preach. We confess we did not know that the practice had its commencement with Rome. But even if the Romans practiced funeral preaching it still may not be wrong for us to preach Christ and the resurrection, when called on to do so. We are inclined, however, with sister Shields to believe the thing is sometimes carried to an excess. We believe some have imbibed a notion that the absence of some religious ceremony at a funeral betrays a disrespect for the dead; and some have gone so far as to call on preachers for whom they have no fellowship to officiate, rather than to bury their dead without religious service. We are no advocate for such superstition: but we do believe it is proper and expedient for the ministers of Jesus to preach the gospel whenever a solemn audience assembled desire it.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1865.

JOHN 14:1-3

“Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

The last solemn Passover supper that was ever to be eaten by divine authority had just been celebrated by our Lord and his disciples; the last lingering moments of the legal dispensation were ebbing away; Judas had received the sop, and Satan had entered his heart and taken the helm of his covetous, traitorous, perfidious mind, and he was at this moment negotiating with the priests and rulers of the people to betray the Son of man. The hour had arrived beyond which divine justice could defer his claim for vengeance no longer. The lowering clouds had gathered thick and darkly around the dear Redeemer, his soul, oppressed with sorrow, was bowed within him as the sin-bearing sacrifice now about to be offered; yet painful as was the bitter anguish of his holy soul, his thoughts were turned to his disciples, and amidst his stifled groans for what was now crushing his own soul, he said to his disciples, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you.” And that little while the golden moments were closely occupied in fortifying their minds for the dreadful scene which they were about to witness. Every moment was fully occupied, from the eating the Passover and institution of the supper, to the time of his arrest, in instructions to the disciples, and in communion, prayer and intercession to the Father. The substance of all these instructions and prayers is recorded in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. Let them be often read and solemnly considered by all who love the Lord and hope in his salvation. On such an occasion how deeply

interesting and vitally important are the words which we are about to consider. Never was there such an occasion before, never can there be again, to try the faith and confidence of the saints of God. How suitable and how consoling the words: "Let not your heart be troubled." Although these words were addressed to the eleven, and through them to all the church of God, but one heart is recognized; he does not say hearts, but heart, for the primitive disciples were of one heart and one mind. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Not the heart of stone on which the Sinai covenant with Moses and the whole commonwealth of Israel was written, which was the center of their national vitality, by which they were embodied in distinction from all other nations, but that heart of flesh which was given to the mystical body of Christ, for Christ in his church is the center of spiritual vitality, of love, of unity and identity. He is the life and immortality of the church, which is his body. This Spirit of Christ in the members of his church is but one spirit, or heart, sending its vitality to every member. This heart was to be assailed by a dreadful trial, which was now about to fall with such crushing weight upon them. But, as though at once to let them know that he was fully aware of the approaching trial, and to give them a comforting assurance that it should result in their good and his glory, the kind, sympathetic words of encouragement are graciously spoken, Yield not to despair; let not your heart be troubled. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."~ The trial now approaching was peculiarly calculated to test their faith in him as the true Messiah that was to come. Although it might not shake their confidence in God, or lead them to fear that there is no God, was it not calculated to make them fear that Jesus was not the Son of God and Savior of his people, as they had understood him to be? It certainly did have that effect. They said despairingly, We verily thought it was he that should redeem Israel. But alas, that confidence was shaken when they saw him crucified and his lifeless body laid in the grave. Still, though fearing that they had been mistaken in regarding him as the Son of God, they betrayed no lack of faith in God. Now these words of assurance seem to imply that there was in all they should witness, if properly understood, nothing that ought any sooner to be allowed to shake their confidence in him as the mediatorial Head of the church than to shake their faith in the eternal Father. Again, the same faith which recognized the Father, also must necessarily recognize the Son of God as one with the Father, for none can know the Father but by revelation of Christ, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Our faith cannot be so divided as to believe in God and disbelieve in Christ, for there is but one faith, as we have proven, and he that has by that one faith seen the Son, hath seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father; he and the Father are one.

"In my Father's house are many mansions." This is the affirmation of an existing truth, and a most glorious truth, and his ability to describe his Father's house was an evidence that he was the Son of God. A stranger could not describe that house which is made without hands, and which is eternal in the heavens, but Jesus is the faithful and true witness. No man hath ascended up into heaven, but the Son of God has come down from heaven, and reveals all that is necessary for us to know of the house of God, and if there were anything more concerning his Father's house which his children ought to know, he would have told them. The house of God is his dwelling-place, his place of permanent abode, where he makes his home. His house is figuratively set forth in types and shadows of the Old Testament as the tabernacle in the wilderness, as the temples in Jerusalem, and in a more spiritual manifestation made to the patriarch Jacob, where in rapture he exclaimed, Verily, God was in this place, and I knew it not; this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. The gospel church and kingdom of Christ is called the house of God. Ye are God's building (I Corinthians 3:9). "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus

Christ (I Peter 2:5).” The house of God is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures, as Genesis 28:17; Joshua 9:23; Judges 18:31; 20:18; Psalm 42:4; 45:14; 42:8; 84:10; Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2, and in very many other passages, and yet we are informed that the Lord dwelleth not in houses made with hands. Figuratively he was said to dwell in the tabernacle in the wilderness, in the temples at Jerusalem, but all these were types, pointing to Christ and his church, or body, as the true spiritual dwelling-place of our God. “For the Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread (Psalm 132:13-15).” “His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God (Psalm 87:1-3).” Therefore the holy psalmist could say, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord (Psalm 122:1)” “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee (Psalm 84:1,4).” The psalmist exulted in the certainty of dwelling in the house of the Lord forever, because the Lord was his Shepherd. (Psalm 23:6) This was the fullness of his aspiration. “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple (Psalm 27:4).” This is the house which our Redeemer calls “My Father’s house,” in which he says “are many mansions.” Many opinions have been expressed in regard to the figurative import of the many mansions here spoken of, and to our mind the precise meaning is not as clear as we could desire. The true meaning, whatever it be, must be important, as we infer from the words of our Lord: “If it were not so, I would have told you.” A mansion, in the modern application of the word, is a dwelling-place, sometimes applied to a house, and sometimes to apartments or rooms of a house. In our text a distinction is implied between the house and the mansions. “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” The mansions are many, but the house of God is but one. So when other figures are used to express the same idea, one body and many members, or one city and many inhabitants, “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High (Psalm 46:4).” In the text last named, the city of God, which is but one, contains many tabernacles of the Most High. The same idea is expressed in I Corinthians 12:12-14: “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.” “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where was the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body (I Corinthians 12:18-20).” In changing the figures which represent the same kingdom, or church, from a house to a city, what in the former would be appropriately called mansions, in the latter would be more clearly expressed as houses, or tabernacles, and when a body is the figure, members of that body convey the same meaning. This to every citizen of the city of God is an appropriate dwelling, for “Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David (Psalm 122:3-5).” There is in the house of God a place or mansion for every member of the household of God; thrones of judgment to be occupied by the apostles to sit upon, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The sons of Zebedee could not change their allotted mansions or positions so as to sit one on the right and the other on the left hand of the King, when he should come into his kingdom, and as members of Christ, God has set each one in its appropriate place in the body of Christ as it hath pleased him. In the types of the ceremonial law the inheritance of each tribe was distinctly marked out and secured to each by an inalienable title, and so also in the positions assigned officially to patriarchs, prophets, priests,

Levities, captains, kings and subjects. These types all pointed to the order of the house of God under the gospel dispensation, for in them were exhibited the patterns of the things of the heavenly kingdom, and although they were all confined to the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances of a fleshly, carnal Israel under the law, no doubt prefigured the heavenly places in Christ Jesus under the gospel dispensation in the true tabernacle which God has pitched, and not man.

The question may very naturally arise, If this be the sense in which our Lord spake of the many mansions of his Father's house, why this special mention should be made of them on this most solemn occasion? All the words of our divine Lord were fitly spoken, well timed and full of vital interest to the saints. The organization of the gospel kingdom was now very soon to be manifested. The law and the prophets were until John; from the coming of John the kingdom of Christ was preached, that it was at hand, but the places in the gospel kingdom could not be attained until the last jot and tittle of the law should be fulfilled, until Christ should do and suffer all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets and in the Psalms, for he must suffer and then enter into his glory, in coming into which he would ascend his mediatorial throne, and when the Son of man should sit on the throne of his glory, the apostles who had followed him in the regeneration should also sit upon their twelve thrones. The deliverance of all his people should then be effected, and each should receive the mansion which was prepared for in him the house of God. Fully with Christ in his death all his members were quickened together with him, and they were raised up together and made to sit together in Christ Jesus. But in all this, as in all things, Christ must have the preeminence; he must go before them in sufferings and death, must be the first-fruits of them that slept in his resurrection, yet by vital union and identity of spirit bearing his sheaves with him. Hence the suitability of his solemn occasion to speak to them of the mansions, or heavenly places so soon to be occupied by them, when he should remove the bars of death, by abolishing death, and bring immortality to light in his resurrection, when at his command the everlasting doors should be opened, and the everlasting gates should lift up their heads, and the King of glory should come in with all the trophies of his deathless victory, and by his triumph prove that to believe in God is to believe also in him, and that the throne of his kingdom should be as firmly established and forever continue as unshaken as the throne of his eternal Father.

"If it were not so, I would have told you." They had been led to expect this and he would certainly have undeceived them if it were not so. Notwithstanding the terrible scenes immediately before them, which should so much try their confidence in him, the gloomy night of trial would soon be terminated, and the sable shades of darkness should be driven from their skies by the bursting light of his resurrection and the establishment of his kingdom and government as the Prince of Peace.

"I go to prepare a place for you." From the explanation which he gave the disciples in this connection we learn that he was going to his Father, for he said to them, "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." And in reply to the inquiry of Thomas he said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." This agrees with what he said unto Mary after his resurrection, and commanded her to tell the same to his brethren: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God (John 20:17)." He had also informed them that he was going to receive a kingdom, and to return again unto them. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:29,30)." This kingdom, which was appointed unto him of his Father, is the place which, according to our understanding, he was going to prepare for his disciples. Although as an inheritance of the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, the kingdom of heaven was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, according to Matthew 25:34, yet its manifest redemption and gospel organization awaited the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The God of

heaven was to set it up in the days of those kings of whom Daniel had prophesied. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession (Psalm 2:8)." "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Hebrews 1:5,8,9)." Thus it was written, and thus it behooved him to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and then to enter into his mediatorial glory as the King eternal, immortal and invisible, the only wise God our Savior.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." The "if" in this case is not to express doubt or uncertainty, for he had told the disciples that it was expedient for them, and that he would soon go away, and that his object in going away was to prepare a place for them where he would dwell with them uninterruptedly forever. Yet a little while and ye shall see me no more, and again a little while and ye shall see me. Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me hereafter. It was necessary that he should first suffer, and be the first to rise from the dead, but he assures them that he will come again and receive them unto himself, that where he is, there should they also be. True and faithful to his words of promise, he came again unto them after his resurrection, and abode with them a sufficient length of time to demonstrate his resurrection, and after his ascension he came unto them by his Spirit on the day of Pentecost, organized his kingdom in its gospel order, and into it received his disciples to go no more out forever. And again will he come to them in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and in their final resurrection in his image will he receive them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also. It is the will of the Father that of all he has given to Christ he should lose nothing, but that he should raise it up again at the last day. And this is also the will of the Son, who in his intercession has said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory (John 17:24)."

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1865.

FAITH

Dear Sir: Not having been a reader of your paper, I may in the following question repeat one which during your editorial labors you have often had propounded. It is on the subject of faith. Will you, or some of your correspondents, be so kind as to give your views on the proposition whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the creation or operation of his faith, or whether it be the exclusive gift of God? If your time and space will permit, your answer in the "Signs of the Times" will be very welcome.

R.W. Monroe.
Evansville, W. Va.
January 25, 1865.

By faith, we presume our correspondent means evangelical or gospel faith, that faith without which it is impossible to please God. According to Webster, and other standard lexicographers, the term may be variously applied, and the Scriptures speak of the faith of God, the faith of Christ, and faith of God's elect, and also of the faith of men, of devils, of living faith, and of dead faith. The Spirit of inspiration has through the apostles particularly described the origin, nature, power and vitality of the faith of the gospel, as faith that works by love and purifies the heart, which subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens, etc. From all that is said in the Scriptures of true, living and triumphing faith, we may infer that there is in the world a spurious, false, lifeless and deceptive faith, or what is called faith, and so received and regarded by the religious world. In the creation and operation of the faith of men and of devils, men and devils have much to do, and we need only to sum up their own testimony to show that it is a creature of their own; indeed, it bears their image and their superscription. So indeed they seem to understand it, and to speak of it as something which is required of and to be produced by ungodly sinners, as a price or condition of salvation. As in their appeals to the unregenerate, they represent that however destitute sinners may be of faith, they can originate it if they will, and that, too, without much cost or labor. It has often been asserted by their preachers that it is as easily produced as for a man to turn his hand over. The very presentation of the appeal of our correspondent for our views affords evidence that the power of the creature to create faith, and when created to put it in motion and control its operation, is contended for by many, and it is well known to be a cardinal doctrine in every Arminian work-mongrel creed. Of that kind of faith it would be folly for us to deny the power of creatures to create and manage. The machinery of anti-christ is apparent to every intelligent observer. History points us to ecclesiastical councils, in solemn convocation from time to time, under the protection of human powers organized expressly for the purpose of making creeds, to be enforced by pains and penalties, flames and faggots, racks and tortures, upon the children of this world, and their humanly devised creeds are received by millions as saving faith. In modern times, and in our own country, the machinery for the manufacturing of faith and piety embrace infant schools, Sabbath Schools, Bible classes, catechisms, scientific lectures, Theological Seminaries, and even our public district schools are almost universally used for the same deceptive purposes. All these, beside the drilling, forging and blowing, so common at excitement meetings, anxious benches and other means-using appliances, are in requisition. The kind of faith engendered by the power and ingenuity of men, by whatever means, mode or machinery, like the idols of the ancients of which we read, is destitute of vitality. There is no breath in the midst of it, unless it be the inspiration of delusion, fanaticism and will-worship, breathing slaughter against the cause and people of the living God. According to the solemn predictions of inspired wisdom the faith of anti-christ in the last days should be greatly facilitated by signs and lying wonders, and by all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:11,12)." (See also Revelation 13:12-14.) But the faith of which we understand our friend to inquire is as distinct and opposite to the faith of men and devils as holiness is opposite to and distinct from sin, as heaven is from hell. No creature can have anything to do, or in other words, can do anything in its creation or its operation.

First. No creature can have anything to do in creating it, because we are expressly told in the sacred record that Christ is the author and the finisher of it. (Hebrews 12:2) This declaration leaves no room

for creatures to operate in its creation. He who is the author is also the finisher. As in the creation of the world, God began and God finished the work, leaving no other beings room to claim that they had participated in its creation, so creatures are equally excluded from participation in the creation or production of the faith of the Son of God. He did not merely begin, and leave creatures to finish the work, for all his works are perfect, and that which is perfect cannot be improved. 1. Creatures, or created beings, are natural, all their powers and perceptions are natural, and must fail to comprehend or perform spiritual things; and faith is a spiritual and vital principle; it is therefore beyond the sphere of creature agency. All the faith that men can create is like themselves – natural. As a spider cannot spin a web from any material that it does not possess in its own filthy bowels, so the faith produced by creatures is not in whole nor in part the faith of the Son of God. 2. The faith of the gospel is spiritual, for it is the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). All fruits of the Spirit must be spiritual. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit (John 3:6); and the faith of the saints is born of God (I John 5:4); and it must therefore be spiritual, for being born of God, it must possess the life, power and immortality of God, and therefore is able to, and does overcome the world. 3. Creatures can have no part in the creation of the faith of Christ, nor can they even bring themselves into possession of it, or under its power, for the apostle positively declares that it is not of themselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8,9). 4. If it were the creature or production of men it would be the property of men, whereas the Scriptures declare that it is the faith of the Son of God. Galatians 2:20 says, “And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Paul had not therefore had anything to do in its creation. Again, it is called the faith of God, (Romans 3:3) as it could not be called if it were of the creature.

The second inquiry submitted is, whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the operation of his faith? The answer to this, as well as the other inquiry, must depend on what is intended by “his faith.” If the creature is a member of Christ, and, like Paul, living by the faith of the Son of God, then, as a member of the body of Christ, the faith of the Son of God is his faith, for of Christ’s fullness has he received, and grace for grace, because Christ in all his fullness is given to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In this relation the faith of the Son of God, as the life, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of Christ, is his, and he is the author and finisher of his faith. As there is but one Lord, so to the head and body of the church there is but one faith and one baptism, and the redeemed of the Lord shall all come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:5,13).

Having already shown that the faith of human origin must be operated by the power which gave it being, we shall now consider the inquiry to be concerning the operation of the faith of the Son of God, as existing in the children of God. To answer the question then requires that we consider, What is faith? And what are its operations? And by what power are they controlled? 1. The faith of which we now speak is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). It is that living principle in the quickened family of God which realizes and actualizes to them those spiritual things which no human power or discernment can comprehend, by which the saints “look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (II Corinthians 4:18).” Even as Moses by faith endured as seeing him who is invisible (Hebrews 11:27). It is to the child of God what the eye is to the natural body. As our natural eye beholds natural objects which we could not see without the eye, so faith looks within the veil, beholds the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and makes real to us that which without vital faith would only be at the best a vain speculation. It is through

faith that the Spirit reveals all spiritual things to the saints; while here we live by faith, we walk by faith and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; hence it is evidence of things not seen, things which the eye hath not seen, things which the vulture's eye hath not seen, which God hath hidden from the wise and prudent, but hath revealed to the faith of his children. 2. The operations of faith are confidence in God, reliance on his counsel, wisdom, goodness and grace, perceptions of his power and glory, confident trust in his gracious promises, discoveries of his dealings, the revelation of Christ in all his Mediatorial fullness and glory, a clear apprehension of his truth, and of all things pertaining to his purpose and grace in the salvation of his people. Faith also in its operation suppresses fear, triumphs over doubts and infidelity, strengthens and confirms the Christian's hope, overcomes the world and all worldly powers and influences which war against the soul. It glories in the cross of Christ, it discovers and points out the pathway of holiness, directs to the throne of grace, inclines those who possess it to follow Christ in his ordinances, to obey him in all his precepts and makes them dearly love his service. It inspires courage to face the enemy, to endure hardness as good soldiers, to suffer the loss of all things and to count not their own lives dear unto themselves, so that they may finish their course with joy. The operations of faith are most gloriously exemplified in the cloud of witnesses presented in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, in the patriarchs, prophets and men of God, from the days of Abel until the apostolic age, and from that period the subjects of this holy faith have known and testified of the power and triumphs of faith over all the opposing powers of darkness in their lives and in their deaths. How often have some of us witnessed the powerful operation of faith making the dying bed of the saints feel softer than the downy pillow, in disarming death of all terror and the grave of victory, lighting up the otherwise dark, dreary and gloomy passage with immortal radiance and refulgent glory. These are what we understand to be some of the operations of the faith of the Son of God, as it operates in and upon the saints until they shall need to walk by faith no longer; until

“They shall see and hear and know,
All they desired or wish'd below,
And every power find sweet employ
In the eternal world of joy.”

3. The power which conducts the operations of faith must be at least as great as the faith and its operations are. As we have seen that this faith of the Son of God, which is born of God, overcomes the world, if we believe the testimony we cannot admit that the world has any power to control its operations. As there is a divine power in faith, as it is the faith of the Son of God, the faith of God, as well as the faith of God's elect, it cannot be governed or controlled by any power out of itself. Even the Christian who has often felt its power, labors in vain to control its operations. God, its author, has ordained that it shall be tried, for the trial of it is precious, and shall result in its final victory and his declarative glory. The Christian would naturally desire to be always exulting in its victories, or rejoicing in its discoveries; dreads, but cannot prevent, the fiery ordeal by which it is to be tried. The Christian to whom God has given the precious faith of his dear Son, although he has no power to create or control it, yet has much to do with its operations; but let us understand, although he cannot govern its operations, he can and must be governed by it. *He cannot exercise faith*, but faith can exercise him. This much he has to do with the operation of faith: he has to feel it, to love it, to cherish it, to testify of it, to be led by it, to walk by it and to live by it. Yea, the children of God are called to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and labor to suppress all their carnal corruptions of the flesh which are at war with it, by crucifying the old man with its affections and lusts, and when the powers of the flesh seem to prevail, and doubts, and fears, and darkness, and temptations make them tremble and faint, they then have something to do; they are constrained to cry out, in the full

conviction of their own weakness and inability to exercise faith, Lord, increase my faith. Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief. Thus they acknowledge God's power in keeping them is through faith unto salvation.

In conclusion, we will give some discriminating marks by which the honest inquirer after truth, if God has given him an ear to hear, and a heart to understand the truth, may distinguish between the faith of the Son of God and that which can be produced by men. The true is born of God, and lives and abides with hope and charity in the hearts of God's quickened children; the false is a bastard, and shall dwell in Ashdod (Zechariah 9:6). The true is a living or vital faith; the false is dead, or totally destitute of spiritual life. The true conquers the sinner, and prostrates him as a willing and joyful captive at the feet of Jesus; the false is conquered by the sinner, and wholly under his control and management. The true humbles its possessor before the majesty of the lord; the false inflates with pride and self-importance. The true is immediately from God; the false is from the devil. The true leads the child of God through great tribulations up to the paradise of God; the false leads down to the chambers of death. The true makes the penitent publican stand smiting on his breast; the false inclines the Pharisee to boast of his own works. True faith inclines the heart to listen to what God the Lord has said, to believe what God has said and to rely alone on what God has done for life and immortality. False faith leads men to reject the testimony of God, to trust to their own vain imaginations and rely upon their own works for acceptance with God. True faith works by love, and purifies the heart; false faith works by the carnal, depraved impulses of the mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. True faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; false faith stands in the wisdom of men and in the power of darkness, of freewill and human agency. True faith relies on what God has done; false faith on what men intend to do. True faith looks for redemption, justification and acceptance with God, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, while false faith confides in human merit, self-righteousness and will-worship. True faith feeds on every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, while false faith thrives upon false doctrine, false philanthropy, false worship and feeds and fattens on its own flesh. The faith of the Son of God leads those to whom it is given to his church, his people, his ordinances, his precepts and his examples, but false faith leads men to seek the society which is more suited to their depraved taste, and which they find in the various branches or departments of Babylon. True faith purifies the heart, but false faith vitiates the heart, and fills it with envy, wrath, hatred, malice, revenge, murder, seditions, heresies and all that is vile and abominable.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1865.



SONG OF SOLOMON 4:12

Dear Brother Beebe: Please give your views through the “Signs” on Song of Solomon 4:12: “A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.” All the preaching I have is through the “Signs”; I have not heard a sermon in more than a year.

Lydia Bordon.
Franklin, N.Y.
February 28, 1865.

To those who are born of God and led by the Spirit of truth into the understanding of the Song of Solomon, it is well denominated the Song of Songs, for in it is embraced the sweetest, noblest and most exalted theme that ever moved the heart or tongue of sinners saved by grace, while to the carnal professor and the graceless hypocrite it presents no beauty or sweetness. Shut out from our understanding the sacred relationship and indissoluble union of Christ and his church, and all the divine beauty and thrilling interest of the Song would be hidden, and nothing presented to awaken the heavenly devotion of the sweet singers of Israel. This Song, although divided by the compilers of the Scriptures into chapters and verses, is but one whole song. It is called the Song of Songs, because it embraces so rich a cluster and pleasing variety of appropriate and striking figures expressive of the spiritual communion and fellowship of Christ and his church. All these figures are presented in other parts of the Scriptures, and used to elucidate and illustrate the doctrine of the gospel and the experience of the saints, but they are here collected and condensed in one grand anthem, to be sung in exalted strains to the praise of God and edification of his children. Among an extended variety of endearing terms employed by the Spirit of inspiration to set forth the Redeemer’s appreciation of and boundless love for his church, as well as the relationship subsisting, we have no less than five in the short passage on which we are requested to write. The church is here called a garden, sister, spouse, a spring and a fountain, in each of which volumes of divine instruction and rivers of sweet consolation may be deduced, well calculated to cause the lips of even them who are asleep to sing. Before we attempt an elucidation of these figures we will give some reasons for applying them to the church of God.

I. Because we can perceive no spiritual beauty in them if in any other way applied. Unto whom or what else can such language be applied as is in this Song used by the Beloved, but to his church? Is she not his spouse, his bride, his wife?

II. Because all these figures are uniformly so applied throughout the Scriptures.

III. Because this application is in perfect agreement and harmony with the teachings of the Spirit in the experience of the saints.

IV. Because the same personage in our text called sister, spouse, etc., is in other parts of the same Song called by names and titles which are nowhere in the Scriptures applied to any other than the church. We will now pass to consider the several appellatives used in our text, and what they signify in their application to the church.

1. “My sister.” This appellation, as well as that which follows, “spouse”, expresses relationship of the most vital and endearing kind. Although high in the heavens he reigns as God over all, and blessed

forever, yet in his mediatorial relation to his church he calls her his sister, not as a mere figure of speech, but as a blessed reality. He is the Elder Brother to all of the children of God. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren (Hebrews 2:11).” “That he might be the firstborn among many brethren (Romans 8:29).” The relation of brother and sister involves identity of parentage, and consequently identity of vitality. Christ is the only begotten of the Father, and in that relation is the Son of God, and he says he proceeded forth and came from God, (John 8:42). Hence he could speak truly of God as his Father, for he is in the Father and the Father is in him. And as all his children were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, their relation to God is in him as the Son of God, their sonship is in his Sonship, for they are his body, his flesh and his bones (Ephesians 5:30). Their life is hid with him in God (Colossians 3:3). They are made partakers of the divine nature, in being members of Christ (II Peter 1:4). His family record, as kept by the three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, (I John 5:7) reads, “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life (I John 5:11,12).” Thus the church identified with Christ, her mediatorial Head, in his immortality is one with him, even as he is one with the Father, and her life is hid with Christ in God. Thus standing in a union of life with the Son of God, he claims her as his sister. In recognition of this vital relation the Holy Ghost, through Paul, addressed the church which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (I Thessalonians 1:1). In speaking of his chosen people as such, Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren, but as a church, the feminine gender being used, she is called his sister. This title, as we have remarked, is expressive of tender affection and fraternal love. The relation of brother and sister is unchangeable; being once established it can never be annulled.

2. “My spouse.” As Sarah was both the sister and the spouse of Abraham, so the church is the spouse as well as sister of him who claims to be both the Brother and Bridegroom of his church. A spouse is one betrothed or married. The church is frequently recognized in the Scriptures as the bride, the Lamb’s wife. As such she was presented in vision to John in Revelation 21:2,9,10: “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” “And there came unto me one of the seven angels,” etc. “And talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God,” etc. John the Baptist bore witness of Christ as the Bridegroom, saying, “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled (John 3:29).” Unto the church of God it is spoken, “For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called (Isaiah 54:5).” “And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord (Hosea 2:19,20).” The nature of this espousal, and the marriage vows of the betrothment, leave no room to fear that the union shall ever be dissolved or annulled. “For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away (Malachi 2:16).” “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me (Jeremiah 32:40).” Well might the apostle say, when dwelling upon this wonderful espousal, this marriage union, “This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:32).” The bride released from all affinity to the law by the body of Christ, being redeemed from its dominion as well as from its power, is now married unto him who is

raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. “But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (Romans 7:6).” Thus Christ “loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:25-27).” This bride or spouse is indebted to her heavenly Bridegroom for all the comeliness which he has put upon her. Fully conscious of this, when brought to the King in clothing of wrought gold and raiment of needle work, (Psalm 45:13,14) she is constrained to exclaim in the fullness of her joy and gratitude, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels (Isaiah 61:10).” Now, in all the perfection of beauty and immaculate purity and comeliness which he has put upon her he claims her as his own fair bride, and calls her his sister, his spouse, and as she is married unto him that is risen from the dead, that she should bring forth fruits unto God, she is also called,

3. “A garden inclosed.” As a spouse all her fruits must be the legitimate result of her sacred union to her Husband; so also as a garden no plants are to be cultivated but such as our heavenly Father has planted, all others shall be rooted up. In attempting to trace the analogy of this figure to the church of God we will observe a garden is a chosen, consecrated spot selected from the plantation or farm for a special and particular purpose, as Dr. Watts has justly paraphrased it, as in the language of the church:

“We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot inclosed by grace,
Out of the world’s wide wilderness.”

Truly the church is a chosen and consecrated inclosure, being “sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called (Jude 1).” To the church it is said, “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth (II Thessalonians 2:13).” As the garden is selected and set apart for a more important and noble purpose than any other part of our lands, so the church is chosen, organized and set apart for the cultivation of the choicest plants, and such as are not found elsewhere. In setting forth the church under this beautiful figure the inspired writer has spoken of some of her productions, as vines which flourish, and which have tender grapes; spices, the fragrance of which flows out when the North wind awakes and the South wind blows. The Rose of Sharon blossoms and blooms in the garden of the Lord, and the Lily of the Valley is among the rich variety of her flowers, arrayed in more beauty and loveliness than Solomon in all his glory could boast of. Bundles of myrrh and clusters of camphire are among her productions. “Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices.” The vine which is found here is one that the Lord brought out of Egypt and planted in a goodly soil. The Father is the Husbandman; he says he will keep it; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. In tracing the pleasing figures embraced in the description of the Lord’s garden, we might extend our article to a volume, but we will only now say all the fruits and productions of the garden, as contemplated in this song, are emblematic of,

First, Christ himself, who is the plant of renown (Ezekiel 34:29). “He shall grow up before him as a tender plant (Isaiah 53:2).”

Second. The people of God, or children of the kingdom of Christ, are called plants, and grow in this garden of the Lord. Christ is anointed to his mediatorial work for this express purpose, “That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified (Isaiah 61:3).” “Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified (Isaiah 60:21).”

Third. The fruits of the plants in this Eden, or paradise of our God, are unto holiness, and the end everlasting life (Romans 6:22). They shall bring forth fruit in old age (Psalm 92:14), and as to the abundance of their fruit, it “shall shake like Lebanon (Psalm 72:16).”

Fourth. The fruits of the garden of the Lord are fruits of the tree of life which John saw in the midst of the street of the new Jerusalem, and on either side of the river of life, which were yielded every month, (Revelation 22:2) and they include all the fruits of the Spirit, which are these: “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Galatians 5:22,23).”

For the production of these fruits the spiritual elements must be propitious; the doctrine of the Lord must drop as the rain, and his speech distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the herb, and as showers upon the grass (Deuteronomy 32:2). The fallow ground must be broken up (Jeremiah 4:3; Hosea 10:12), the hills must be digged with the mattock (Isaiah 7:25), to subdue the briars and thorns; and when the ground is properly prepared and the seed is sown, and the plants set and the trees made good, then the North and South winds must blow upon this garden, that the spices may flow out (Song of Solomon 4:16). When the Spirit comes, as on the day of Pentecost, like a mighty rushing wind from heaven, its power will be felt in the garden of the Lord. The genial rays and life-inspiring light and warmth of the Sun of Righteousness must shine, the refreshing dews must distil, reviving showers come down, and then the rich perfumes of the spices and fragrance of the flowers will be borne on the gentle winds of the spirit of pure devotion.

This garden of the Lord is inclosed. A garden without an inclosure is exposed to depredations from without. If her hedges are broken down all they which pass by will pluck her choice vine, the boar out of the wood will waste it and the wild beast of the field will devour it (Psalm 80:12,13). Gardens are inclosed not only for defence, but frequently for ornament. When the wise man went by the field of the slothful and the vineyard of the fool, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then he saw and considered it well, as all wise men should do (Proverbs 24:30-32). But the garden of the Lord is not kept by one who will neglect it, but by the Lord, whose eye never slumbers nor sleeps. He says, I the Lord do keep it: I will keep it night and day (Isaiah 27:3). The inclosure of the church of God is perfectly invincible, for unto her it is said, “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms (Deuteronomy 33:27).” “For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her [Jerusalem] a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her (Zechariah 2:5).” “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks (Isaiah 24:1).”

“Her walls are strength, and at her gates
A guard of heavenly warriors waits;
Nor can her deep foundations move,
Built on his Godhead and his love.”

Her foundations, walls and gates are beautifully described (Revelation 21:12-27). The election of grace, the purpose, counsel and eternal, immutable love of God encircle and secure the garden of the Lord like walls and bulwarks of eternal brass. “Walk about Zion, and go around about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following (Psalm 48:12,13).” The landmarks of this garden are unalterably established. Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of her cords be broken (Isaiah 33:20).

Fifth. “A spring shut up.” Ezekiel, in his vision, saw a river of water issuing from the threshold of the house of the Lord, which carried life wherever it flowed (Ezekiel 47:1). “And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be (Zechariah 14:8).” A spring is a place in the earth, or rock, where some vein of water arises to the surface, and in a garden a spring of living water is of great importance to refresh the plants. In the garden of Eden, where God placed Adam in his primeval state, he caused a river to flow to water the garden, (Genesis 2:10) and this was undoubtedly a type of the garden in our text, for God has promised that the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water (Isaiah 35:7). This last promise was in connection with cheering prophecies of the establishment of the church or garden of the Lord among the Gentiles, which should cause the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose; and so also we understand many of the Scriptures referred to point, for the church, at the period indicated in the Song, had not been brought into her gospel manifestation, but was a spring shut up. Like the well of Haran unto which Jacob came on his way to Padanaram, where three flocks of sheep were waiting for the removal of the stone from the well’s mouth, so lay the great stone on which the law was engraved, on the mouth of the well of salvation, until our spiritual Jacob came and rolled away the stone. (See Genesis 29:2-10.) Thus until the adamantine tables of the law were canceled, the church of Christ, as a spring, was shut up. “Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed (Galatians 3:23).” We believe there can be but little doubt that the Scriptures to which we have referred fully agree with our application of the figure, “a spring shut up.” The voice of prophecy clearly expressed a set time for the opening of this spring, when these living waters should go forth from Jerusalem, when Christ, the glorious Lord in his garden or church, should be made manifest as the place of broad rivers and streams, when he should call unto him all who thirst for salvation, to drink of that water which shall be in them a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life.

Sixth. “A fountain sealed.” There seems to be but little difference between a fountain and a spring; all springs are fountains, but the fountain in this case is applied to gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Not that the church apart from Christ could be either a spring or a fountain, for these waters which Ezekiel and John in their respective visions saw proceeded from the throne of God and the Lamb, although they were seen issuing from the threshold of the house of God, and in the midst of the streets of new Jerusalem. God has set his Son upon his holy hill of Zion, the mediatorial throne of God and the Lamb is in the church, and all the springs of God’s people are in Christ. The sealing of this fountain may signify,

1. That which was hidden, secluded or concealed, like the contents of the book which John saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, which no man in heaven or earth or under the earth was able to look upon or open, (Revelation 5:1-8) and as David and John were commanded to seal up certain things, the revelation of which was designed for remote ages in the future. In this sense certainly the gospel church among the Gentiles was in the days of Solomon a sealed matter. As Paul says, “whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the

Spirit: that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel (Ephesians 3:4-6).” “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:26,27).”

2. The church of Christ may be regarded as sealed, having the seal of God, as in Revelation 7:3-9, as a mark by which they are identified and known, as this seal is in a prominent place, in their foreheads, where it is visible and known in distinction from anti-christ, which bears the mark of the beast, and in her forehead her names and titles written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, etc. (Revelation 17:5).

3. The seal of God is a binding and indelible testimony of her identity, and sacred consecration to Christ. As a seal is set to establish unchangeably a decree or covenant, as of Christ in his mediatorial relation to his Father and to his people, it is said, For him (the Son of man) hath God the Father sealed (John 6:27), so also, “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his (II Timothy 2:19).”

4. We may consider the seal upon the church of God to be the Holy Spirit of promise, “which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:13,14).” “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30).”

5. The church is sealed by the impress of the image of Christ upon her. As a seal enstamps its peculiar marks or characters, devices, etc., upon the yielding wax, so the church of God, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (II Corinthians 3:18).

6. The spouse speaks of the seal of her Beloved as an ornamental memento, or mark of affectionate esteem and tender love. “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death, etc. (Song of Solomon 8:6).” The church in this expresses the most important desire of all intelligent Christians, to be remembered in the love of the heart and protected by the omnipotent arm of her Beloved. An assurance of this will secure her from her doubtings and fears and jealousies, which she has found by painful experience to be cruel as the grave.

7. This sealed fountain is made to flow richly, sweetly and joyfully with those streams which make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. From this inexhaustible fountain sealed flows the high and lofty praises of God her Savior, the doctrine of salvation by grace, the order of the gospel, the fellowship of the saints, and every gracious operation of the Spirit of truth and holiness. The light and truth of God go forth from her. Love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith and every fruit of the Spirit in living streams flow from this Jerusalem, half of them towards the former sea and half towards the hinder sea; in summer and in winter do they flow. Gardens also flow from her, for she is a fountain of gardens. Jerusalem which is above (having risen with Christ) is free, and is the mother of us all; that is, of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of promise (Galatians 4:26-31). From the church of Christ as organized at Pentecost, in primitive glory and apostolic faith and order, have flowed all the churches of the saints which have ever been recognized by the word and Spirit of the Lord, whether among the Jews or Gentiles, down to the present time. We say churches, for although as the bride and spouse of Christ his beloved is but one, yet her various branches have been so recognized, and are called the daughters of Zion, children of Jerusalem and people of the most high God. As standing in Christ they are indivisible, but in location and date they are members one of another, and of the body of Christ.

In conclusion, may we not say to the children of God, who bear the marks of the children of Jerusalem, which is above and is free, Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold your King, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart?

Middletown, N. Y.
June 15, 1865.

ISAIAH 45:19

Brother Beebe: When you have leisure, please give your views on Isaiah 45:19, the middle clause in particular.

Yours in Christian love and esteem,
Mary J. Eddy.

With great pleasure we comply with the request of our esteemed correspondent, being ready at all times to give such views as we have on the Scriptures to all who desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus. The text proposed reads thus: "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." Holy men of old have written the Scriptures as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and we are told that God spake to the fathers by the prophets, from which we infer the importance of every part of the inspired volume, but when passages are marked like the one proposed for our present consideration, as coming so immediately from the mouth of God, they seem to claim, from those who fear him, their most profound attention. This text is specially prefaced in the context by these remarkable words: "For thus saith the Lord." This is a sufficient cause for reverential and solemn reflection, but to increase our awe and to prostrate our souls in the most humble and devout attitude, to wait with breathless silence for the words which proceed from his mouth, it is added, "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." What power has he displayed in the creation of the heavens and earth, and how successfully has he executed his predestinated design that the earth should be inhabited. Truly he whose designs can never be frustrated, whose purpose shall stand and who will do all his pleasure, has the right to declare, as in this case, "I am the Lord, and there is none else." Our destiny for time and eternity is in his hand; no power can successfully compete with him. He is of one mind, and none can turn him.

"The heavens above, the earth below,
Thee, Lord, their great possessor know;
By thee this orb to being rose,
And all that nature's bounds inclose.

From thee, amid the aerial space,
The North and South assume their place;
'Tis thine the ocean's rage to guide,
And calm at will its swelling tide."

“I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth.” That is, in the calling of Jacob, and in bidding his seed to seek him. Let us consider,

1. Jacob and his seed. Jacob as the father of his chosen tribes was a type of Christ, in whom all the election of grace is embodied. All the natural descendants of Jacob were chosen in him and set apart as a peculiar people in distinction from all other tribes of the earth, and embraced in the legal covenant, in which all the privileges of the law of a carnal commandment were secured to them before any of them were born. So all the spiritual family or seed of Christ were chosen in him as the antitype of Jacob before the world began, and embraced in the everlasting covenant of life and peace which is ordered in all things and sure. So clearly does this typical relationship appear in the Scriptures, that the church of our Lord Jesus Christ is frequently in the New Testament called Israel, the seed of Jacob, the twelve tribes of Israel, etc., and although we are informed that they were not all Israel which were of Israel (that is, Israel after the flesh), “Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:7,8).”

2. The doctrine of the special election of grace is by divine authority illustrated by the discriminating grace of God bestowed on Jacob, irrespective of any work, good or bad, on his part. “For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand.” God’s purpose must always stand in all cases, for he doeth his pleasure in heaven and on earth, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. But that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, – how? In what manner must his purpose stand? “Not of works, but of him that calleth.” This then was the object of God in conforming the type to the thing signified, to show that the election of grace stands not according to works, but of him that calleth; so the case of Jacob and Esau was irrevocably fixed and unalterably settled before the children were born or had done any good or evil, and this figure the apostle assures us was thus arranged to show that the election of God’s people in Christ was prior to their birth, and irrespective of their good or bad works, and wholly governed by the sovereign will of God who calleth (Romans 9:11,13). “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (II Timothy 1:9).” “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8,9).” This doctrine of discriminating grace is clearly indicated in the prophetic application of the names Jacob and Israel. “But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine (Isaiah 43:1).” “Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel whom I have chosen (or elected), (Isaiah 44:1).” “Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:1).”

3. The open and manifest calling of Jacob, as signifying the clear and open calling and salvation of God’s spiritual Israel. “I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth.” Upon this subject what has ever been more clearly manifested?

A. The calling of Jacob personally to seek his face, instead of hiding or disguising his calling as a secret matter, as we have seen he declared it to Rebecca before the children were born, and in all his providential dealings with him, causing him to inherit the blessing of the firstborn in Isaac’s family, in shielding him from the wrath of Esau, in giving him favor with Laban, and in finally bringing him to the place of his nativity with great riches, all of which presents him as the type of him of whom the

psalmist says, “He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:6).”

B. In his calling as the type of the election of grace Moses thus testified: “For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye (Deuteronomy 32:9,10).” This was not done secretly, for in the same chapter heaven and earth are summoned as witnesses of this distinguishing grace. “Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.” This was not speaking in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth, but before high heaven and the listening earth. Thus openly the proclamation of Jacob’s calling is made. The fathers, the ancient patriarchs, were advised of all this; it was no secret. “Ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.” What will they tell thee? They will tell thee this: “When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel (Deuteronomy 32:7,8).” So far from concealing his special favor to Israel, he is seen riding upon the heaven in their help and in his excellency on the sky.

C. The calling of Jacob out of Egypt was no secret event. All the wonders of our God were executed. His arm was made bare in the eyes of the nations, and all the ends of the earth saw the salvation of our God. With a high hand and an outstretched arm the yoke of Egypt was broken, and so clearly visible was the display of his almighty power in calling Jacob then to look to him alone for deliverance and protection that it is said even, “The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron (Psalm 77:16-20).” He rebuked strong nations for the sake of Jacob, and finally made public the entrance of his chosen tribes into the land of Canaan, all of which abundantly proves that in the calling of Jacob to seek his face, God spake not in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth.

D. So in the application of these types and shadows to the spiritual Israel of God, in their high and holy vocation, God’s voice has been clearly heard. The fact their calling had been prefigured in all the types, and emphatically declared by all the prophets from the days of Abel, shows that God did not design to conceal his purpose in their calling.

Not in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth, was the calling of the spiritual Israel of our God when they were saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God’s own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ before the world began. “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Romans 8:29,30).” Thus it is seen that the calling of God’s people in Christ in this election and predestination to glory was not in any dark place of the earth, but in a radiant blaze of refulgent glory. The calling of the Israel of God experimentally is open, manifest and irresistible. “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 4:6).” The calling of the Israel of God from the bondage of the law, the guilt of sin, and from the power of darkness into God’s marvelous light, is witnessed in the triumph of our Redeemer in his resurrection, in which he spoiled principalities and powers and made a show of

them openly. Having abolished death, he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (II Timothy 1:10).

E. The infallible certainty that the calling of God's chosen Israel is and forever shall be effectual. "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." This very declaration implies, first, that God has said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me, and second, that his word to that end is not in vain.

In this same chapter, verse 22, he reiterates this command, saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." As none but God can save a sinner, and as there is no other God, it is vain to look for salvation from any other source. All other powers in heaven and earth combined could not save a single soul, could not deliver from wrath, purge from guilt, quicken from death or translate from the power of darkness any of the seed of Jacob. For their salvation is of me, saith the Lord. In this chapter the scattered condition of the seed of Jacob, as spread over the entire surface of the earth, and extending to earth's remotest bounds, is alluded to in the twentieth verse, and they are informed that wooden gods or other dumb idols cannot save them. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West." How? "I will say to the North, Give up; and to the South, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him (Isaiah 43:1-7)." "To give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise (Isaiah 43:20,21)." These Scriptures show beyond all reasonable doubt that the seed of Jacob in our text is the Lord's people, who by the absolute decree of the unchangeable God shall be gathered and shall every one of them be brought from the ends of the earth, and shall shew forth God's praise. This decree, though offensive to men and devils, is not to be concealed nor kept in the dark, for God has spoken and proclaimed it before heaven and earth. His word goeth forth from his mouth in righteousness, and shall not return void of the work whereunto he has sent it; it shall prosper in the accomplishment of all his pleasure. This word going forth is all the seed of Israel, scattered though they be to the ends of the earth, shall find out every one of them to whom he has directed it, and in this word he says to them, even to every one of them, "Seek ye me." This fiat from the throne of God shall be effectual, it cannot fail, it has not been spoken in vain. We are aware that these words of our God, and those also in verse 22 of the same chapter, are treated as mere invitations, but let it be known to all men, the Lord God of Israel deals not in invitations. Where a king's word is there is power, and our God is a great King, and his kingdom ruleth over all. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

‘Firm are the words his prophets give,
Sweet words on which his children live;
Each of them is the voice of God,
Who spake, and spread the heavens abroad.
Each of them powerful as that sound
Which bid the new made world go round,

And stronger than the solid poles
On which the wheel of nature rolls.”

But we would call the attention of our sister to the efficiency of this saying of God especially: “I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain,” for the power and efficiency of these words are established by the solemn oath of God that they shall not fail, for he adds, “I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come: and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.” Every knee and tongue of whom, according to this oath, shall bow and swear allegiance to the Lord Almighty? The knee and tongue of every one of the seed of Jacob, whom he has commanded to seek his face. For he further says, “In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.” We cannot doubt nor dispute the power and omnipotence of the words thus spoken by the Lord to the seed of Jacob without involving the sin of blasphemy. God, who cannot lie, has not only said that his word shall secure the accomplishment of his order, but he has confirmed it by an oath. To contradict is then to not only charge God with falsehood, but also with perjury. When the Lord, by his Spirit, applies these words to any of the seed of Jacob, God is himself in his word to make it effectual. David, in Psalm 27:8, testifies to the power of God’s word in its application to him: “When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” For David was one of the seed of Jacob to whom the words were not spoken in vain, and as it was in the case of David, so shall it be with all the seed of Jacob, even every one of them, for God, who cannot lie, has sworn it. They shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. “My sheep [says the good Shepherd] hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” Men, even mighty men, kings and potentates of the earth, may fail to make their words effectual, but God says, I the Lord speak righteousness; I declare things that are right. Should God be disappointed in the effect of his word in the accomplishment of his designs, that would not be speaking in righteousness, for there would be a failure, something wrong. When he said, “Let there be light,” if light had not come forth at his bidding there would have been a failure; but when he said, “Let there be light,” and when he said to the seed of Jacob, “Seek ye me,” instead of uttering an invitation, or an uncertain mandate, he called the words so uttered a declaration. “I declare things that are right,” and so the sequel shall show, for not one of the seed of Jacob, which for multitude is like the sands of the seashore, shall fail to respond as did David, “Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” Let the children but know that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken and they can live on every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, for the word of our God endureth forever.

“He looks, and ten thousands of angels rejoice,
And myriads wait for his word;
He speaks, and eternity filled with his voice,
Reechoes the praise of her Lord.”

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1865.

SONG OF SOLOMON 2:15

“Take us the foxes.”

Modern poets, however celebrated, derive their highest inspiration from the powers of their imagination, and their elegance of style from the gifts of nature; but the poetry of the scriptures hath its inspiration from the Holy Ghost; and while the former may charm the ear, and transport the natural man, only that which derives its inspiration from the throne of God can elevate, cheer, refresh, instruct and transport the new and spiritual man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. The vain attempts of men to reach or imitate the sublime inspiration of Moses, Deborah, Hannah, David and Solomon have only demonstrated the groveling weakness of the noblest powers of nature as contrasted with the wisdom, power and excellent glory of heavenly and divine things. The songs of those heaven-inspired writers to which we have alluded, with all their force and beauty, cannot surpass the song of songs, which is Solomon's. In this song of songs is condensed the beauty, the glory, and the whole substance of the songs of all the inspired writers in the Book of God.

To the natural man whose limited conceptions can only contemplate the letter or the literal application of the figures employed in this divine song, its spiritual excellency is, and must forever be, entirely concealed, for to the natural man it is not given to know the things of the Spirit of God, which are spiritually discerned. But the Spirit of God, which dwells in those who are born of the Spirit, searches all things; yea, the deep things of God. When by revelation of that Spirit which inspired the sacred verse we are enabled to perceive Christ and his church portrayed in and throughout this song, the figures employed have a powerful significance and melting effect upon the children of God, who alone can learn the song or enter into the divine inspiration of the theme. The figure presented in the verse referred to at the head of this article presents the church of Christ as a lovely fruit bearing vine, laden with delicious clusters of tender grapes. When exposed to depredation and robbery by cunning and insidious foes, which are what the foxes are to the vines which bear tender grapes, the fruits of the Spirit in the church and in the saints are put in danger.

In John 15:1, Christ says, “I am the true vine; my Father is the husbandman,” and in verse 5 he says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” That is, Christ in the church is the true vine, or the real substance of all the figures employed to set him forth in his relation to and identity with his church. The Father, by the pen of Isaiah, declares himself to be the Husbandman, or Keeper of the vineyard, saying, “I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day (Isaiah 27:3).” Christ, as the true vine, includes all the legitimate branches, whether developed or still to be developed. Like the figure of a perfect body, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ (I Corinthians 12:12).” So, as the true vine is one and hath many branches, and all the branches of that one vine, being many, are one vine, so also is Christ, as the true vine, of which his Father is the husbandman or the keeper.

This vine, which in the song is called “*Our* vine,” is in John 16 called the *true* vine, not only to identify it as the substance to which the types, shadows and figures of the Old Testament pointed, but also to distinguish it from all false vines, or anti-christs. Moses describes another vine which he says is “the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrali; their grapes are of gall, and their clusters bitter; their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps (Deuteronomy 32:32,33).” That is the false vine or false church – the anti-christian church, whose fruits, or grapes, have always been as gall and bitterness to the Lord's portion, which is described in the 9th to 12th verses of the same chapter. Whenever any of those whom the Lord claims as his portion have been allured by the glitter of

Babylon's golden cup to taste its sparkling contents, they have become intoxicated, inflamed and inoculated with the poison of dragons and cruel venom of asps. So poisoned that they speak with the voice of dragons, calling for blood and being infected with the deadly poison of asps, they become cruel, and brother will deliver up his brother to be put to death. For it is said: "They make God's people howl, and his name is continually blasphemed." How painfully have we witnessed the corrupting effects of this intoxicating cup, this maddening venom of those with whom we have formerly taken sweet counsel; but having imbibed the anti-christian spirit, have joined the clamor of anti-christ, exulting in the shedding of blood, and profanely professing to thank God for fields of slaughter, and expressing the most heartless and cruel desire for the torturing of helpless captives, and even giving sentence of vengeance on those whom they still recognize as brethren, because they cease not to protest against such cruelty, and plead for peace on earth and good will towards men. Surely these are not very *little foxes*. Alas! how they rob the vine of its tender grapes. How truly the apostles admonish the saints, saying, "Ye cannot drink of the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils (I Corinthians 10:21)." "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be (James 3:8-10)." "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (II Corinthians 6:14-18)."

But as our object in this article is to *take*, or at least to point out some of the *little foxes*, we will not now stop to chase those which are so fully grown as to be plainly discerned by every eye, only as they cross our track we ask permission to tree them as we pass on; for if we mistake not, they are as numerous in our day as they were among the Philistine's corn when Samson sent forth three hundred of them with fire brands tied between each pair in days of old; nor are they less mischievous and annoying to the tender fruits of the choice vine than they were then to the standing corn of the Philistines. See Judges 15:4,5.

Having attempted to show that the true vine in our subject is Christ and his branches, or members, if we are correct in the application of the figure, then the tender grapes, or fruits of the vine, must be those described by the apostle in Galatians 5:22,23. "But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." What a rich cluster is here! How sweet, how pleasant and how refreshing to the saints; but yet how tender. It is like the cluster which Joshua and Caleb brought from Eshcol, as a specimen of the fruits of the goodly land in Numbers 13:23. Such grapes cannot be gathered of thorns, nor such figs from thistles. See Luke 6:44. None but the true and living vine can bear such fruit, for it is the fruit of the Spirit. Nor can even the legitimate branches of the true vine bring forth such fruit, except they abide in the vine (John 15:4-11). The precious fruit that clusters upon this vine are so tender that great care should be taken that the thievish foxes spoil them not.

As we have understood the tender grapes to represent the fruits of the Spirit, so we are constrained to consider the lusts, or works of the flesh to be the little, sly, thievish foxes which spoil, or rob the vine. Paul has classified these little foxes and calls them by their respective names. "Now the works of the

flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like, of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21).” These foxes all burrow in the carnal, depraved nature of even the saints, and take advantage of every unguarded moment to rob the saints of the enjoyment of the precious and delicious fruits of the Spirit. The first grape named in the cluster is love, and the whole pack of cunning foxes are ever ready to pounce upon it, and although they cannot utterly destroy it, yet they can, and too often do rob the saints to a great extent of the sweet enjoyment of it. They cannot destroy it; for “I am persuaded,” says Paul, “that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38,39).” Yet, “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold (Matthew 24:12).” There are no less than eight of the aforementioned foxes in deadly opposition to this *love*, which is named as the first of the whole cluster of grapes from the true vine. Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, envyings, and murders are the most deadly assailants of Christian love of all the pack which lurk around the vine. Will any experienced Christian who reads this article fail to remember times and places when the sweetness of their early love, to at least some of the dear saints, has been checked and chilled by wrath, strife, sedition or envy? Happy indeed must be that child of grace whose love burns with uninterrupted glow to all the dear members of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let loose these hungry foxes upon the vine with their fire brands of discord tied between them, and not only the love, but also the joy and peace of the assaulted saint will decline. Instead of joy, sorrow wrings his heart; turmoil instead of peace; precipitancy, impatience, and even rashness will usurp the placid seat of long-suffering and gentleness. Envy, with forked tongue, scatters her poisonous whispers, with which she kindles the fires of hell among the saints of God; and the malicious spirit of murder from the deepest fountain of that carnal mind which is enmity to God, breathes out threatenings and death to spoil our vine of its tender grapes. The strife and confusion engendered by the assault of the foxes upon the tender fruits of the vine dares even attack that faith which overcomes the world. The furious din of war within the child of God so much disturbs his confidence and hope in God that doubts and fears arise in regard to his interest in Christ. Can it be possible, in astonishment he cries, that one in whose nature swarms such hosts of implacable enemies to godliness can be a subject of saving grace? How dwelleth the love of God in such an one? Our faith often quails when thus beset with doubts.

These lusts of the flesh which war against the soul are like foxes because they are sly, cunning, artful and insidious, demanding of us vigilant care and watchfulness. The peace, unity and harmony of churches, as well as individual Christians, is often interrupted by the little foxes, and some of them so small as to be regarded harmless. An experience of more than half a century as a member of the Baptist church, and more than forty-five years in the ministry, has afforded much opportunity to observe the spoiling of our vine by foxes, some of which were apparently of the smallest size. Churches we have known once flourishing and fruit-bearing, have become infested with little cunning foxes, whose diminitiveness has shielded them from being taken, have done more mischief than ravening wolves or roaring lions, for the latter would have been boldly resisted and every inch of the ground resolutely disputed. A little error in preaching has been thought too trivial to elicit objection. Or, if objected to, some foxy method has been employed to make the delinquent an offender for a word. Instead of a kind brotherly interview and calm investigation, a sly fox insinuates himself into the counsel, and the offended brother takes upon himself the responsibility to let his brethren know how wise and far-seeing

he is in detecting errors, gets one after another of the members by the button and slyly insinuates to them that there is something wrong with the preacher or pastor still perhaps smiling pleasantly when in his presence. Presently the church is astonished to find there are parties in the church, and these parties seldom, if ever, fail to imbibe bitter and hostile feelings one towards another, until the vine is robbed of its delicious fruit, and biting and devouring takes the place of love and fellowship. This, although regarded as a little fox, is capable of doing great mischief.

So also when a brother or a sister is overtaken in a fault; or is supposed to have erred; instead of heeding the command of Christ, "You that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness," as the laws of Christ direct; the unbridled tongue of gossip, and exaggeration spreads the fault abroad to the disparagement of the supposed offender until the whole church is made to suffer, and the vine is sadly spoiled. In short, any departure in doctrine, discipline, in faith or practice, from the well defined laws and order of the church of Christ is a fox that, however little, ought to be taken. They are so sly and cunning it may be hard to trap them; nevertheless the duty is upon us; for the word says, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes." It is astonishing to observe how very small a fox can mar the concord and fellowship of the children of God; a cold look, an averted eye, an unkind word, an inconsiderate expression by word or act; like a barbed iron sinks deep in the hearts of some of the tender lambs of the fold. Those whom we love the most can wound the deepest; we are wont to say with the psalmist, "If it had been an enemy, I could have borne it." The grapes or fruits of the Spirit in the children of God are so very tender and sensitive that their peace and comfort is greatly spoiled by whatever tends to disturb the vine. When we have gained a fellowship for and learned to love and confide in those whom we esteem as the excellent ones of the earth, in whom is all our delight, the smallest fox that can shake our confidence in those whom we so dearly love, dashes our choicest cup of happiness, and robs us of our sweetest social enjoyment. In a spiritual frame of mind, we look upon our kindred in Christ as being better than ourselves; and desire to copy their virtues; but we hear or see something in their conversation or walk which savors more of the world than of Christ, showing up more the corruption of their fleshly nature than of their spiritual life, it dampens our joys and fills the soul with grief and sorrow. Seeing then that our vines have tender grapes how important it is that we should heed the admonition of our text and take us the foxes; the little foxes that spoil the vines.

But how shall we take them? Are they not sly, crafty and hard to be caught or taken? One of the slyest and most mischievous of them all burrows even in the Christian's mouth. "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among the members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison (James 3:5-8)." Some foxes may be tamed, but this unruly evil cannot be tamed by man; the divine rule commands us to bridle it. And the apostle James declares to us that if any man among us seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. See James 1:26. The psalmist, although so highly favored of the Lord, found it necessary to use this method of discipline. "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me (Psalm 39:1)." A bridle is used to guide, restrain, and subjugate, and render manageable that which is naturally inclined to be vicious or refractory; as James says, "Behold we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us: and we turn about their whole body (James 3:3)." Thus we are instructed how this little fox is to be taken; or brought into subjection. We can make nothing but a fox of it; but let it be

bridled, watched, guarded, and kept in subjection, by all who desire that the goodly vine may flourish, and the tender grapes be spared from spoliation.

All the carnal passions of our nature may also be regarded as foxes, to be taken, suppressed and brought into subjection to the law of the spirit of life. Our love should be directed to those things which are lovely, pure, peaceable, gentle, and holy; and not suffered to rest on that which is earthly, sensual and devilish. Our hatred should be confined to that which is hateful to God We may freely hate sin, and every abomination which we see in ourselves or others; we may hate the garment that is spotted with the flesh. But let it not rankle in the vine among the tender grapes. Better far for the child of grace that his right hand should forget its cunning, and the tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth, than that he should not prefer Jerusalem above his chief joy.

Avarice is a mischievous fox. Take him; for covetousness is idolatry, and nothing is more fatally injurious to the vines which bear the tender grapes. It proceeds from a craven selfishness, the very opposite of that spirit which should lead us to love God supremely, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Jealousy is a very wicked fox; it is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a most vehement heat. What wretched work this little green eyed fox makes among the tender grapes. Envious, selfish and cruel. It would monopolize the favor, the esteem, and even all the spiritual gifts of the church of God, and seek to disparage the virtues, gifts, reputation and esteem of others. Such foxes should be taken and not allowed to disturb the precious vine.

Self-conceit and self-confidence may be detected among the small foxes, but they sometimes grow to gigantic size, so as to require much room; but it is very annoying to the vine and injurious to the tender clusters. Those who become infected with this fox are soon found to be wiser than seven men that can render a reason. They consider themselves to be the men, and doubt not that wisdom will die with them. They are “heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away, for of this sort are they which creep into houses, etc. (II Timothy 3:4-6).”

Among the foxes of larger size which are exceeding hurtful to the vine and make much trouble and disorder, are some of the “*Diotrephes*” breed. They love to have the pre-eminence. See III John 9,10. No vine can flourish or church enjoy peace and union, harmony and fellowship where they bear the sway. Like the ancient Pharisees, they love the uppermost seats, and are famous for making parties in the churches and schisms in the body of Christ. Let them be marked and avoided, for saith the apostle: “Mark them which cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16: 17,18).”

We might point out many other foxes which infest the vines, and which ought to be taken and secured from spoiling the vine, but time and space would fail to speak of them all.

In view of the numerous wild beasts of the field which pluck and seek to devour the lovely vine, and spoil the tender grapes, and of our impotency to resist all their depredations, let us, with the inspired psalmist devoutly pray: “Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts, look down from heaven, and behold and visit this vine, and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself (Psalm 80:14,15).”

Middletown, N. Y.
August 1, 1865.

MATTHEW 26:52

While we fully approve the views of brother Wlm. J. Purington on Matthew 26:52 in reply to the inquiry of “E. H.,” we feel inclined to express a few thoughts further upon the same subject, which are designed to be in perfect harmony with what he has written. The perfect security and perpetuity of the Kingdom of Christ upon its own basis, independently of the powers of this world, is a delightful consideration to the enlightened children of God. No carnal weapons are required to repel the foes of God and truth, for no weapon that is formed against Zion can prosper. “Salvation [not swords nor spears, but the salvation of our God] will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.” Not only are they not required or needed, but they are most positively forbidden. All our trust and reliance for protection and safety must be in God. He is himself a wall of fire round about his people, and the glory in their midst. In this particular is the church of God manifestly distinguished from all anti-christian churches or religious organizations. In all ages, worldly religion has relied on worldly support and worldly protections. At this very day there is a mighty howling among the shepherds of anti-christ, and those religious denominations who have been the principal promoters of the dreadful scenes of carnage which has just swept over our country, desolating what was the fairest portion of the earth, slaughtering hundreds of thousands of our fellow-men, and both at the North and the South are now appealing to the worst passions of men to aid in procuring from the secular powers a law for the suppression of those religious orders which they deem antagonistic to their interests, pleading that their religious establishments are in danger by reason of the Roman Catholics, and all others who will not pander to them. They staining the earth with a crimson tide ask, and even demand that the sword of state shall be drawn for the suppression of those whom they proscribe as heterodox, and for their own defense. They take the sword, rely upon the sword, and with the sword shall they perish. But it is not so with the church of the living God.

Not only has the cause of God and his church always been sustained without aid or protection of human governments, but in opposition to all the powers of earth and hell, and always in such a manner as to clearly show that God is himself the strength of Israel, and the Savior thereof in the time of trouble. His name is their strong tower, and in his pavilion where he has hidden them they have perfect safety. We perfectly agree with brother Purington that Christians are forbidden to use carnal weapons for the defense of the kingdom of God, which being “not of this world,” cannot be sustained by the power of this world. But the question arises, and perhaps was intended by “E. H.,” “Are Christians allowed, by the laws of Christ, to use the sword, or carnal weapons, in any case, or under any circumstances whatever?” The more we have reflected upon this subject, the deeper our convictions have become that the precepts, as well as the spirit of Christ in his saints, forbid it. Every essential requisite for a Christian disqualifies him for carnal warfare. To be a disciple of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, we must have his spirit and temper; and except we have it we cannot be his disciple. While to fit men for carnal warfare they must be bold, daring, defiant, aspiring, and unpitying. To be a disciple of Christ we must love God supremely, and love our neighbor as ourself; and we must love even our enemies, do good to them who spitefully use and persecute us; but to be a soldier in carnal warfare, we are forbidden to sympathize with our enemies, or to give them aid or comfort, on pain of penalties provided in the laws of human warfare.

The Christian then, to be a soldier in carnal warfare, must abandon the laws of Christ and submit to the military code; must disobey the commands of Christ, and obey the opposite commands of military chieftains. How truly are we told, “No man can serve two masters.” How can we possibly obey both

when one commands us to kill, and the other forbids us to kill? When one commands us to love, pray for, and do good to our enemies, and the other commands us to fight, rob, harass and destroy them? The example of Christ is given as an infallible guide to all his children, and in that example he went about doing good to all classes of men, friends and foes; healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and showing compassion to all who were in distress; in all his walks he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and he commands his disciples to follow him. And he says, “Except a man deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, he cannot be my disciple.”

The recruiting officers of Caesar would reject such men as really and truly follow Christ as unfit for a place in their army. What do they want of men who love their enemies, or who will not kill, nor rob, or spoil their enemies? But while the meek, lowly, loving, sympathizing Christian would be rejected, they would greatly prefer carnal professors and graceless hypocrites, who go in the way of Cain, whose feet are swift to shed blood, and before whose eyes there is no fear of God, and of whom it is said, Misery and destruction are in all their ways. Such are the men for carnal warfare; those who are led by the spirit, temper and example of him who was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. But those who strictly follow him who came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them, would only be in the way in earthly warfare.

But it is urged that Christians are to “be subject to the powers that be, and to obey those who are in authority over them.” This is very true, but at the same time they are told that there is no power, or authority but that which is of God. Usurpation is not legitimate power, and usurpers have in reality no authority to enjoin on the subjects of Christ’s government anything that Christ has forbidden; for Christ is himself the only and blessed potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. In everything wherein God has invested kings, governors, rulers or judges of the earth with power or authority over the citizens of the world, the Christian is, by the laws and commandments of Christ, required to honor and obey them, to that extent, but no further. Whether it be right for Christians to obey men rather than God, judge ye. If Caesar commands us to kill, and God commands us, saying, “Thou shalt not kill,” which is to be obeyed? Or if rulers of the earth forbid the ministers of Christ, as in the case of Peter and John in Acts 5:29, to preach in the name of Christ, and God has commanded them to preach, is it hard to determine which is the higher power, or which is to be obeyed?

It is said that some Christians have been compelled to take up arms, and to slaughter their fellow-men. This may be so; but we do not know of a case in which a Christian, who was conscientiously opposed to carnal warfare, viewing it a violation of the law of Christ, who has made his appeal in solemn prayer to God for deliverance, and has not been delivered. But even if it were so, if the Christians were actuated by the same mind which was evinced by the martyrs of former times, would they not sooner suffer death themselves than yield to violate the law of Christ by killing their fellow men?

Let the church of God take her position as a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hidden; and let it be known that come life, or come death, her members cannot be forced to shed the blood, or destroy the property of their fellow men under any circumstances whatever, then we doubt whether the governments of the world would have use for such soldiers as they would make. But should they persist, we might look for a divine interposition, or if brought to the test, God would give us grace to bear all the consequences. It is not strange, as the case now stands, that the governments of the earth should regard the conscientious scruples of Christians as unimportant and trifling. For while nearly all the anti-christian orders of religionists not only sanction, but absolutely occupy a leading position in all the wars that agitate the world, the church has been slow, very slow indeed, to declare her position and say to the world that she will, under no circumstance, stain her hands with blood. But instead of

holding this position, has not the church been faulty in withholding her light upon this subject; and have not, some at least of her members voluntarily entered the field of carnage, or advocated the shedding of blood; and when the matter has been submitted to the voice or vote of the people, have not some, even of the members of the church of God, the professed disciples and followers of the Prince of Peace, given their voice, their vote, and the full measure of their influence for war, to the bitter end? How is this to be reconciled with the command of God to “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord?” There are many examples given of Christ and his apostles, and the primitive saints, resisting evil even unto the death, striving against sin, but in all cases refusing the use of carnal weapons. But in what part of the sacred volume have we an account of Paul, applying to Nero for a Major or Brigadier General’s commission, or Peter asking for an army contract, or even of the loving John preaching war sermons, and making war speeches to induce the disciples of the Lamb to enter the army? Even if we had such examples left on record, we are forbidden to follow them; for we are only to follow even the apostles as far as they followed Christ. And Christ, when he was reviled, reviled not again; and he has commanded his disciples to “Avenge not themselves; to resist not evil with evil.” If smitten on one cheek, to turn the other cheek also to the smiter, and to remember the word of instruction, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” If God thus claims the sole right of arbitration and retribution, and if he has as positively forbidden us to avenge ourselves, is it not irreverent and presumptuous for us to usurp the ministration of wrath and vengeance in his stead? Let those who know not God and therefore fear him not indulge their cruel passions; but, Christians forbear! Let not the sun go down on your wrath. Appeal not to the sword, lest by the sword ye perish!

Middletown, N. Y.
August 15, 1865.

MATTHEW 25:30

Brother Beebe: Please give your views on Matthew 25:30: “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

J. Armstrong.

The parabolic instructions and admonitions of our Lord, recorded in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew, were addressed especially and exclusively to his disciples. A careful examination of these two chapters will show that all which they contain transpired at a private interview which the disciples of Christ sought for and were favored with on the mount of Olives. “And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, [namely, to his disciples] Take heed that no man deceive you,” etc. Then follows the answers which he privately gave to their inquiries, extending to the twenty-sixth chapter and second verse, inclusive. All his admonitions contained in his reply to their inquiries were solemnly enforced by appropriate parables, which the disciples undoubtedly perfectly understood to apply to themselves, especially and primarily in regard to their exposure to temptations, deceptions, and their liability to be deceived by others, or involved in disobedience and tribulation by their own want of vigilance, and

inattention to the solemn warnings he had given them in regard to the dreadful trial and sore temptations they should endure while waiting for and at the time of the fulfillment of what he told them in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem. The fact that Jerusalem should be destroyed, and not one stone left on the top of another of all the splendid buildings of the temple, and that all these things should be fulfilled before that generation should pass away, was no less certain, for, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." But certain and irrevocable as was the decree that all this destruction should take place in their day and generation, yet the day and the hour was not a matter of revelation; it was known unto the Father only. God had purposely concealed the precise time, the day and hour, of the accomplishment of this terrible judgment from all men, his saints not excepted, and with a special design to try the faith of his children. For if the good man of the house had known in what hour of the night the thief would come, he would have watched, and not suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore, said he, be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh; that is, he cometh to execute these judgments upon Jerusalem. And he adds, Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and to drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In what we have called attention to, as contained in the twenty-fourth chapter, we have presented the admonitions, to more fully and solemnly enforce which the three parables in this twenty-fifth chapter are given. "Then at that very time, when the faithfulness of the good and unfaithfulness of the evil servant shall be proved shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins," etc. "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one," etc. Two of the servants in this parable sustained the character of good and faithful servants, and were applauded by their lord on the day of reckoning, but the third was found wicked and slothful, and was condemned and punished. Of his sentence and punishment brother Armstrong inquires. We have deemed the foregoing review of the whole subject necessary in opening the way to a clear understanding of this and to every other part of the whole.

We will now devote a few remarks to that part contained in the verse proposed, in which the sentence of the wicked servant is given. The parable of the talents represents the faithful servants who in the absence of their lord were diligent in the occupancy of their trust, approved, promoted and generously rewarded for their fidelity in the day of special trial, and the faithless and slothful servant cast out and consigned to darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth. Such being the bearing of the parable, we are to look for its application to the disciples of our Lord, who are recognized as his servants, and by his will as the servants of his church. In the divinely authorized interpretation and application of the parable, the man, or lord of the servants, represents the kingdom of heaven. The servants in the parable are those invested with gifts to rule the Lord's household and give to those of his household their meat in due season. The good and faithful servants represent the faithful servants in the church, in the ministry, who shall be found of their Lord giving meat to those of the household of God in due season, and who in the faithful discharge of their duty "have purchased to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus (I Timothy 3:13)." The slothful servant represents the servant of the church, who is intrusted with a gift for feeding the flock, who buries that gift in the earth, and with the

people and things of the earth becomes intoxicated and infatuated, smites the menservants and the maidservants of his Lord's household when they disturb his sluggishness by application for their meat in due season, leaving the care of the flock of Christ for the vanities of the world, associating with the drunken fanatics of the world, to the annoyance, discomfort and distress of the saints; they shall in the day of reckoning receive of the temporal plagues and judgments which are held in store for the ungodly. These three invested according to their lord's judgment with gifts or talents according to their several ability, were all equally his servants, his property, for a servant, in a scriptural sense, is one who is not his own, but is bought with a price, who therefore owes obedience and fidelity to his owner, or lord. Such were the servants in Abraham's household, born in his house, or bought with his money, according to God's law upon that subject (Leviticus 25:44-46). Thus the term "servant" is always used in reference to the servants of God and of the church, always signifying the Master's right of property in them. The reason given by the apostle why "ye are not your own," is that "ye are bought with a price," consequently the property of him who has bought you, owing to him all your powers to serve. Upon no other principle could the slothful servant have been held accountable to his lord for neglecting to improve his talent, for if his lord had no right of property in him he could no more have demanded obedience from the servant than could the servant from his lord. It must be remembered, however, that all of God's servants whom Christ has bought with a price are also children of God, and it is as children, not as servants, they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. As sons, their inheritance of immortality is secure, being incorruptible, undefiled, and fading not away, but as servants, if they know their Master's will and do it not, they shall be beaten with many stripes. The gifts or talents bestowed on the ministers or other servants of Christ and his church are committed to them as servants and stewards. So the apostle has settled the matter, for, says he, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." And this treasure, talent or gift, we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power thereof may be of God, and not of us.

The peculiar labor obligatory upon the servants of the kingdom of Christ is set forth in connection with this cluster of parables to be, first, to take the oversight of the flock; they are made rulers over the Lord's household, to give them meat in due season. But as rulers they are not lords over God's heritage, nor are they to make rules for the household, nor smite or abuse either the menservants or maidservants, but simply to administer the rule which Christ himself has laid down for the government of both pastor and people. The obligation of the church or household to recognize these servants whom he has commissioned to take the oversight of them is found in Hebrews 13:7,8: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." The word of God which they have spoken to you is the rule, and the only rule which they have or are allowed to have over the household of God, and if they do not speak the word of God unto the church they are not invested with any legitimate power to rule, nor are the saints or churches at liberty to follow their faith unless the end of their conversation be Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever. If they show such credentials as are here indicated, on their peril let not the churches or the saints despise them. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves;" that is, to the rule, to the word of God which they have spoken unto you, for that is the rule, "For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." As watchmen, they are still servants, and must give account to their Lord and Master. Now, in administering the law of Christ, the word of God, as the rule, the servants of Christ and of his kingdom are also required to "feed the church of God, which he bath purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28)." In feeding the church of God they are to give to those who are of the household of faith, both menservants and

maidservants, babes and fathers, sheep and lambs, their meat in due season. There are regular and stated times for meals in all well regulated households; if the family does not receive their meals regularly they may suffer from hunger and become disorderly. Paul indeed charged Timothy to “be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine (II Timothy 4:2).” As the children of the household may become hungry between meals, the servants in charge are to attend instantly to their necessities. “For,” the apostle adds, “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” In all such cases the servants of the Lord will be required to be seasonable with their reproofs, rebukes, exhortations, longsuffering and doctrine. They must not wait until the wolf has entered the fold and begun to devour the flock before they give warning, nor delay serving the wholesome food of the good word of the Lord until they see the children fainting, but they are required, as good stewards, to deal out such food from the word, whether reproof, rebuke, exhortation or encouragement, comfort and consolation, in due season; that is, just as the peculiar circumstances of the family require it. “Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.”

“But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken,” how striking the contrast! The servant whom Christ approves is watchful, faithful and diligent in the most darksome and trying times, but the other, like an eye-servant, assures himself that his lord delayeth his coming, chooseth for himself a course of self-gratification and ease, at the expense of the household over which he has been called to watch. In the trying hour, when the conflict becomes intense and violent between the church and the world, or anti-christ, in regard to the promise of his coming, in the execution of long predicted and impending judgments, the slothful servant, recreant to his trust, disloyal to his master and treacherous to his fellow-servants, falls to beating them and unites with their enemies, eats and drinks with the drunken. But the scene will soon change, the coming of the day of the Lord will not be delayed; he that is to come will come, and he will not tarry, and at his coming judgment shall prevail. The faithful servants of our Lord will be approved, but the wicked and slothful will not only be exposed and condemned and speechless, unable to utter a word in justification of his course, but will be compelled to share with the enemies of God and truth in the temporal judgments which shall consume the adversaries. His sentence is already written: “Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.” Depose him from the ministry, and let the privileges and gifts pertaining to his position be given to those who will improve them. “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” The execution of this order seems to be given to the church, who in the faithful execution of the discipline of the house of God shall disown, depose and withdraw support, countenance and fellowship from the wicked and slothful servant, and in doing this they shall cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Outer darkness is the opposite of inner light. The light, joy and peace of the people of God are realized in the church of God. “For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof (Revelation 21:23).” Expelled from the privileges of the church of Christ, and from the fellowship of the saints, the excluded, if a servant or child of God, is cast into outer darkness and utter wretchedness, “cut asunder,” or, as the margin reads, “cut off;” his portion no more with the saints in sweet communion and fellowship, but he takes a miserable portion with hypocrites, with those whom he has been eating and drinking, and a sad portion it must be to one who has ever known the inner joy and blessed light of the house of God. No wonder it is said there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; for while the poor banished servant from his Master’s house must weep bitterly when he remembers Zion, the hypocrites

into whose society he is cast have no consoling words of comfort, but railing, reproaches and blasphemies. Like salt that has lost its savor, he finds himself good for nothing, but is cast out of the church to be trodden under foot of men.

We are aware that many have understood that this unprofitable servant is designed to represent one who has never been a true servant of God or of the church of Christ, but the whole connection shows that he was. The man in the parable called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods, and to every one according to his several ability. What part of the gifts of the church, goods of the spiritual household of God, or talents for feeding the church of God, has our Lord ever bestowed upon graceless hypocrites? Or what punishment would it be to cast out of the society and fellowship of an orderly church into the society and communion of hypocrites one of their own stamp, who in reality never knew the Lord and never saw the inner light and glory of the church of God? The character here presented is a servant, equally bought with a price and equally bound in duty to obey his master, with those who received the ten and the two talents. If the disciples were not themselves liable to temptations and slothfulness, and to the consequences of rebellion and disorder, why were these parables spoken privately to them? In Revelation 18:4, John says, “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues.” This voice was heard speaking to those who were unquestionably God’s people, yet they are admonished that if they partake of the sins of Babylon they shall also receive of her plagues. Of course the plagues spoken of are her temporal judgments, and so also in the case of the destruction of Jerusalem, to which all these parables primarily referred. Those who were admonished that when they should see the signs of Christ’s coming to destroy Jerusalem were to flee to the mountains, or participate in the temporal calamities which were to be poured out upon her. And so it is at this very day in which we are now living; the cup of anti-christ is nearly filled to its brim; she has slaughtered her hundreds of thousands, and her clergy is still as bloodthirsty as before, and still crying for carnage, and some of God’s servants who hold a commission to preach peace on earth and good will toward men are even now evidently eating and drinking with the drunken, and in their mad intoxication are smiting their fellow-servants, who cannot join them in their murderous howlings in consigning their fellow-men to the sword. The admonitions of these parables in thunder tones are addressed to them, admonishing them that the time of her judgment is very near at hand, but from their associations with the drunken, infatuated fanatics of the day they are still assuring themselves that the Lord delays his coming, and are crying peace and safety now, while sudden destruction is near at hand.

“On wings of vengeance flies our God,
To pay the long arrears of blood.”

The talent of the infatuated and slothful servant, though it be but one, is buried in the earth, or in earthly speculations, delusions and infatuations of the present times, and many have turned away their ears from the truth and are turned unto fables. But as surely as we have correctly understood the fearful import of these solemn warnings, the day is not distant when they shall call for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. The measure which they are now meting to others shall soon be meted to them again in full measure, heaped up and running over. Let those of God’s children who can, put far from their thoughts and apprehensions the evil day, and fortify themselves with their delusions; nevertheless

“That awful day will surely come,
The appointed hour makes haste,

When they shall stand before their Judge,
And pass the solemn test.”

We do believe, however much of God’s redeemed people may have to suffer with the ungodly world for their complicity with anti-christ, they shall finally all be saved, yet so as by fire, for however far they may go in wickedness, and deeply suffer in consequence thereof, their spiritual life is hid with Christ in God; yet while here in the flesh, it is equally certain that they that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8: 13,14).”

Our friend Armstrong will understand us to consider the unprofitable servant in the parable to mean an unprofitable servant of Christ, and his punishments to be a suspension of the comforts and privileges of the church, and a participation with hypocrites in the temporal judgments to which they are doomed; and further, that this solemn warning was given privately to the disciples of Christ in special reference to the judgments at that time impending over Jerusalem, and that a record of the same is preserved as an admonition to the servants of Christ in all subsequent time until the end of the world; and what Christ has said to those servants privately on the mount he says also to all his own servants throughout all time: “Watch!” “Watch and be sober.” “Take heed that no man deceive you.” “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them.” “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”

A day is now most evidently upon us in which the faithful and unfaithful servants of the kingdom of Christ whom he has commissioned to minister to those of his household, and to give them their meat in due season, are being called to a strict reckoning, and the line is now being drawn between those who shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, even at the peril of their lives, and those who prefer to eat and drink with the drunken, and to smite the menservants and the maidservants who remain at their posts; and it will be made fully to appear that those who seek to save their lives by withholding the truth and conniving at error, shall lose their standing as ministers of Christ and be driven into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; and they who will lay down their life for Jesus’ sake shall find it. Servants of the kingdom, beware; spread your banner fearlessly, in the name of your God. Bury not your talent in the earth. Stand boldly forth and contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and count not your lives dear unto yourselves, that ye may finish your course with joy and the ministry which ye have received to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1865.



I CORINTHIANS 8:5, 6

“For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him (I Corinthians 8:5,6).”

Admitting all that can be claimed by principalities and powers, either in heaven or earth, to us, that is to those who are the called, quickened, and spiritually instructed, there is but one supreme ruling power, transcending all the powers which are put under him. He is the only wise God, our Savior. His name is called THE WORD OF GOD. All the powers in heaven acknowledge his majesty, and all the angels of God are commanded to worship him. The four beasts (or living creatures), and the four-and-twenty elders, which represent all the principalities and powers in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, acknowledge him to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. And he himself declares his supreme power over all flesh, which he must needs possess, that he might give eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him. When by a commission from him, his apostles were seated upon thrones of judgment, to judge and administer to the twelve tribes of his spiritual Israel, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven (that is the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, with which they were baptized on the day of Pentecost), was given them, expressly to make binding on earth, all their apostolic decisions, they were distinctly informed that the excellency of all this power was of God, and not of them. “He came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18-20).”

In asserting the absolute supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ over all beings, all events, and all worlds, we design in this article to show that in ascending his Mediatorial throne, all temporal as well as all spiritual authority was vested in him. The apostle in showing what is the exceeding greatness of God’s mighty power to his church-ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, adds: “And hath put all things under his feet,” and in all this fullness of power over all things in heaven and earth, in this world and that which is to come, “gave him to be the head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:19-23).” We will notice first his supreme power in the heavenly places, and secondly, his supreme authority over all the principalities or departments of power in this world.

First. Christ is supreme, blessed and only Potentate in his spiritual kingdom, the departments of which are called Heavenly Places, wherein are set thrones of judgment; the thrones of the house of David (Psalm 122:5). There are no thrones of legislation: for not even the apostles were allowed to enact any law, or amend, annual, or altar any part of the law of Christ. His princes shall sit in judgment. They shall sit in judgment over his chosen tribes, giving judgment and decision on every part of the law of Christ, and their judgments and decisions are authoritative, for they sit on thrones, and thrones signify places of imperial power. Thus in setting forth the principalities of the heavenly places, the apostles are first brought to view, endowed with power from heaven to administer the laws of Christ, to set in order all that belongs to the organization and travel of the church of God. What they have written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost makes up a full, perfect, and complete directory for the observance of all

the children of God throughout all time. The man of God is perfectly and thoroughly furnished to every good work. The primitive church was organized on and in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and only so far and so long as we abide in the doctrine of the apostles, can we continue in their fellowship. What they have bound on earth is bound in heaven; also, what they have loosed on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Next to the apostles in authority are the prophets which God has placed in the church, having gifts from the Lord for the edification of the saints. Thirdly, teachers, in a more general acceptation of the word, as this principality embraces, as we apprehend, all the gifts, or all those to whom God has given ability to teach the doctrine, order, and ordinances of the house of God. The same gifts which are simply called *teachers* in I Corinthians 12:28, are in Ephesians 4, called evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Next to these in their order come the gifts of healing, of helps, governments, tongues, etc., and all for the edifying of the body, the church. None of them are to be despised or unappreciated, for these all being established as principalities in the heavenly places of the church and kingdom of Christ are to be regarded as thrones of power which Christ himself has set. They are to teach, exhort, reprove, and rebuke with all authority. That is with all the authority by Christ invested in them, and that is to be determined by his word. These principalities cannot be disregarded without violation of our loyalty to Christ; for he has said to his servants, "He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me (Matthew 10:20)." The Pharisees were astonished at Christ's doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes; and it is a distinguishing mark of a servant of Christ now, that they, and only they, have divine authority for what they teach. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." But we should remember that it is only when the servants of God speak as the Lord Jesus has authorized them, that they speak or teach with authority. Now all these principalities and powers which Christ our King has set in the heavenly places of his kingdom are in subjection to Christ as the Blessed and only Potentate. He is exalted not only above, but far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, both in this world, and that which is to come. They are only his servants, acting by his authority, having none of their own. He is the Head, and they the members of his body: and to him they constantly ascribe all power, might, and dominion; saying, "for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever, amen."

Should any one therefore attempt to introduce into the kingdom, or to bind any obligations upon the saints which our Lord Jesus Christ has not authorized, whatever their position may be in the church or in the ministry, their effort should be firmly resisted. Even the apostles are to be followed only as they follow Christ. And if Paul or an angel from heaven should teach any other doctrine than that which the apostles have preached, let them be accused. To hold Christ as the blessed and only Potentate will not allow us to receive from any of his servants, or professed servants, aught in doctrine or order that does not bear the broad seal of his Holy Spirit. All the power or authority any of his apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors or teachers can have, or that the children have a right to regard or obey is the power and authority of Christ himself, as he is the only, as he is the Blessed Potentate. And it would be treasonable in any of his subjects to bow to any other sovereign or potentate in his kingdom.

Secondly. The principalities and powers of the earth, as well as all those of the heavenly places, are subordinate to him, whose name and titles are written upon his vesture and upon his thigh; King of kings, and Lord of lords. The boundaries of his government in providence are from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession, and all legitimate powers, governments, thrones, and dominions of or over the tribes of mankind are from him; and no power can be exercised over men except by usurpation that comes not

from him. He as God of the whole earth has instituted human governments, set up kings, governors, rulers, and judges, limiting their rights to govern within such bounds as to be a terror only to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. Paul gives this as the reason why every soul shall be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. This applies alike to all degrees of power or authority, by special ordinance of God, whether it be vested in kings, governors, presidents, judges, husbands, parents, masters, or wherever it exists, and for the limitation, regulation, and duration, Christians are to examine the ordinance of God in which all these several powers are authorized. The powers are widely different in degrees; the parent or the master has not the power which God has given to kings; but their respective powers to the extent provided in the ordinance is as legitimate in the one as in any of the other departments of human power, and in every case Christians are to respect all these powers and authorities, simply because God has ordained them; not because one man of himself has more right to rule than another. The Christian is to “honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honor the king,” upon the very same principle that servants are commanded to obey or be subject to their masters with all fear, because it is God’s ordinance, and our obedience as children, as servants, and as citizens of states and nations, is, so far as Christians are concerned, that thereby we honor and obey God.

This motive for the submission and obedience of every soul to the higher powers or authorities is urged alike in regard to every grade or degree of authority which God has ordained and enjoined. Children are exhorted to obey their parents, because God has commanded it. It is the first commandment with promise. Servants are commanded to obey in all things their master according to the flesh; “not with eye service,” as though it were only from fear of man; “as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and to do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men (Colossians 3:22,23).” Obedience to kings, governors, judges and magistrates is by special command of our blessed and only Potentate, to be faithfully rendered, because God has commanded it. Not merely because men have enacted the laws, or kings have decreed them, with pains and penalties, but in the fear of God and in obedience to him. “For rulers are not a terror to good works.” That is those whom God has invested with power, and who are his ministers to us for good. The extent of all power given of God to rule is that they shall be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well. They are ministers of God, in the civil department of his government, to protect the law-abiding in all their rights, and to punish those who infringe upon the lawful rights of others; hence the power to be recognized by Christians, although ministered by rulers and judges divinely appointed, is none the less the government of our Blessed and Only Potentate. And all kings, governors, and rulers of the earth, are as firmly bound to rule in the fear of God, observing the limitation of all their powers, as their subjects are to obey them, as the ministers whom God has put in authority over us.

A careful examination will show every candid and honest enquirer after truth that the obligations of subordination, submission and obedience, enjoined on Christians to all the principalities of the heavenly places; that is in the church of God; and their obligations to obey all men who are divinely invested with authority over us in the flesh, as kings, rulers, parents, husbands, masters, and all other institutions of power, to the full extent of the power thus given to them over us, rests alike upon the recognition of the divine power. They should be cheerfully rendered in obedience to our Blessed and Only Potentate, as unto God, and not unto men. It is then as disloyal to our Potentate as for a child to dishonor or disobey his parent, a servant to dishonor or disobey the lawful commands of his master, as it is for a citizen to disregard, dishonor, or disobey the wholesome laws of the state or nation where he owes his obedience.

No man on earth is invested by any ordinance of God with unlimited power or authority. Some have indeed usurped and exercised such power for a season, making the monarch's will the supreme law. Such were the pretensions of the haughty king of Babylon, when commanding all his subjects to worship his golden image; but God rebuked him, and drove him from the society of men to eat grass with the beasts of the field till he confessed the supremacy of the God who rules over all. No earthly government has any divine right to judge the saints in religious matters; nor has any saint a right to be judged by them in meats, or drinks, or holy days, new moons, or Sabbaths. Nor has any husband a right to dictate the religious faith of his wife; nor has a parent a right to command his child to disobey the laws of God or men; nor has the owner or master of a servant a right to require of him anything that God has forbidden, or that would be in violation of the legitimate laws of the land.

In this view of the subject, we bow our knee, and swear allegiance to our Blessed and Only Potentate, as the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and whatsoever we do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men (Colossians 3:23)."

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tongue
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all."

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1865.

I TIMOTHY 6:1-5

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of our God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

In the discussion of the subject matter of this text it is our design to address our remarks especially and exclusively to the saints of God, and to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, as to them who are redeemed from the tribes of the earth, and called out of the world into that kingdom which is not of this world. With the political strife of the potsherd of the earth we have nothing to do: nothing to say. We are not responsible for the policy of human governments, nor are they responsible to us. God will hold them to a strict account who rule not in his fear. But while we shall cautiously avoid as far as possible

alluding to the political controversy and strifes of the kingdoms and governments of the world, we design to shun not to declare all the counsel of God to his saints, and especially such portions of the sacred scriptures as Christ, our blessed and only Potentate has, through his apostle, commanded his ministers to “teach and exhort.” Our mission is to the saints, and our paper is devoted to the Old School Baptist cause, and by example of the apostle, and the precepts of Christ, we are forbidden to keep back anything that is designed to be profitable to the children of God. The laws of Christ and the doctrine of the apostles are only applicable to the children of God; they were not given for the government or instruction of the kingdoms of this world; therefore, although they may conflict with the policy of human governments, they are nevertheless to be religiously observed by the disciples of Christ; and if any of them are repudiated by earthly legislation, that fact affords no license to the subjects of Christ’s kingdom for disregarding them. Much of the apostles’ doctrine on which the church of Christ was organized on the day of Pentecost, and in which the primitive disciples continued steadfast, was repugnant of the laws, ordinances and usages of the earthly governments of that period, and brought the apostles and early disciples into frequent collision with kings, councils and human authorities, and they were frequently incarcerated in dungeons, and cruelly punished for the tenacity with which they adhered to their allegiance to Christ as “the King of kings, and the Lord of lords,” for they counted not their lives dear unto themselves; they loved not their lives to the death.

The peculiar circumstances surrounding the saints of God upon the subject presented in our text, the great strife which has recently been witnessed, and the disposition made of the subject by the secular powers, when considered in connection with the divine injunction which commands the children of God to submit to every ordinance of men, for Christ’s sake, makes it the more vitally important at this very time that we carefully, prayerfully, and in the fear of the Lord, investigate the subject and seek to learn from the instructions of the inspired word the decisions of the apostles whom Christ has seated on thrones of judgment over us, what course we are required to take as disciples and followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, and nicely to discriminate between the things which belong to Caesar and those which belong to God.

A careful examination of our text (I Timothy 6: 1-5), compared with Colossians 3:22-25; Titus 2:9,10; I Peter 2:18, and all other passages treating upon the same subject, clearly presents to us the three following propositions, viz.:

First, that the relationship of servant and master, with all the relative obligations of both, is an institution of God in harmony with “the name of Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness.”

Second, that Timothy and Titus and all other ministers of Christ are commanded to teach and exhort its recognition and observance by all the church of God.

Third, that all who teach otherwise, and consent not to these wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to be put away from our fellowship; or in the words of our text, “From such withdraw thyself.”

First: Without going back to the record of the ordinances in the Old Testament instituting the different grades of human governments, we find enough embodied in the instructions of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament to sustain our position upon this subject. Indeed, in the absence of all other testimony, the five verses at the head of this article are abundantly sufficient for our purpose. Can it be supposed that the apostle Paul, inspired as he certainly was by the Holy Ghost, would enjoin on Timothy as a minister of Christ to teach and exhort the members of Christ’s kingdom to observe and practice what God has not approved and enjoined upon them? His commission was only to “teach them

to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded.” (See Matthew 28:20.) And if it be admitted that Paul spake and wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, then what he has said on this, as on every other subject, is said and written by God himself. To the apostles were given the keys of the kingdom of God. And what they bound on earth was bound in heaven, and what they loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. How then can we possibly avoid the conclusion that what the apostle has here bound on the church is ratified in heaven, and binding on saints throughout all time? It would be trifling with the holy scriptures to suppose that Paul, as an apostle, solemnly enjoined on Timothy, Titus and others to teach and exhort the churches to recognize and exhort the saints to practice what God has not authorized, much less what God disapproves. The apostle in this text not only recognizes the institution as of divine appointment, but says distinctly that it is presented in the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and according to the doctrine of godliness. And still further, that to fail to observe, and teach, and exhort these things is to expose the name and doctrine of God to blasphemy.

Again, as an institution appointed, approved, and enjoined on the saints by God himself, it is classified with other unquestionable ordinances, or laws of God, such as that of marriage, and all grades of human government and human subordination to be observed by the children of God. In almost every place where the relationship of master and servant is named in the apostles’ instructions to the churches, it is placed in connection with the relations and corresponding obligations of parents and children, husbands and wives, kings and subjects, governors and governed; and with all these institutions in view, the apostle exhorts most solemnly that every soul shall be subject to the powers (authorities) that be. The soul of the child, of the servant, the wife, the citizen, and even the king or governor, in their turn are to be in subjection to the higher power of him who holds his throne “far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come.”

No man, in our understanding of this subject, can loose what the apostles have bound upon servants to honor and obey their masters, without also loosing the obligation of children to obey their parents, wives their husbands, citizens their kings, governors, magistrates or rulers. These relative positions are all classified together by the apostle in Romans 13, and the saints are informed that these powers which are, are ordained of God, and whosoever resists them, resists the ordinance of God. “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.” Among those to whom honor is due, the apostle in our text recognizes the master, and commands that as many servants as are under the yoke shall count their own masters worthy of all honor. Dare any servant who fears God disregard this command, and refuse honor and obedience to his own master, or deny that the institution by which he is held under the yoke is of God, or say it is wicked and sinful, and ought not to exist? Peter goes still farther, and commands servants to be subject to their masters, with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. And this rule we presume also applies to all others in subordinate positions. Children may have ungodly parents, wives may have tyrannical husbands, and citizens may have oppressive rulers, yet they are, as Christians, commanded of God to honor them in all cases, and to obey all their lawful commands; that is, all their commands which do not conflict with their obligations to obey God rather than men. The different degrees of power or authority invested in men to rule in any of these positions, as parent, master, husband, magistrate, governor or king, is to be determined by the Christian child, servant, wife or citizen, by the extent of authority expressed or implied in the ordinance of God by which such power is invested; for all the powers that be are ordained of God; for there is no power but of God. That is, as Christians, we have no right to recognize any authority but that which God has given. Neither parents, masters nor kings, have any legitimate power to require those over whom they rule to disobey God.

Indeed, the obligation resting on all Christians to obey parents, masters, governors or kings, is simply because God commands them to do so. Hence they are commanded to render this honor and obedience in the fear of God; “as unto God, and not unto men.”

Second: That Timothy was commanded to teach and exhort these things is expressly stated in the most unequivocal terms that human language can afford. “These things teach and exhort.” And as Titus is also commanded in Chapter 2:9, to “Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; nor purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior, in all things.” And as similar instructions are contained in nearly, if not all, the epistles, we infer that what Timothy and Titus, as ministers of the gospel, and as pastors or bishops of churches were to teach and exhort all the other ministers of Christ, and pastors and teachers of the churches must also teach and exhort. Here are two duties devolving on the faithful minister: First, to *teach*; secondly, *exhort*.

First: *Teach* these things, as the disciples are to be instructed in word and in doctrine; for a disciple means a pupil, a learner; and the minister must be *apt to teach*, and according to their commission they must teach the disciples to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, and these things, among all other things which he has commanded. And if Paul or an angel from heaven shall teach less or more than what Christ has commanded them, Paul says, Let him, or them be accursed. To teach is to expound, to explain, show the authority of God on which these obligations rest, and how and in what manner they are to be obeyed. Timothy must teach servants how they are to honor their masters, and that their adherence to his instructions is required, that the name of God, by whose authority they are required to observe these instructions, and the instructions or doctrine be not blasphemed. Titus is told also that they are not to purloin, or steal anything from their masters, but to please them well in all things; not to be disrespectful, impudent or saucy, but reliable, honest and faithful. Peter adds to the instruction given, that if they have bad, or severe, or froward masters, still they are to bear it for their heavenly Master’s sake; for this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience towards God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully, etc.

Second: In their exhortations, the ministers of Christ are to faithfully admonish servants to discharge all the duties devolving on them in the position and relation which they occupy, in the fear of God; exhort them to do their duty faithfully because it is the command of God that they should; and that they cannot fail to do so without disobedience to God; that is in special reference to the will and law of God which requires fidelity of them, and not merely as men-pleasers.

Thirdly: We come now to our third and last proposition: the duty of the ministers of Christ to withdraw themselves from those, if any there be, who teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words. Here are two points involving fellowship, or companionship. First, if any man *teach otherwise*. Secondly, if any man consent not to wholesome words, etc.

Any subject involving Christian fellowship demands a serious and careful investigation; for all the saints are required by the laws of Christ to “Endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.” Yet to extend expressions of fellowship beyond the limits which are set by Christ and his apostles would be unjustifiable, and tend to disorder and confusion. The precise limitation of fellowship, or at least of companionship on the subject under consideration is so distinctly marked by the apostle in our text as to leave no discretionary power. Neither our feelings nor personal interest have any lawful bearing on our decision. The stakes are unalterably planted by divine authority.

The questions arising on which we are to judge and decide are: what is it to teach otherwise? and who are they that will not consent to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness?

We would not, and perhaps should not, include with those who teach *otherwise*, those whose minds have not been drawn to the subject; for although it is the duty of all the saints to search the scriptures, to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good; there are those who are weak in the faith, whose burdens we are to bear; and those who are lame and must not be turned out of the way. But by *teaching otherwise*, we must understand those who teach that which is antagonistic to the plain instructions of our text. Those, it is meant, who teach that the institution itself is wicked, or sinful, and that it therefore ought not to exist; that masters have no right or property in servants; that the relationship is oppressive, unjust, and incompatible with the gospel of Christ, and inharmonious with the doctrine of godliness, or that it is right, scriptural, philanthropic and Christian like to oppose it; that it is not the duty of the servant who is under the yoke to count his master worthy of all honor, but that he may run away, or in any way refuse to comply with the explicit instructions of our text. They are understood to teach otherwise, from what the apostles taught, who use their influence to deprive masters of their property in servants, and who recommend and justify the use of the sword in putting down the institution, and thus of depriving the masters of their property in servants. In short, we cannot conceive it possible for a Christian, or one who professes the Christian religion, to be what is at this time called an *Abolitionist*, without teaching that which is clearly and palpably otherwise from what the apostle has taught in our text.

Those who teach otherwise from the instruction given in our text are such as assume to be *teachers* and do not confine their instruction to what the apostles taught; but teach something else, and whatever else they may teach must be *otherwise* from what Timothy was commanded to teach and exhort. Of this class of teachers, however, few have been found among Old School Baptists; anti-christ has furnished her legions, who have made war upon the institution, blasphemed the doctrine which the apostle says is according to godliness, repudiated the plain instructions of the scriptures, and authority of Christ; and have used all their influence to stir up strife, envy, evil surmisings and perverse disputings on the subject; urging the most desperate and cruel measures for the abolition of the institution, denouncing that as unholy which God has authorized and approved. All these evidently *teach otherwise* from what Christ by his holy apostles has taught, and we are commanded to withdraw from them. We are neither to hold fellowship nor companionship with such.

They who consent not to the wholesome words of Christ and the doctrine which is according to godliness, whether they be teachers or pupils, are those who will not regard these plain instructions of the scriptures; but set their judgments above the apostles' instructions; making themselves wise above what is written, and persistently refuse the admonitions of the word, and madly contribute their influence in opposition to what the apostle has so clearly enjoined. From all such we are commanded to withdraw.

We do not however understand that this divine rule requires that we should withdraw from such as merely, from ignorance of the teachings of the apostles, or from the prejudice of education and habit, may feel an aversion to the holding of servants as property; providing they consent to the apostles' instructions. The institution, as taught in the scriptures, requires no one who does not feel so disposed, to own or hold servants, nor does it forbid the owners of them to set them free; but the law of God does forbid that we should covet, or seek to deprive our neighbor of his man-servant, or his maid-servant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is our neighbors. And the servant, if he *may be free*, by the consent of

his owner, is allowed to choose it rather. But those who teach that the institution is not a divine appointment; that servants are not by the law of Christ required to honor, obey and faithfully serve their masters, and consent not to, but deny these apostolic injunctions, must be put away from our society and fellowship; or, in other words, we are commanded, “from such to withdraw.

The necessity for observing this rule is as important now as at any other time or place, for heresy on this subject is full as productive of envy, strifes, railings, evil surmisings, and perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth now, as at any former time. The fruits of *Abolition* prejudice against our Southern brethren has already been betrayed, to some extent, and now that intercommunication of brethren, which has been interrupted, is being restored, this subject must be met; it cannot be avoided. Let us meet it on Bible grounds and fear not for consequences.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1865.

ROMANS 3:7

Dear Brother Beebe: Some three weeks ago my attention was called, by Brother Symmond’s, to the seventh verse of the third chapter of Romans, which reads: “For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why am I also judged as a sinner.” And at the time, nor yet, is my mind so clear on the intention of the Holy Ghost by the apostle as I desire, and although asking much of you, I would be glad to have you, through the “Signs” give your views, especially on the first clause. Likely it may meet Brother Symmond’s eye, although I cannot say he takes the “Signs.” From your brother in a desire to know the truth.

J.G. Williams.

Reply to Brother J. G. Williams on Romans 3:7: According to this text, it should be read in connection with the verse which immediately follows, and in its connection also with his general argument presented in the preceding context. God is true, though every man be a liar: that is, God is justified in all his sayings, though his sayings are disputed by wicked men; their disputation and opposition shall show the contrast, and make the glory of God’s truth more clearly manifest; as triumphing over all error. And the righteousness of God shall be commended by contrast with our unrighteousness. Yet, although God will be glorified in the salvation of sinners; and the very fact that they are poor lost, guilty sinners, shall more abundantly show the riches of God’s grace in their salvation, than it could be if Christ had come to call the righteous, and not sinners to repentance. To illustrate this proposition Paul supposes a case. All men, himself included, are liars; that is, all have sinned; the saints are in no wise any better than those liars, and slanderers whose damnation is just; yet “the truth of God has more abounded through my lie.” God’s truth, though opposed by our lies, cannot be annulled, is made more apparent, and its power and majesty is more abundantly manifested by the violent opposition it is able to encounter and to triumph over. Yet, as we all know, the effect of our lie, in it being made to commend the truth of God, does not justify us in lying. Paul does not take the position that he is any less sinful in lying because through his lie the truth of God hath abounded to the glory of God; for if he had, it would have been no slander for their enemies to affirm of him that his doctrine was that we

should sin that grace might abound. But he takes the position that although God's truth hath the more abounded to God's glory through "my lie," yet I am none the less guilty for lying; and am therefore judged as a sinner. This would not be the case if we were justified in lying, or sinning, that grace might abound; if the end could justify the means.

"If our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say?" Shall we say because God is able to over-rule our wickedness for his own declarative glory, that therefore it is wrong for him to hold us guilty and to take vengeance on us for that which has resulted in his glory. Upon such a principle, why would Paul be judged as a sinner for telling a lie, if that lie had made God's truth and glory abound? Or why were the Jews and Romans guilty in the crucifixion of him who was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God? Were his persecutors any less guilty of murder because God is glorified in the death of his Son, and in the great salvation resulting from his death?

Ungodly men in Paul's day, like wicked men of our day, "slanderosly report," and some of them affirm, or swear, that the tendency of the doctrine of the apostle is that men should sin, that God may be glorified. But Paul repels the spiteful slander, and in the text, shows that although God's truth should the more abound to God's glory by my lie, yet I am no less a sinner in lying. I am still judged, by the law which forbids me to lie, as a sinner. Otherwise, or on any other view of the subject, "How shall God judge the world?" It is true that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." And that neither men nor devils shall ever be able to go one step in wickedness beyond the fixed bounds or limitation which God in his inscrutable wisdom ordained, yet he will nevertheless judge the world in righteousness, and hold every sinner amenable for every transgression and disobedience to his eternal law. Paul then admits that if he lies he is judged as a sinner, although that lie be overruled for God's glory; and why, or how could this lie, if he were required to sin, that the grace of God might abound?

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1865.

PROVERBS 22:6

In reply to a sister who has desired our views on the text: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

The proverbs of Solomon are short sentences of wisdom, which, while proverbially true in their literal application, as a general thing, are more immediately designed for the spiritual instruction of the children of wisdom. Hence Wisdom is personified as giving divine instruction to her children; by whom she is ever justified. In many parts of the book of Proverbs, the address is made to "My son," "My children," etc. And in chapter seven, Wisdom is the speaker. "Doth not wisdom cry? And doth not understanding put forth her voice?" Our Lord Jesus Christ is of God made unto us, (his saints) wisdom and righteousness; sanctification and redemption. For in him is found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. To them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, he is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. Admitting then, as we must, that these proverbs are given by divine inspiration, we are to receive them as addressed to us by our divine Instructor, the Lord Jesus Christ, who says, "Learn of me, for I

am meek and lowly.” And of whom God’s voice, in the cloud of transfiguration, said “Hear ye him.” In liberalizing the proverb now under consideration, its beauty and truth does not appear; for there is no human wisdom so perfect as to secure infallibly the result which is contemplated in our text. In Solomon’s own case, there was an apparent failure. His father, according to the flesh, was David, the man after God’s own heart; and Solomon himself says, “I was my father’s son; tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thy heart retain my words; and keep my commandments and live.” And certainly Solomon was as brilliant an example of good breeding as we can find, yet we are told that when he became old, “nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin (Nehemiah 13.26).” In his old age he was led into idolatry by his strange wives. And in our day we have many sad examples of the kind. How many anxious parents have taken all the pains of their power in the discipline and education of their children, and yet those children have in many instances departed from all the wholesome instructions and judicious counsels which had been lavished upon them in early life, while instances have not been infrequent wherein children who have in childhood and youth been exposed to the most unwholesome instructions, and most pernicious examples, have risen to eminence, and in old age been found among the best citizens in the world. Although the course suggested by the proverb commends itself to the wise, it does not give assurance that human care and prudence shall always be successful.

Many experiments have been tried by the wise and prudent of this world, to improve the condition of mankind, and much discussion has been had on the question: “In what way should a child be trained?” The ancient Pharisees boasted their superior advantages, having the law and the covenants with them, of training their children; but we are told they made their pupils two-fold more the children of hell than themselves were. And our modern Pharisees, by Sabbath Schools, infant and Bible classes, and Theological seminaries, have succeeded no better. The present generation has been raised and educated and trained under the full power of all this humanly invented religious machinery, thoroughly drilled in Sunday Schools; we have often been told that when they become old they would be pious Christians, and good citizens. But what do we see as the result of all this kind of training? A more wicked, murderous, heaven-defying generation probably has never been upon the earth since the deluge. “He that sitteth in the heavens has laughed, and God has had them in derision (Psalm 2:4).” According to his unerring word, “Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse; deceiving, and being deceived.”

But, as we object to the use or abuse to which our text is and has been prostituted by ancient and modern Pharisees, we will give our esteemed sister, and our readers generally, such light as we have upon its true and spiritual meaning. Understanding Christ as head over all things to his church, as personified by Wisdom, and as such set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, as the head of his spiritual family, and Husband of his church, or his Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and which is the mother of all the legitimate children of wisdom, we shall regard the admonition and instruction of our text as addressed by him to the church, the Lamb’s wife, the spiritual mother of the family, directing her to “train up” her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. None can successfully dispute that this application of our text most fully and beautifully expresses the instruction of Christ to his church, in regard to the discipline of his household. The church of God is under a most solemn charge from him whom his soul loveth, to train up her sons and daughters in the fear of the Lord. She is solemnly charged to see to it that all his laws and ordinances, precepts and examples, doctrine and order, be faithfully taught, and constantly observed by all her children. And who has ever known a heaven-born son or daughter of the church of the living God, who has been trained from the infancy of their spiritual experience under the faithful administration of the word of truth, well instructed in the doctrine of Christ, and constantly habituated to take the scriptures as the man of their

counsel, standard of their faith, and rule of their conduct from their first connection with the church until their heads have whitened with age, that has not become well established in word and doctrine?

In the nature of the figure, it is the peculiar office of the wife to instruct her household to honor and obey their father and their mother in all things. And as a mother, her children are placed under her peculiar care and instruction; they are directed to look to her for succor, instruction and consolation. She is an help meet for him who is the “Everlasting Father,” of all her children. He bids her, “Train them in the way they should go.” To train is to exercise, to instruct, to keep them in the practice, to drill, and accustom them to the constant practice of that in which they are to be trained.

Practically, the church of Christ, walking in all the order of the house of God, sees that sin is not suffered to rest unrebuked on any of her children. She has maternal charge as well as love for them all. She receives to her bosom the “newborn babe,” as soon as it is born, feeds it with the sincere milk of the word, which flows from the breasts of her consolation. She attends to their numerous wants, hears and understands their cries for bread; or feeds them on milk, as she knows their condition and age can bear; teaches them to talk, and turns to them a pure language, that they may not speak in a mongrel, or half Ashdod dialect; instructs them how to spell and pronounce *Shibboleth*, and every other pass-word or countersign required of those who are of the household of God. She sees that not a morsel of food from the pulpit, or elsewhere, goes into the mouth, that is unwholesome; she examines well that there be no wild gourds served up by young and inexperienced prophets; that there be no “death in the pot” from which they are to feed. She has a charge to see that their clothing is in good order, white and clean, unspotted from the world, undefiled and unpolluted. Her husband has stored the wardrobe well. The garments of salvation, the robe of righteousness, garments of praise, and raiment of fine needlework are there; she is to see to it that they are seasonably put on, carefully protected from pollution, and duly appreciated. She has a special charge in training them, to keep them out of bad company; for her Husband, in one of his proverbs of wisdom, has told her that “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” She must not allow them to go after *strange women*, (professed churches). She must teach them to beware of the flattering words of the strange woman (anti-christ), and thoroughly warn them against her subtle snares, and tell them plainly that “her house is the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death; lest they should let their heart decline to her ways, for she hath truly cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Such are her fascinating charms and seductive devices, that many shall follow her pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. She must therefore faithfully warn them to beware of dogs, to beware of evil workers, and to beware of the concision. She has a solemn charge to see that the discipline of the house of God is faithfully observed in all cases, and see that the little children love one another. She must in training them see that they are well instructed in all the doctrine of God their Savior, and that they perfectly understand and walk in all the order and ordinances of his house, blamelessly and unrebukably until his coming.

Now, my dear sister, do you think a child of God, a son of the church, brought up strictly according to the laws of Christ, and duly instructed to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, from early infancy to old age, will, when old, depart from the doctrine, order or ordinances of his kingdom? Did you ever know such an instance?

But even the children of God who are left, like the few Jews in Jerusalem while the tribes were carried into Babylonish captivity, may forsake the law of the Lord, inter-marry with the children of Ashdod, become corrupted, and their very language become confused and incoherent, so that they spake neither language correctly; but a mongrel jargon which betrays their lack of wholesome training. The children

of God require the care and counsels of their mother; or they are liable to become as children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

In conclusion, esteemed sister, although you are located somewhat remote from your mother, as to the privileges of frequent social privileges in the church, and but seldom can hear the preaching of the word in truth and faithfulness, yet as God has graciously trained you himself; weaned you from the vanities of the Gentiles; led you about and instructed you; and kept you as the apple of his eye; surely there is no good thing that he will now withhold from you. Where you formerly sought a home, when you asked for bread, they gave you a stone; when hunger compelled you to ask for a fish, they gave you a serpent, and for an egg, they gave you a scorpion. But the Lord has heard your groaning, and came down and delivered you; he brought you out of the house of bondage with a high hand, and an outstretched arm, and he has brought you to his banqueting house, and over your defenseless head has he spread the banner of his love. Now we address to you the inspired admonition, which has already been brought home by the Spirit to your heart, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house: so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him (Psalm 45:10,11)."

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1865.

I PETER 3:8

"Finally, be ye all of one mind."

This eminent apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, in common with all the other apostles of the Lamb, was invested with divine authority to establish in the church of God every principle of faith and order which can ever be lawfully entertained in his kingdom. No religious organization can ever be recognized as a church of Christ or a branch of the church of Christ, unless standing in the apostles' doctrine, conforming to their decisions, listening to their instructions and accepting all their decisions in judgment on all parts of the law of Christ. The apostle John lays down this rule of judgment, this infallible and everlasting test of fellowship, and criterion by which the saints of God shall know, without the least shade of uncertainty, who of all the professing world are of God, and who are of the world, and not of God. He says, "We [that is the apostles, and the apostolic church, which holds the apostles' doctrine and order] are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." "They [that is, they whose spirit and doctrine are not of God] are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." (I John 4:5,6) To hear the apostles, in a scriptural sense, is to receive their instructions, accept and abide by their decisions in all they have said, and to obey their injunctions and heed all their admonitions. He that is of God will do all this, and if any who profess godliness do not in this sense hear the apostles, it is because they are not of God, but are of the world. This decision is infallible, whether applied to individuals or to churches. By this rule the church is commanded to "try the spirits", and by it they are to discriminate between truth and error; between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world, or of antichrist.

In conformity with this unerring rule let us examine the admonition of Peter, which we have placed at the head of this article. It is given as a finality, admitting of no amendment, of no abridgment, of no alteration. “Finally.” This word is used not only to express in this place irrevocable decision, but also legitimate deduction from the instructions contained in the context, in which the duties of all the saints to God and to men are distinctly and authoritatively laid down; as citizens of the world, to kings and governors, magistrates and rulers, of wives to husbands, children to parents, and of servants to masters. These are the instructions immediately preceding, and the “finally” of our text is expressive of the general summing up of what they amount to, or the unanimity of consent with which they must be accepted by all who are of God, all who are to be held in fellowship as “elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience,” etc.

“Finally, be ye all of one mind.” Unanimity of sentiment is indispensable to church fellowship. Of the church, in her original organization at Pentecost, we are informed that her constituents gladly received, or heard, the doctrine of the apostles, that their union was so perfect that they were of one heart and one soul. They on whom God had poured out his Spirit were pricked in their hearts, gladly received the word of the apostles, were baptized in that faith and order, continued steadfast in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship. They could not possibly be in the latter, if not in the former, for if they were of God they would hear the apostles, according to the infallible rule copied from the apostle John, and if any one of them stood not in the apostles’ doctrine, his spirit was of the world, and not of God. No one was allowed to dissent from the apostles’ decisions on any one of those positions taken by them, on the plea that he had a right to his opinion independent of the apostles, or of the church of God in which apostolic rule and order are maintained. The apostles have not so decided, that if any man teach otherwise from their instructions that it is only a matter of opinion, and he has a right to such opinion, and his brethren and the church should tolerate such independence. No one is to be recognized as being of God who does not yield every opposite opinion, and bow to the decision of the holy apostles. Paul says, “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words,” etc., he is proud, knowing nothing; that is, knowing nothing of the things of the Spirit of God. How can he, if his spirit is of this world, and not of God? No man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. They are spiritually discerned, therefore the natural man cannot know them, and consequently he knows nothing, and in his blindness and ignorance he dotes about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, etc. From all such the command of God through the apostles is, “Withdraw thyself;” and all who are of God will hear this last, as well as all other of the apostles’ commands and decisions, admonitions and exhortations.

As all the fraternity of the household of God are required to be of one mind, as our apostle has decided, then it follows, of course, that no member of the brotherhood has a right, or can be tolerated by the church, in holding sentiments or opinions discordant with the mind of the church, which is based upon the decisions of the apostles. How can the church of God be distinguished from the world, or from antichrist, if there be no unity of faith, no unanimity of sentiment, no agreement in doctrine and practice? It is indispensable to the existence of an orderly gospel church that all her members should be of one mind, and to be of but one mind; it is equally indispensable that all shall be of one spirit. If all are born of the Spirit, and led by the Spirit of God, then all will have the mind of Christ, and in that mind there is unity. That mind is always in perfect harmony with all the teachings of the apostles, and will recognize their high authority, as inspired judges of the spiritual tribes, to establish forever the order of the church of Christ.

But, one demands of us, Have I not a right to my own opinion? Must I pin my faith on the sleeve of another? While we believe that all intelligent beings must have settled convictions and opinions of their own, and as members of the human family no man or set of men has a right to domineer over the conscience or judgment of his or their fellow men, and while as citizens of the states and nations freedom of thought and independence of opinion is the inalienable right of every man, so far as relates to the authority of his fellow men to control his thoughts, provided, however, that he, in his freedom of thought, does not infringe upon the equal rights of others, by entertaining unwarrantable thoughts or malicious feelings against his neighbors, yet, while admitting all this independence of thought to men of the world, we at the same time hold and contend that as a member of the body of Christ no one has a right to entertain thoughts or opinions independently of the faith of the church to which he belongs. This point the apostle has settled in our text: “Be ye all of one mind.”

When called out of the world we are commanded to renounce the world and its doctrine, spirit and opinions, and on the profession of faith in Christ we professed to gladly receive the doctrine of the apostles, to take on us the yoke of Christ, to learn of him, and to take his word as the man of our counsel, the standard of our faith and the rule of our practice. In short, we relinquished all claim to an independent position, we gave ourselves to the Lord, and by his will, to one another, were baptized into one body, surrendered our individuality, became all one in Christ, a perfect unit; no more our own, for we were bought with a price; members of Christ, and members of one another. No reservation of rights which we did not hold in common with the church of the living God.

As to the right of thought, take for example the case of Peter with Simon Magus. How terribly sharp was his rebuke: “I perceive that the thought of thy heart is not right. Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.” Upon the plea of independence and right to think differently from the doctrine of the church, how is heresy to be detected and disposed of? The divine rule enjoins on the church to reject an heretic after the first and second admonition. Heresy is understood to be thoughts and words which are opposite to, or not in harmony with, the doctrine of Christ, as laid down by the apostles and held by the church. They were heretics who resisted Paul, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and Paul describes them as being of the sort which creep into houses, who lead captive silly women. He says they are heady, high-minded, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power (or authority over them) thereof, and he adds, “From such turn away.” Timothy is commanded to “shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness; and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.” There are many such examples of heresy recorded, and the peremptory command in every case is, “From such withdraw thyself.”

Now it must be seen that the church of God has no right to tolerate a diversity of sentiments or opinions on any matter of faith or practice which has been established by the authority of Christ, through his holy apostles. While on every matter only involving personal interests or rights we are admonished to be lenient, kind, forbearing, longsuffering and gentle, we are not allowed to trifle with the order of the church as positively established by divine authority. Those who are unwilling to yield their own independence, or who claim the right to dissent from the rules and authority of Christ in his church, should never be admitted to membership. Except they become as little children they cannot truly enter the kingdom of God; this is an indispensable prerequisite to membership in the church of God. No church can be all of one mind where this rule is not strictly adhered to.

It has been thought by some that there are exceptions to these divinely established rules; that the church has no authority over our worldly matters, such as belong to our domestic or political relations with mankind. If that be so, why did our Lord require that we render to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and to God the things that belong to God? The apostles have laid down rules which are binding on all Christians, to regulate all their social, civil, political and domestic relations in the church and in the world. This fact is overlooked by many, and quite repudiated by others, but it is nevertheless true. They have given no rules for the world to be governed by; the world is not responsible to the church, nor the church to the world; the kingdom of Christ is not of the world, nor are the governments of the world of the church; they are quite separate and distinct. The apostles only sit on their twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. "Them that are without God judgeth." All within the precincts of the kingdom of Christ are in their social relations to associate only as the apostles have directed. This department embraces the social relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, people and magistrates, rulers and ruled, and we hold that the apostles have clearly laid down and explained to the church of God the laws of Christ, commanding Christians to be governed by them.

By his law the Christian can have but one wife; the parent must provide for those of his household, or he denies the faith. Children must honor and obey their parents; servants must honor and faithfully serve their masters, and every Christian, by the law of Christ, is to submit to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to the governor, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well, and every soul is to be in subjection to the higher powers. They are commanded to pay tribute, and, as good law-abiding citizens, render honor to whom honor, and tribute to whom tribute is due.

Therefore, if any man seeks to evade the laws of the house of God by denying the right of the church, or of his brethren, to meddle with his politics, or his secret lodges, or oath-bound covenants, it is an evident mark of disloyalty to the King of Zion, and a virtual repudiation of the authority of Christ in his church over his members. Can the admonition of our text be duly regarded if conflicting views be entertained by her members? Is it possible they can all be of one mind if a portion of the members are allowed to deny responsibility to the church, and regard any part of their walk and deportment as being beyond the jurisdiction of the church to which dissenters profess to belong? Can two or more walk together except they are agreed? To be all of one mind in the church, as the divine law requires, can only be practicable where all the members are required to receive and continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, withdrawing from all who depart from the faith.

We cannot repudiate the apostles' instructions, decisions, admonitions and exhortations and still be a church of Christ, nor can we tolerate in our churches such as the apostles command us to withdraw ourselves from, without repudiating them and their doctrine; nor can we repudiate the apostles, as enthroned in judgment over the church of Christ, and still retain Christ as our King; for when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, then shall his apostles also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If the apostles do not sit over us in judgment, then neither does Christ preside over us as members of his spiritual kingdom. The church of God is the body of Christ. The necessity of unity in the body, harmony in all the members, is strikingly set forth in the figure of a perfect body. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, and if the members of Christ be not all of one mind, where is our stability? If in the body one hand claims to be independent of the body, not moved by the same volition, but by some spasmodic or rebellious impulse, it cannot work in harmony with the other. If one foot resolves to journey southward and the other northward, the rebellion of both against the government of the body would prevent the travel of the whole body. Or, if to compromise the matter, the feet be each in turn to have its way, the unstable body alternately swayed by its refractory members

would, like the pendulum of a clock, vibrate back and forth, and make no progress. But the rule to be applied in case of such disorder and schism is, If thy foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; or if it be the hand, or the eye, or any other member, and let all be of one mind. Let those who are refractory, if they cannot by gospel rule be reclaimed, go to their own company, where they can enjoy their independence of the body among their kindred spirits. Of the church it is said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye [all her members] are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Middletown, N. Y.
November 1, 1865.

HEBREWS 12:25-29

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For *if* they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

In the preceding context the inspired writer has spoken of the terribly grand display of the majesty of God in the dispensation of his fiery law from the summit of that mount which might be touched and that burned with fire, and blackness, and tempest, and the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words; which words they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded. On that most fearful occasion the tribes of Israel, filled with consternation, heard the voice of words which shook the earth with terror and amazement, which caused the mountains to skip like rams, and the hills like lambs. Although that fiery law applied to the fleshly tribes, and the shuddering earth, the leaping mountains and skipping hills were emblematic of the legal dispensation, the worldly sanctuary and carnal, or fleshly ordinances, in striking contrast with the heavenly Jerusalem, the gospel state of the church in her present organization, yet the promise is given that as the former, so shall the latter also be shaken. That voice which then convulsed the earth shall also shake the heavens, and so terribly as to remove from the church whatever can be shaken, allowing nothing to remain that is not immovable.

As the carnal Israelites in the type, by their frequent unlawful affinity with the nations round about them, became corrupted from time to time so as to require the judgments of God for their purification, so the church of Christ has from time to time been infested with "strange children" who have brought in with them "divers and strange doctrines," which have required the shaking of the heaven or church for their removal. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of (II Peter 2:1,2)." And the apostle Paul is also

the bearer of a special message to the church of God on the same subject; he says, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; (I Timothy 4:1-2).” “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come (II Timothy 3:1).” From these, with many other warnings, we are admonished to look for the fulfillment of these predictions in these last days. And truly the developments of the present times afford most unquestionable demonstration of the perfect accuracy of the predictions. While the various departments of anti-christ are swiftly hurrying on to their doom, being suffered to fill up the cup of their abominations, the church of Christ is invaded by men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who have crept in unawares, who come not but to kill, and to steal and to destroy. But although all these predictions must be fulfilled in all their jots and tittles, it is nevertheless true that every plant that our Heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. All who come without grace into connection with the church of Christ shall be cast out without favor. For the fulfillment of the scriptures, for the trial of the faith and patience of the saints, and for the greater display of the righteous judgments of the Lord, God shall choose the delusions of his adversaries, and suffer them to mature their plans, promulgate their doctrines, and perplex his saints, only however until the appointed hour of judgment; for in due time his voice which once shook the earth shall shake heaven also. Also it seems to express the idea that it shall be in like manner as when in audible words his voice shook the earth in the thunder tones in which the precepts of his fiery law were uttered from Mount Sinai. But however this may be, we are perfectly confident that the shaking of heaven, as witnessed at this present time, is occasioned by the voice of God in the Scriptures.

At this very moment there is evidently an unusual agitation and stirring up of the passions and fears of nominal professors and graceless hypocrites who have had a name to live while they are dead, and a form of godliness while they deny the power thereof. “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? (Isaiah 33:14).” “There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled (Zechariah 11:3).”

Their consternation is most unmistakably occasioned by the voice of him whose voice shall shake the heavens. But it is the power and majesty of his voice in the written word. Scriptures which uncover their deceptive doctrines and drag forth to the light their base hypocrisy are falling like bolts of wrath from heaven upon them. The ministers of Christ are led by the spirit of truth to open the batteries of heaven upon the hidden things of dishonesty. Their craft being exposed makes them desperate, and in their desperation they vent their malice against those who faithfully declare what God the Lord hath spoken. The church which is called heaven in our subject, is necessarily shaken by the conflict of truth against error; and the children of the latter, with all their inventions, doctrines, plans, merchandise and appliances are being shaken out of their concealment. All doctrines antagonistic to that of the truth, however cherished, must be exposed, and nothing suffered to remain in Zion which the truth of God condemns. This word, “Yet once more,” has an awful significance, for it signifies the removing of those things that are, or that may, or can be shaken. Nothing that the voice of God, as sounding in his word will shake, shall be suffered to remain in the immovable kingdom of our Lord. The things of the kingdom of Christ which God has established are immovable. His word will never shake, disturb or displace them. They are not things which are made, but things which are eternal. But every thing that is made, all things of time, of earthly origin, must and shall be removed, and the heaven shall be sufficiently agitated and shaken to eject from her sacred precincts whatever can be shaken. The

legitimate elements of which the kingdom of Christ is composed are immutably established. Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed; not one of her cords shall ever be broken. The subjects of this kingdom can never be separated from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, by angels, life, death, principalities, powers, things present or to come, height, depth, nor any other creature. The King is immovably seated. His throne is for ever and ever; his sceptre is a right sceptre; his kingdom is everlasting, and his dominion has no end. His laws are right, and will admit of no amendment, improvement nor abolition. The ordinances of his kingdom are as the ordinances of the throne of God himself. The foundation of this kingdom stands sure and steadfast; the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. The doctrine of this kingdom is the doctrine of God, that cannot change. There is nothing that properly belongs to this kingdom that can be shaken or changed. None of the things of earth could move the apostles, nor shall they be able to move or shake the everlasting purpose and grace of God, or pluck out of the hands of our Redeemer one of those whom the Father has given to him.

Wherefore, we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved. Such a kingdom it is the Father's good pleasure to give to his saints. It is not of this world, or its subjects would fight. It is not of this world, therefore its subjects will not fight with carnal weapons. Receiving this kingdom, we do not need materials out of which to organize a kingdom, nor power to defend it, nor wisdom to improve it, nor ornaments to beautify it, but "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably." This is all we need, and this our God will abundantly supply; for "he will give grace and glory." And as it is only by grace we are saved, so it is by grace alone that we can serve our God and King acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness (Malachi 3:3)."

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1865.

SONG OF SOLOMON 4:16

Dear Elder: There is a friend here who begs an explanation of Songs 4:16: "Awake, O North wind; and come, thou South; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." Is the North wind the law, and the South the gospel? Or does God bring his children again under the law of sin and death after they can say by faith, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This friend has lately come out of a great storm, wherein his soul reeled and staggered, and he was at his wits end. He thought God had brought the law to bear again upon him, and this storm was the law. Now he appeals to you, as a father in Israel, hoping that you will instruct him according to the wisdom given to you. By complying with his request, you will greatly oblige one whom I believe is a dear brother.

F. E.
Longwood, C.W.
November, 1865.

Reply: It will afford us great pleasure to comply with the request of our tried and tempest-tossed friend; and if anything we may say shall serve to relieve, enlighten or comfort him, perhaps the same may also be interesting to our readers generally. We will first give our views on the text proposed, and then offer some remarks on the peculiar trials of our friend and his conflict with the law.

Among the many beautiful figures employed by the Holy Spirit in this Song of Songs illustrative of the spiritual things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the church is compared to a garden, and the Spirit's operations on the church to make her fruitful is compared to the North and South winds blowing upon a garden of spices, and causing their delicious odors to flow out. We have not understood the North wind to represent the law of sin and death from the power of which Christ has redeemed his church, nor the South wind to designate the gospel in distinction from the law, although the figures might not be wholly inappropriate, if so designed. But in the general application of the wind in the scriptures, it is used to represent the Spirit of God. As in John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." So also on the day of Pentecost, when that day had fully come, and the disciples were all with one accord in one place. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting (Acts 2:1-2)." There are many particulars in which the wind is emblematic of the Spirit. First, it is invisible. No mortal eye has ever seen the wind, nor can the Spirit of God, or any of the things of the Spirit be seen or known but by its own revelation. As the natural sun in the heavens can only be seen by its own light. All the flaming torches or gas lights which nature can afford, or art devise, cannot aid our vision to see that glorious orb, the fountain and fullness of light. Just so the lights of nature, art and science fails to reveal to us the Spirit, and the things of the Spirit, which are only spiritually discerned. Second, its power can be felt by those whose eyes cannot see the wind. So the power of the Spirit is felt by every one that is born of it; but whence it came, or whither it goeth, none can see. Third, the wind is sovereign in its course. It bloweth where it listeth. Not all the power of kings or potentates of the earth can change its course. So it is with the Spirit of our God, it can never be diverted from its course, or varied in the least from the execution of its immutable purpose. Fourth, the wind is also irresistible in its power. The towering cedars and the sturdy oaks bow their majestic heads submissive to its might. Thus the Spirit is omnipotent and irresistible in all its operations. It brings down the lofty imaginations of men, and subdues every power in the children of God to the obedience of faith.

The North and the South winds are the same winds, though they blow from opposite points of the compass. It is the wind that bloweth, whether it be from North or South, and it would be absurd for us to say, because the South wind is warm, and the North is cold, that it is therefore not the same wind. The Christian, also led by the Spirit into the wilderness, (where Jesus was led to fast for forty tedious days and nights and to be tempted of the Devil) and will be severely tempted concerning their relation to God, by the tempter's cruel *ifs*. *If* thou be the Son, or *if* thou be a child of God, thus he may feel so chilled and benumbed by the trial as to doubt seriously whether he were led to the dreary wilderness by the same Spirit that had led Jesus to Jordan's banks, or to Zion's open gates. But we are told that our Leader was led *by the Spirit* into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. It was the same Spirit of the Lord God which was upon him, and which descended upon him at his baptism, like a dove, which led him to that dreadful scene of conflict in the wilderness. And as followers of the Lamb, we must be led by the Spirit through conflicts, darkness, tribulations, persecutions, and many a fasting wilderness conflict with a tempting Devil; how else are we to be his followers? If we suffer with him, we shall also be partakers with him of his glory.

But our figure of the North and South wind has a still more forcible and appropriate application when considered as applied in our text to its effects upon a garden. The church of Christ is the garden, as the figure is used throughout this delightful Song; and the members of Christ are the pleasant plants; the graces, or fruits of the Spirit, abiding in the saints, are the spices which flow out. The figure is so applied in the verses preceding our text. "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse." None but the bride, the Lamb's wife, are ever so addressed by him. He calls his church his love, his dove, his undefiled, and he also calls her his sister and his spouse; and as his sister and spouse she is a garden enclosed; and he says to her, "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits, camphire, with spikenard, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices. A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." The church is the garden of the Lord, and by the pen of the prophet, Isaiah 61, he says that he is anointed with the Spirit of the Lord God, to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. The trees of this garden are those who bear the characteristics named, the meek, broken hearted, captives, prisoners, mourners, mourning in Zion, and oppressed with the spirit of heaviness; for the most bruised plants exhale the sweetest odor. But they are in Zion, that is, in the garden of the Lord, and are there known as trees which the Lord himself has planted. These comprise all the people of Zion to whom God has said in Isaiah 60, "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Who else has the power or right to plant in the Lord's garden? Jesus has said, "Every plant that my Father has not planted shall be rooted up." The good seed are the children of the kingdom, and he that sowed them is the Son of man. The garden then clearly is the church of Christ, and the plants, as trees of righteousness, are the children of the kingdom, whom God has planted there, in a soil which he has provided and prepared, in a garden which he has enclosed, and around which he is himself a wall of fire, and the glory in the midst. Those who are familiar with the figure know that for the growth of plants or trees something more is required than the enclosure, the prepared soil, and the planting of trees and plants. To flourish, a garden must be well watered; this garden cannot lack for moisture, for she is a fountain sealed, a spring shut up. She is a well of living water, and streams from Lebanon.

"And all the springs of Zion flow,
To make this young plantation grow."

The genial rays of the sun, and the dews of the night, are abundantly supplied. Upon all these plants in Zion the Sun of Righteousness has arisen, with healing in his wings. And his Spirit, like precious ointment, descends as the dew of Hermon descended upon the mountains of Zion, where God commanded the blessing, even life forevermore.

Still, in nature, the watered garden, supplied with sun and shade, requires the North and the South wind, for the following reasons:

First, the soft South winds are necessary to start the sap, the life or vitality, up from the root that it may be diffused to all the branches, swelling the buds, and opening the blossoms, as also to mature and ripen the fruit in its season. And the North winds are required when the autumn rolls around, and the fruits are gathered, to send back the sap into the roots, and the wintery blasts of North wind to so shake the trees as to cause their roots to take deeper and wider hold upon the soil by which they are to be

nourished and supplied. Indeed, it would be hard to tell which is the more essential to the trees, the North or the South wind.

Certainly the application of this figure to the dealings of the Spirit with the saints is very easy. Should the winds of the Spirit only operate on us experimentally in its soft South breath, like zephyrs from a sunny clime, the plants would always be shooting upward – tall and spindling, and for want of sufficient root, they would become top-heavy, and bear very little, if any, fruit; to take root downward, and bear fruit upward requires the action of both the North and the South wind. Now mark the Christian who is never chilled with the northern blasts; he has no winter, no severe trials, temptations, doubts or fears; is he able to succour the tried and tempted of the saints? No; he is a stranger to their complaints. Peter must needs be sifted as wheat before he could comfort his brethren, and our dear Redeemer himself, as the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through sufferings; he knoweth how to succour them that are tempted, having been tempted in all points as they are. For such an high priest becomes us, who is easily touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Our health, vigor, fruitfulness and well being all require that we shall have our trials as well as joys, downs as well as ups, seed time as well as harvests, North winds as well as our South winds, cold as well as melting seasons; for we must drink our wine with our milk, and eat our honeycomb with our honey, our bitter herbs with our Passover lamb.

Second, the North and the South winds are required to waft abroad the delicious odors of the garden of the Lord. It is for this purpose the desire is expressed by the spouse in our text, “Awake, O North wind, and come, thou South; blow upon my garden, that the spices may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.” The rich fragrance of a garden of spices and of frankincense would never bless the surrounding regions if there were no winds to convey it abroad. The North and South winds of the Spirit, as we have noticed, blew upon the garden of the Lord on the day of Pentecost, causing the spices to flow out, as the apostle Paul has explained in II Corinthians 2:15, “For we are unto God, a sweet savor of Christ,” etc. This savor was sent abroad by the descent of the Holy Ghost like a mighty rushing wind from heaven, upon the apostles and primitive disciples. Moved by the wind of the Spirit, the apostles and New Testament saints exhaled the odoriferous savor of the gospel of Christ far abroad, even among the Gentiles. The prayers, the songs, and all the devotion of the saints arise as sweet smelling incense from his church; but that they may flow out, the Spirit must operate upon the plants which God has set in his garden. The North winds of afflictions, tribulations, losses, crosses, disappointments, and sometimes bitter persecutions, have the same tendency to draw out our humble aspirations of prayer to God that the South winds of comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost have to tune our songs of praise and thanksgiving to God and the Lamb. “And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:7-10).” From these scriptures, with many others, we learn that the spiritual worship of God, from those who are led by the Spirit, is compared to sweet incense flowing from the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. But our experience tells us that these fragrant spices never flow out from the plants of Zion except when the Spirit blows upon the garden.

Again, all the fruits of the Spirit, which are “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, are productions of the Lord’s garden, and are borne only by the plants

which he has planted, and the delightful perfume of them, like that of the precious ointment poured upon the head of Aaron, fills the whole house of God, the savor whereof transports the saints with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And will any experienced child of God doubt that the North as well as the South wind is required to send forth these rich perfumes from the garden of our Lord? Joy and peace, and even gentleness and faith may be richly developed as fruits of the Spirit, grown in the Lord's garden, by the gentle, warm and refreshing South breezes of the Spirit, acting gently, softly and agreeably upon the trees of righteousness. But meekness, patience, humility, contrition and self-abasement require the cold North wind to send the sap down to the roots of the plants to make them vigorous and deep rooted.

By our application of the figure of the North and South winds to the operations of the Spirit, we do not mean that the Spirit is changeable, sometimes cold and stormy, and anon soft, warm and melting; but rather that its operations are suited to the necessities of the plants. There are diversity of operations, but one Spirit. The same Spirit that leads the saints to feel their poverty, also leads them to hope in God, who is the health of their countenance and their God. The desire of the spouse, in the closing words of our text: "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat of his pleasant fruits," receives a gracious response in the next verse of the song: "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk; eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." As he has eaten his honeycomb with his honey, and drank his wine with his milk, so he has spread the banquet for his friends. So also must they eat the bitter with the sweet, and the milk for nourishment, as well as the wine for exhilaration. Of all the provisions he has spread upon his table the saints may eat freely, without fear of famine or want, for his resources are inexhaustible, and all that he has blessed is wholesome. And all who are hungry may freely eat; for every soul who has a relish for the food, it is provided. All who are his friends are bidden. The poor who have no money or treasure wherewith to buy, shall be supplied without money and without price.

The Law. We cannot conceive it possible that one who is redeemed from the dominion of the law, by the blood of Christ, and by the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, made free from the law of sin and death, should ever be brought again under the power and dominion of that law. It has been held and taught by very many that Christ only redeemed his people from the curse of the law, leaving them still under its dominion, as a rule of life; but nothing can be found in the scriptures to sustain that position. Indeed the testimony of the apostles most clearly prove the very reverse; for the apostle most positively affirms that, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." We cannot therefore be under its dominion and free from its curse. What the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. If then we be under the dominion of the law, we are guilty before God; as the apostle adds, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:19-20)." The perfect redemption and deliverance of God's people from the dominion of the law is thus forcibly illustrated: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye

should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God (Romans 7:1-4).” Our connection with and subjection to the law is thus compared to the relationship of a wife to her husband. Our obligations to the law forbid our union to Christ as long as the law’s claim on us remained uncanceled. Until the last jot and tittle of the law was fulfilled, it was adultery to be married to Christ. Hence the necessity of redemption. To remove this impediment out of the way, Christ, whose claim to us was prior to that of the law, came himself under the law, by being made of a woman, or by being made flesh; for it was in our fleshly nature the law held dominion over us. So Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil (Hebrews 2:14).” As the head and embodiment of his church, now identified with them in the flesh and under the law, he was delivered up for our transgression; he died our death. When he died for us all, then were we all dead, and buried with him by baptism into death; that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also should walk in newness of life. That is, in the newness of his resurrection life; being risen with him, quickened together with him, and raised up with him, now completely and forever delivered from the law by the body of Christ, dead to the old husband, and married, and one flesh or one body with the risen Christ; and therefore no more under the law, but under grace. That law under which we were held being now dead to us, as a husband, or as holding dominion over us, the legal impediment to our marriage to the Lamb is removed, the marriage is consummated in our resurrection with Christ to newness of life, we are no more under the law of sin and death, but under the law to Christ. We are dead to the dominion and claims of the dead husband, and under law to our living husband. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin [or by a sacrifice for sin, as it reads in the margin], condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit (Romans 8:1-5).” It is not possible that those who are dead to the law and married to Christ should ever die to Christ, and be re-united with the law; for the deliverance from the law was and is by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which is an immortal life that cannot die, and as the marriage to Christ cannot be annulled but by death, and the power of an endless life, makes it impossible that death, or life, or angels, or things present, or to come, shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. It is altogether impossible that we can ever be placed back in that former relationship to the law of sin and death.

As to the conflicts of our friend with legality, we suspect that he, with very many, if not all, of the redeemed saints has become entangled with the yoke of bondage, by walking after the flesh, as did the Galatian brethren when they were bewitched by the heresy of Judaizing teachers. So far as we are led by the Spirit, we are led into the liberty of the sons of God; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But our fleshly nature is still full of legality, and its inclinations are to adhere only to that law, which we see in our members, which brings us into bondage. “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.” Our earthly bodies and carnal minds being born of the flesh are *after the flesh*; but that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit, and that Spirit, being born of God, is *after God*, created in righteousness and true holiness. Therefore, to be carnally minded is death; for there is no spiritual life or immortality in our flesh; for the body is dead

because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. From the opposite and belligerent propensities of the flesh and Spirit, in every Christian arises the warfare, the flesh striving against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. All our doubtings, unbelief, darkness, murmurings, unreconciliation to God, and opposition to his word, all our fear and discontentment as Christians arises from the flesh; and we are called on to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. The leadings of the Spirit incline us to deny ourselves of ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Our fleshly bodies, though sealed with the Spirit of adoption, are not yet adopted; but the sealing gives assurance that they shall be delivered from their corruptions, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. When that deliverance shall come there will be no more groaning or warfare, for mortality shall be swallowed up of life. But whatever may be our conflicts, we who are born of God, and by the immortal life implanted in us made free from the law of sin and death, can never be unborn and replaced under that law from which we were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. In our wanderings, as led by the flesh, we may become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and terrified by frightful images, painted by our imagination. “Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his.”

Middletown, N. Y.
December 1, 1865.

REPENTANCE

In replying to the inquiries of brother Samuel Rixey, of Culpepper C.H., Va., we will in the onset observe that although we are not very familiar with all the theories of theologians on the subject of repentance, and therefore but poorly qualified to follow them in all their applications, explanations, divisions, and nice distinctions as to the meaning of the word, when applied literally, we nevertheless feel willing to give to our brother, and to our readers generally, such views as we can gather from a close attentive reading of the scriptures. That the word is used in our version of the Bible with a variety of application is certain, from the fact that it is not only applied to good men, and bad men, but also to God himself. And that it does not apply to God in the same sense that it does to man is clear from the declaration that God is not a man that he should repent. That is, God does not repent, yet in the same chapter (I Samuel 15:29,35) we are told “the Lord repented that he made Saul king over Israel.” And this he did, simply by deposing him from the throne, and supplying the throne with a better man. Repentance when applied to God does not intend a sorrow for what he had done, a conviction of having done wrong, or even a change in his mind or purpose; but, as we understand, it signifies a change of his outward administration in his dispensations, and all in perfect harmony with his eternal and immutable purpose. Nor does the term when applied to men always mean sorrow, or regret, for what we

sometimes denominate *evangelic* or gospel repentance, which is unto life, is not, but results from a godly sorrow for sins.

In the text referred to by brother Rixey (Mark 1:15), the word is used in the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom by Christ himself, and not in the ministration of the law by Moses; it was not therefore *legal* repentance, but a repentance preparatory to a cordial reception of the gospel of the kingdom which Christ was preaching. If the term *legal* be used as an adjective, to signify a repentance demanded or required by the law, we should first inquire whether the law ever did, or could, demand or accept of any kind of repentance. It is not in the nature of any absolute law to require repentance. The law of God does not require that we shall be sorry for having sinned, but it forbids that we should sin. It requires perfect and perpetual obedience, and condemns to death for the first transgression.

“And could our tears forever flow,
And could our grief no respite know,”

It would avail us nothing by way of explanation. “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy.” No repentance or mercy can flow to transgressors, from the law.

From the confused theory of Arminians of a legal repentance grows also the doctrine of obligatory repentance. That repentance which is unto life and is connected with godly sorrow is the gift of God; it proceeds from a godly principle implanted in the heart, and which cannot possibly flow from an ungodly source. Any sorrow or repentance that could come from an ungodly sinner’s heart, or from any sinner’s heart before a godly principle is therein implanted, would be like the fountain from whence it emanates; ungodly. We search the law and gospel both in vain to find this obligatory repentance which is in so great demand among all the legal work-mongrel tribes of the Arminians. We do not wonder that our dear brother’s mind has been puzzled and perplexed to bring the obligation of repentance upon unregenerate sinners. We might as well speak of their obligation to remit their own sins as to procure their own repentance, seeing Christ alone is exalted to be a Prince and Savior, for to give, both the one and the other unto Israel. It would be equally as proper and scriptural to speak of their obligation to be saved, to go to heaven, and to make themselves sons and heirs of God. But, does man’s inability to repent, or to believe, or even to keep from sinning, relieve him from his obligation to do so? Certainly not, if it can be found that such obligations are upon him. Now the sinner is one that has sinned. Sin is the transgression of the law; but where has the law under which the unregenerate sinner is held, either required him to repent or believe the gospel? The law truly forbids him to transgress, and holds him answerable for every transgression. Sin, not a want of repentance or faith, is what the sinner is condemned for. Without the faith of the Son of God, no sinner ever did or could believe the gospel; for believing the gospel is the assurance of faith, and that is the gift of God. Is there any obligation devolving on a graceless sinner making it his duty that God shall give him either faith or repentance? How absurd! But suppose the sinner could control the convictions of his own carnal mind so far as to make himself believe that he is a Christian, that he was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that Christ died for him, that he is freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, would that carnal assurance make it so? Would he not believe an untruth, even if he believed literally just what the Christian believes? Because that which is true in the case of one that is born of the Spirit is not true of him who only possesses a carnal assurance. The heaven-born child believes that God is his Father, and has the witness in himself. The Spirit bearing witness with his spirit that he is born of God. But if the unregenerate sinner without that witness believes himself to be an heir of immortality, he is deceived, and believes a lie. But to believe the gospel is to believe all this. It is precisely so with

all that passes for true gospel repentance, if it be not the work of God, and the gift of God, it is all delusive and vain.

But, we shall be asked, did not John the Baptist and our Lord preach to the people saying, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”? All this is admitted. But if we carefully observe when, to whom, and by whom this repentance was preached, it will enable us the more clearly to understand what manner of repentance was called for.

“The law and the prophets were until John.” Since that time, and until these words were spoken by our Lord (see Luke 16:16), the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it. At this particular time John was sent from God to prepare the way of the Lord; to preach that the kingdom of heaven, so long predicted, was at hand; that the Messiah had come; that Jewish rites and ceremonies were now about to be abolished; that their fleshly descent from Abraham was no longer to avail them; for God was able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. John’s mission was only to the Jews, to preach repentance to them, and to baptize them with the baptism of repentance. This repentance and baptism both signified a turning away from the works, rites, ceremonies and ordinances of the law, as a ground of acceptance with God; and a coming out from Jerusalem, and a reception of Christ as that Messiah which was to come, and which they professed to be looking for. Their repentance did not signify that they were at that time born of the Spirit, or that they had not been subjects of that spiritual birth for many years. But it did signify that they came out from Judaism, sensible that the works of the law could not purge their consciences from dead works, to serve the living God; and hence they came to John’s baptism of repentance, confessing their sins, and professing their faith in and reliance upon that Christ whom John pointed out to them as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. Remember John was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. His work was stated by the angel of the Lord in Luke 1:13-17. It is also recorded in prophetic declarations of Zacharias in Luke 1:68-79. “And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God: whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Now observe, John’s commission was to go before the face of the Lord, to announce his coming, and to “give knowledge of salvation” to God’s people, by remission of *their* (God’s people’s) sins, and to make ready a people, already prepared by grace, for the Lord, by calling them out from the house of bondage, and by baptizing them with the baptism of repentance, or reformation, saying unto them that they should believe on him that was to come, that is on Christ; and that they should receive him as the true Messiah, and look to him alone for salvation. The repentance which John preached, and to which he baptized the people prepared for the Lord, is further defined in its peculiar nature and effects by the rejection of the Pharisees from John’s baptism of repentance. “O, generation of vipers! Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say unto yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham (Matthew 3:7-9).” Had these Pharisees and Sadducees possessed the repentance which John preached, they would have signified it by a turning away from their cherished traditional hopes of being saved by their fleshly relation to Abraham, and by a reliance alone on him whose kingdom was about to be organized. The repentance preached was an abandonment of all confidence in the flesh, and a ready and hearty acknowledgment of Christ. “And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees.” They were about to be cut off from Abraham as their root, and scattered among the Gentiles. *The wrath to come*, of which John spake was that wrath which had long been

accumulating and now hung impending over Jerusalem and the Jews as a nation. Every tree in this *wilderness* of Judea, which God had not by his grace made good and fruitful, was to be cut down. Their confidence in Abraham as their root, and the covenant of circumcision was now to fail them, and only such Jews as God had prepared, and John was commissioned to make ready, should be admitted into the kingdom which was at hand.

The preaching of Christ referred to by brother Rixey was addressed to the same people, and was a continuance of the preaching of John. “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel (Mark 1:14,15).” This time appointed was Daniel’s weeks, or the “fullness of time,” when God was to send forth his Son; the time allotted to the legal dispensation, the time for the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances was fulfilled. The good news, tidings of great joy to those who could show fruits meet for repentance; the gospel of the kingdom, which the God of heaven was to set up, was now preached, and those who had oil in their vessels were to go into the marriage, and the door was to be shut. This proclamation was made that all such as were prepared for the announcement should abandon their former position under the works and ritual of the law of a carnal commandment, and adhere to the gospel. This proclamation was not a proposition that if they would repent and believe the gospel they should be saved for doing so, for that would suppose that a bad tree could bring forth good fruit, without first being made good, which Christ says is impossible (see Matthew 7:18). We are told that when Jesus thus came to his own (his own people, the Jews) his own received him not. “But unto as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:11-13).” The twelve disciples also which were sent out were in their commission forbidden to go with this message to the Gentiles, for God had not yet granted repentance to the Gentiles. (See Acts 11:18.) Nor were they allowed to bear these gospel tidings to the Samaritans, “But, go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:5,6).” The time had not yet come for the gathering in of the *other sheep* which were afar off among the Gentiles. For this preaching of repentance and remission of sins in Christ’s name must begin at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). At the preaching of John, of Christ, of the twelve, and of the seventy, as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed, and came forward, confessing their sins, and professing faith in Christ, renouncing their former hopes of salvation by the deeds of the law, or works of the flesh; and signified the same by being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and not unto Moses.

We have perhaps said enough to signify our views as to the nature of the repentance preached to the lost sheep of the house of Israel by John, by Christ, and by the disciples, before the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God, to satisfy brother Rixey that we do not understand the repentance preached by Christ in our text to be either that, strictly speaking, which results from fear of wrath, nor that which proceeds from godly sorrow for sins, but rather a turning away from their former legal works and adherence to abrogated rites and ceremonies, to receive that promised Messiah, of whom Moses and the prophets had written, and whom they were expecting should come. And although the words were addressed to the Jews generally, they were only applied to a people *prepared* for the Lord. All such on hearing the proclamation came from Judea, Jerusalem, and from regions about Jordan, to Jordan, and were baptized of John in the river Jordan, confessing their sins, thus fleeing from the wrath which was then about to come upon Jerusalem, and other cities of Judea, and thus by baptism signifying their death to Moses, and resurrection with Christ to newness of life.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 15, 1865.

CLOSE OF VOLUME 33

As flies the winged arrow of the archer and the shuttle of the busy weaver, so in swift succession pass away our hasty years. Generations are born, and generations die. Kingdoms and nations rise and fall, and nature herself with time-worn marks leans forward to her final fall. The very heavens shall soon be wrapped in flame, and the elements melt with fervent heat; the sun with age grow dim, and all the stars shall fade and disappear, and nothing terrestrial shall remain to mark the place or tell the story of the past. And yet our years as they rush onward, each is the bearer of its due share of great and small events; each the revealer of things before unknown by mortal intelligences. And as we are hurried along down the steep declivity of the last years which the supreme Ruler of all events has allotted to the existence of this transitory world, we witness the fulfillment of long recorded prophecy, and the development of what must be accomplished before this mundane sphere can pass away. We are filled with amazement as we gaze on what has in our days transpired, and what is now transpiring. We have newly discovered arts and sciences in the natural world; the harnessed lightning and the mighty power of steam, inventions of machinery unequaled in the history of the world, while the embowled treasures of the earth, in precious minerals, and oily fluids are disclosed.

But what are all the wonders of nature when compared to the amazing revelation of the wisdom, power, and providence of God, for whose pleasure all things are and were created, and whose right it is to govern, control; and dispose of all beings, all events and all worlds.

Darkness indeed must shroud the stupid mind of him who living at this time does not discern the “signs of the times” which indicate the near approach of that day in which “the Son of man shall be seen coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” We do not mean it for sensation when we say that our firm convictions are that before another year shall elapse great and fearful events are to be developed in fulfillment of the prophecies. Perhaps those closing up of the events of the sixth trumpet, the resurrection of the “Two Witnesses,” the great earthquake, the falling of the tenth part of the city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, the slaughter of men, seven thousand, and the remnant of the citizens of that city affrighted shall give glory to the God of heaven. (See Revelation 11:10-13.) These developments are to immediately precede the seventh, and last of the seven trumpets, in which great voices shall be heard saying, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

Many of the signs laid down in the scriptures which indicate our near approach to the period of the fulfillment of these things have already transpired; and while we wait and watch further developments, “Let us exhort one another, and much more as we see the day approaching.”

This being the last number of the year 1865, with it the thirty-third year of our labors as editor and publisher of the “Signs of the Times” are finished, and we have great cause to acknowledge with gratitude the goodness of God in so long sustaining us, and in raising up brethren and friends to encourage us in our work, by their liberal contributions to our columns, and substantial aid in the pecuniary support which they have generously afforded.

Middletown, N.Y.
December 15, 1865.

I CORINTHIANS 4:15

Brother Beebe: I will renew my request which I made one year ago, for your views on I Corinthians 4:15: “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.” By complying with this request you will oblige many who are inquiring after the truth, some of whom seem to be entangled with the means doctrine. It is for their sake that I make the request.

James Osburn.

Leesville, Ia.

January 1, 1866.

Reply: Amidst the numerous applications for our views on various passages of the scriptures, we had overlooked the former request of our beloved brother. Even now we may not be able to satisfy the inquirers after truth, much less stop the mouths of gainsayers who pervert the scriptures in vainly assaying to torture them into a seeming support of their delusions; but with such ability as the Lord may give, we will attempt an elucidation of the text.

By instructors in Christ we understand the apostle to mean those teachers in the church which are by the church looked up to for instruction, and are recognized as pastors, teachers, and other gifts designed “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:12-16).” By instructors *in* Christ, we must understand those who are recognized as in his body, which is his church, and of these we are told that Christ, when he ascended up on high, “Gave some apostles; some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers.” Now all these gifts are employed for the instruction of the saints; to enlighten their understanding, that they may not only enjoy the comfort of a clear understanding of the truth; but be also protected from the slight of men, who, like wily means-users, lie in wait to deceive the saints. Of these gifts the church of Christ may have ten thousand; or whatever number God is pleased to supply, and yet of all these there may be but few possessing the peculiar gift of qualification of fathers, as we will presently attempt to show.

If by *instructors*, we may be allowed to include all the teachers who find their way into the various organized branches of the Christian church, it would swell the disproportion of fathers and instructors to an inconceivable extent, especially in these “last days,” wherein many “shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” “For the time will come,” (yea, it has already come) “when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (II Timothy 4:2,4).” “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and shall bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through

covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (II Peter 2:1-3).” Among this description of instructors there are no fathers to be found. “For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (II Timothy 3:6,7).” This sort has been described by our Lord as coming in sheep’s clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. We are commanded to beware of them! There are no *fathers* among them; no parental regard for the welfare of the flock, for they are without even natural affections, truce breakers (they will violate their most solemn covenants). They *are false accusers!* Don’t forget that this is a prominent trait of the sort spoken of. Moreover, they are *incontinent*, however sanctimonious they may seem to be; for they are slaves to lust. It is also said of this very sort, they are fierce, like tigers howling for blood, their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and of the way of peace they are totally ignorant. They are “despisers of those that are good.” Traitors, however loyal they may profess to be to earthly powers, to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places to which they have professed allegiance, they are recreant and defiant to those into whose confidence they manage to insinuate themselves by false professions and false pretenses; they are treacherous. “Heady and high minded,” are special characteristics of this sort. They assume to know more than seven men who can render a reason, and are wise above what is written, and are of the sort to whom Job, in biting sarcasm, would say, “No doubt ye are the men, and wisdom will die with you.” High minded, but not in an honorable sense; but lofty and towering in their vain imagination. Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Carnal pleasures. Ever ready to sell their professed Lord for less than thirty pieces of silver, and to betray him, his cause, his truth, or his people, with a perfidious kiss. Yet with all these marks branded upon them, like the mark of Cain, they “have a form of godliness.” They wear the coat of the sheep, to deceive the flock of God, and to conceal their abominable wickedness. But these painted hypocrites may still be known, notwithstanding their disguise, if their track, especially their back track, be closely examined. Trace these grievous wolves back to their secret lair, and you will find that many a confiding flock has been torn and scattered by them. Wherever they have been intrusted with the pastoral care of the flock, that flock has either been corrupted by them, or it has dwindled away under their instructions. And when detected in their deceitful working, and expelled from fellowship, like the devils of whom we read, when cast out, invariably tear and rend the church or body out of which they are cast. And very generally when so expelled, they find some herd of swine ready to receive and hurry with them away to a swift destruction.

The apostle certainly was aware that such false teachers would infest the church of God; for he found such in the churches of Galatia, and would that they were cut off, for they troubled and bewitched the saints, and he knew full well that after his departure, grievous wolves would come in to the church of Ephesus, not sparing the flock. And with prophetic inspiration he gave warning of their increase in the last days, but still he could only speak of their being in Christ, so far as related to their connection nominally with the church which is his body. They are not in Christ vitally, or experimentally, nor by having entered into his fold by the door of the sheepfold, but as having climbed up some other way, proving that instead of being fathers, they are thieves and robbers, whose work is to steal, to kill, and to devour. But whether the apostle designed to include these false teachers with the ten thousand instructors in the church whose vital relation to the body of Christ we have no right to question, who while they have gifts which are useful for instruction, are totally destitute of every qualification to be fathers, we will not say.

If we confine the apostle's meaning to those instructors who are divinely qualified with gifts for instructing the saints, and who are and have been useful as instructors, do we now discover many of them who lack the peculiar traits of fathers in Israel? As a prophet of the Lord, Jonah was a qualified instructor, and has given us instruction by the word of the Lord that "Salvation is of the Lord," but Jonah was entirely too impatient, peevish and fretful to discharge the duties of a loving, watchful provident, and careful father. Moses was faithful as a servant, but too austere and severe to feel a fatherly tenderness for erring children. A mere instructor may impress many useful lessons on his pupils with his rod; but parental love and tenderness belong to a father, and the father feels a solicitude for the children which none but fathers can feel. Have we not known in our day preachers who seem to be remarkably apt to teach, almost inspired to dive deep into the sublime mysteries of the gospel, very clear and sound, and edifying in their elucidation of the more obscure portions of the scriptures; who in their every other trait of character were entirely unsuited for a pastoral relation to any particular branch of the church? Indeed it has become proverbial of some instructors, "When in the pulpit, they never ought to go out; and when out they never ought to go in." Their impetuous rashness, imprudent carriage, unbecoming levity, foolish jesting, uncouth extravagance of language, cold unsympathetic treatment of brethren, especially when under trials which require the most careful and tender treatment, carelessness in regard to the discipline and order of the church of God, unexemplary habits, high, austere, or haughty bearing, rendering themselves unapproachable to the tender timid lambs, or the opposite extreme of low and reckless familiarity and companionship with those who scoff at sacred things. All, or any of these faults tend to disqualify for parental usefulness in the house of God. But few, alas! too few of us who hold a position in the ministry, or otherwise as instructors, can say in truth that our usefulness in our holy calling has not, is not restrained by some or all of these evils. The peculiar qualifications for and characteristics of *fathers* in the house of God will be more fully considered in connection with what we propose to write on the last part of our text: "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel," which, for want of room in this number, we must defer until our next.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N. Y.
January 15, 1866.

I CORINTHIANS 4:15 (Concluded)

In resuming our remarks on I Corinthians 4:15, we propose to treat more fully on the affirmative, in regard to the indispensable requisites which constitute relation of position of a father in the church of God, in the sense in which the word is used in our text. As a progenitor, or author of our spiritual life, or rightful claimant of our supreme devotion, filial love, reverential fear, and implicit obedience, the saints of God are forbidden to call any man on earth father: for One is their Father, even God. They are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. The life therefore developed in that birth must be ascribed to God alone. But in the illustration of the various gifts which God has given to his church, the apostle has, as he tells us in verse 6 of the same chapter, "In a figure transferred this to himself, and to Apollos." Not to exalt himself or Apollos by an assumption of titles applicable to God;

but for the very opposite object. “That ye may learn in us not to think of *men* above that which is written; that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.” The apostle in thus transferring the figures employed in this chapter to Apollos as well as to himself, gives us to understand that the term is applicable in the sense in which it is used to other ministers of the gospel besides the apostles, but not properly applied to all instructors, or there would be no disparity between instructors and fathers. We therefore may search for the marks of distinction by which we are to discriminate between those instructors which are, and those who are not fathers.

We infer from the manner in which the apostles John, Peter, Paul and others have used the term, that it is designed not only to signify seniority of membership in the church, but certain peculiar qualities bearing analogy to the patriarchal or fatherly relation to, and care for, the children.

In our former number we pointed out many of the opposite traits which some instructors have betrayed. We will now attempt to show what are some of the distinguishing qualities or characteristics of fathers in the church of God.

First. Those who from long experience, wholesome training, and spiritual gifts are especially qualified to be useful by their counsels, instructions and examples to the younger and less experienced members in the church.

Second. Those who from long and faithful deportment have secured the well-placed confidence of the saints.

Third. Those who are sound in the faith, and deep in their understanding of the scriptures: orderly in their walk, sober and grave, yet humble and courteous in their deportment.

Fourth. Those who are familiar with the laws and discipline of the church of God; and careful to observe and contend for the order of the house of God.

Fifth. It is highly important that fathers in the church should render themselves perfectly accessible to the veriest babe, the weakest and most trembling child in the church.

Sixth. Those who are qualified to be fathers in the church will show a father’s affection, care, solicitude and untiring devotion to the spiritual welfare of all the family.

Seventh. As affectionate and faithful fathers feel a responsibility resting upon them to do all in their power, by diligent and indefatigable labor, or sacrifice of personal ease and comfort, for the benefit and well being of their family, so those who are to be regarded as fathers in the house of God will show a corresponding devotedness to the best interests of the children of God. Not only to those who have been enabled to come forward and openly profess the religion of Christ, but they will be quick to discover those lambs that may be bleating around the fold, trembling and diffident about making their trials known; giving to such wholesome instruction, comforting words, and fatherly instructions.

But the particular sense in which the apostle in our text claimed to be a father is that he had, in Christ Jesus, begotten them through the gospel. We presume it is on this form of expression that the Arminians and means-advocates cavil, and on which brother Osburn more especially desires our views.

Now the simple question is, in what sense does Paul claim to have begotten the Corinthians through the gospel? If, as Arminian cavilers contend, their regeneration, as subjects of saving grace, was effected by the efforts of Paul in preaching the gospel to them as a means of grace, it must then follow that they were as Christians begotten and born, not of the Spirit, but of Paul, and consequently not the children of God but of Paul; not heirs of God, but heirs of Paul. Very unlike those spoken of in John 1:12,13, to whom God gave power to become the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of

the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Now let us see the inevitable bearing of this logic. Paul is admitted to be a son of God, for God himself called him when on his way to Damascus, without any intermediate agency. Well now, admitting the Corinthians were begotten by Paul, what is their relation to God? Can it be any nearer than that of grandchildren? If that relation is near enough to suit the means advocates, we are certain that nothing short of the relation of sons of God will suffice to make us joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But Paul himself repudiates the absurdity, and denounces the theory as carnal. “For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Appolos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything; neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase (I Corinthians 3:5-7).”

Thus we see that the apostle repudiates the idea of his having power to beget children for the Lord. To be the children of God we must be begotten immediately of God himself, as the scriptures everywhere affirm. It never was so in nature, that one could beget children into a relationship to another: how absurd and ridiculous then to talk of Paul’s having begotten the Corinthians into the relation of sons and heirs of God. It is not, it cannot possibly be, that Paul intended to express any such thing. But the question then will return, what did he mean by the words, “For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel?” The answer, to be in harmony with all that Paul himself has said upon the subject, and all that the scriptures teach, must be that Paul and these Corinthians addressed were in Christ Jesus; not out of him to be brought in by Paul or Apollos, or by anybody else; and in Christ Jesus they sustain certain relations to each other as fellow-members of Christ. The position of Paul in the body, on which he claims the relation of father, is that himself and Apollos were ministers of Christ, called, qualified and sent forth to preach the gospel, and to proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that under their divine commission they were the ministers by whom these Corinthians *believed*; not by whom they were redeemed from hell or quickened from death. How did these brethren believe by Paul and Apollos? Let Paul himself explain. “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.” How as unto carnal? “Even as unto babes in Christ.” Now, as babes in Christ, they were already begotten and born of God, or they would not have been babes in Christ. “I have fed you with milk,” as a nursing father, in adapting his instructions to their weak condition, so that they could understand his language, comprehend his meaning, and digest the food ministered to them. Babes, to be susceptible of food, even of milk, must be living babes. Even milk cannot be fed to the unbegotten or the unborn babes, nor to any but living children. These, being babes in Christ, are babes in life, for Christ is the life of all his children. If they were not alive, feeding them with milk would not make them live; or if they were not babes in Christ they could not possibly be fed with the sincere milk of the word. This Paul has clearly proved in the preceding chapters of this epistle. “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” How unnatural it would be for a father to attempt to feed either milk or meat to a dead child, especially when he knew and had declared positively that they could not possibly receive it. But when the children of God are born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, then, and not until then, can they desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. By the ministry of Paul and Apollos, these brethren had been so instructed and fed, that they had grown and were still growing; and as transferring the figurative language to himself and Apollos, he speaks of having been with them from their early infancy, imparting to them that instruction which their heavenly birth and spiritual life had qualified them to receive with joy, and by which they were through Paul’s ministry inducted, or

figuratively born into the more full understanding of the gospel; the light and liberty of the children of God, who are taught and instructed by and through the gospel ministry. It was in this sense that Paul called Timothy his son, and the beloved John claimed all the scattered saints as his little children. In this application of the figure, Paul appealed to the members of the Galatian churches who had received the Spirit, and who had run well, saying, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you, etc. (Galatians 4:19)." If he travailed of them again, he had travailed of them before. As an anxious parent earnestly desiring that they might bear the image of Christ, to which end his former travail and labor had been successful; now that error, in the form of legality, meansism and Arminianism had bewitched them, again he travailed in birth, that their former beauty might be restored, and Christ, not Moses, be formed in them, so that they might again reflect his lovely image.

By his administration of the gospel, which is Christ to them, Christ was reflected or *formed* understandingly in their hearts, so that in the exhibitions of their faith they presented Christ, and not Moses or Old Testament doctrine.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1866.

I PETER 5:5; ROMANS 12:10

Elder Beebe: I have been in the habit of reading your editorials for the last few years, and being highly pleased with them, I would like to have your views on I Peter 5:5, and with Romans 12:10. By giving them you will oblige,

A Friend to the Cause of Truth.

Oxford, C.W.

January 17, 1866.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you, be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble (I Peter 5:5)." "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another (Romans 12:10)."

The former is an apostolic admonition to the elders which were and are among the scattered people of God, the latter is addressed more generally to all the saints, irrespective of the position they may, any of them, hold in the church of God. The two passages, considered together, show us that the apostles have given exhortations, instructions and admonitions to all, whether elders or private members of the church of God. The apostles are by the authority of Christ seated upon twelve thrones, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. And being divinely qualified for the very responsible and important position to which Christ has elevated them, their judgment and decisions on every point of doctrine, rule of order, and exposition of every precept of the law of Christ, the establishment of every ordinance belonging to the house of God, together with all the relative duties and privileges devolving on or belonging to the saints, regulating their deportment in the church, and all their intercourse with the world, is accurately considered, authoritatively decided, and unalterably established, never to be amended, improved nor repealed so long as this world shall stand. By the special command of the King Eternal, Immortal,

Invisible, the Only Wise God, our Savior, they are commissioned to teach the disciples of Christ of all subsequent ages, to observe *all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them*. And to prevent the possibility of the slightest failure, from forgetfulness or any other cause, the Holy Ghost is sent down from heaven, like a rushing mighty wind, to qualify them perfectly by its unerring inspiration, and to bring to their remembrance all the instructions which Christ has given them. Without the possibility of committing an error in their official administration of judgment, all they have bound on earth is bound in heaven, and all they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. In every decision they have made, they have spoken as the Holy Ghost has given them utterance, God himself has spoken by them, and from their decisions there is no appeal. None may claim that they are disciples of Christ who are not governed by the decisions of the apostles in all matters of faith and practice; nor can any church, or branch of the church of Christ, be known as such, where Christ does not sit upon the throne of his glory, and his apostles with him, upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (See Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30 and Isaiah 32:1.) Where ever Christ is recognized upon his Mediatorial throne, his apostles must also be recognized as his authorized judges and exponents of his laws. Our obedience to Christ is the test of our discipleship, and if we reject his apostles, we also reject him, and therefore cannot be his disciples or his church.

Peter not only claims to be an apostle, a judge, enthroned in judgment with all the authority of heaven and earth to establish his inspired decisions on every point, but he claims to be also an elder. An elder, in a gospel sense of the word, means a pastor, or one who is authorized to preside over, and to feed the flock, or church of God.

1. This was at least a part of Peter's work, for Christ had specially commanded him to feed his sheep and to feed his lambs. (See John 15:16,17.) He was the more eminently qualified to hold that relation to the church from having been a witness of the sufferings of Christ. He was with him in his betrayal, when arrested, and at court where he was tried and condemned to die; was with him in the garden, a witness of his agony; and from his mentioning this in our text, we infer that the elders of the church, while they feed the flock, are qualified by the Spirit to be valid witnesses of the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ. And Peter was also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, as resulting from the sufferings and death of Christ. The prophets had testified of his sufferings and of his glory. And Christ said, "Ought not Christ to suffer, and then to enter into his glory?" And Paul testifieth that, "He was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Peter was a partaker of that glory, and so are all who have risen with him, and with him sit together in the heavenly places.

2. The work of elders generally, who are not apostles, is clearly defined in Paul's valedictory to the elders of Ephesus. (See Acts 20:17-38, but more especially in verse 28.) "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The pastoral labors of an elder belong to the church, and not to the world. Not, however, to every community who may call themselves, or be by others called a church, or the church; but they stand related to, and are the servants of "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." And as there is but one church of that description to be found in heaven or earth, the labor of the elder is restricted to that church alone. He has no commission or authority to feed the world, or any of the queens or concubines which are recognized by the world as churches, for the food which they are to deal out to the church of God cannot suit the appetite of any but the children of the living God. They "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever," are qualified to receive and feed upon the "sincere milk of the word."

3. The pastoral nature of the work of the elders is fully expressed in the exhortation of Peter, who being himself an elder, had a perfect understanding of the duties involved in the calling. He exhorts them thus: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof.” Observe he directs his epistle to the elect which were scattered as strangers throughout Pontius, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. And this special exhortation is to the elders which were among these scattered saints, and they are exhorted to feed the flock of God which was among them, and to take the oversight of them. That is as watchmen, not as lords over God’s heritage, but as faithful watchmen; to warn, admonish, exhort, teach and administer the word and ordinances, according to the instructions and examples given them by the apostles. And this they must do from pure motives, not for the gratification of a covetous disposition, but of a ready mind, and as examples to the flock. And as in this work they sustain to the flock of God the relationship of *under* shepherds, they are encouraged that they shall be approved and remembered by the chief Shepherd when he shall come.

As we desire to extend our remarks upon the exhortation to the elders, as introductory to what we may say on the two verses to which our attention has been called, we must, for want of room, defer the further consideration of the subject to our next number.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1866.

I PETER 5:5; ROMANS 12:10 (Concluded)

Remarks on I Peter 5:5, and Romans 12:10. Reply to “A Friend to the cause of Truth.”

From Peter’s exhortation to the elders, which are among the flock of God, and Christ’s charge to Peter in John 21:16,17, as also from Paul’s charge to the elders of Ephesus in Acts 20:28, we unavoidably infer that the pastoral work of the elders is very definitely and clearly stated, to feed the flock of God, the sheep and lambs of Christ. No authority, expressed or implied, is given to provide a flock, or to increase the flock, but to attend to the flock which the chief Shepherd has gathered with his arm, and which he carries in his bosom (Isaiah 11:2); and to take the oversight of them, as shepherds, whose business is to look after their welfare, vigilantly watching for their peace, comfort and safety, and ready to give the alarm at the approach of their invading foes; their principal business being to see that they are well fed on good and wholesome pasturage. “Not by constraint.” In the spiritual application of our figure, how unfit for the pastoral duties is he whose heart is not in the work; who does not delight to mingle freely with the flock; who must be induced by filthy lucre, or some worldly inducement appealing to his selfish, carnal nature. “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage.” Instead of being lords, God’s ministers are servants of Christ, and by his will, servants of his church. “Ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.” Looking not to men for a reward, but to the chief Shepherd who has the hearts of all men under his control, and will see that they shall be provided for here, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away; or, as Paul says, “a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (II Timothy 4:8).”

Having thus briefly noticed the apostolic exhortation to the elders, which are among the flock of God, we pass to notice the relative duties enjoined by the same unquestionable authority on all the other members of the Lord's flock.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder." This submission is in like manner, as the word *likewise* means. There is a reciprocity in the submission of pastor and people, of elders and younger. Whether we consider the elder as a pastor, or only a senior in church membership and experience, the submission must be mutual and reciprocal; for while the ministers of Christ are vested with authority to "preach the Word," and to "teach with all authority" according to that Word; so that when they preach and teach according to the Word, every member is solemnly required to submit to the instruction, and no member of the church has a right to disregard the preaching of instruction. So, on the other hand, while the elders preach, the church sits in judgment, and are authorized to investigate and decide whether they preach and teach according to the Word; for if they do not, it is because there is no light in them. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?" or messengers. Elders, whether by age or position in the church, are under the authority of the church, and must be in submission to the authority which Christ has invested her with. And this extends not only to the doctrine they may preach, but all their walk and deportment in the church, and in their intercourse with mankind; for all is under the supervision of the church. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." And God has set his King upon his holy hill, Zion. There Jesus, by his Spirit, sits in judgment, and arraigns all his subjects at his bar in Zion. That there is a marked deference to be paid to pastors and to senior brethren, there can be no doubt. Divine instructions are clear on this point. Read I Timothy 5:1,17, and 18. Here, while the apostle commands double honor to the elders in both applications of the term, and especially to those elders which labor in word and doctrine, he adds a most solemn charge before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, to observe these things without partiality. As all the members of the body of Christ are equally precious, and all to be recognized in their appropriate places or gifts, as it has pleased God to set them in the church, the honor or distinction of honor due to age or gifts, is not to be observed in a manner disparaging to all the other members of the body.

The injunction or command of the apostle to the younger is applicable to all in the church who are not elders, either by age or vocation, and none are left at liberty to disregard, disrespect, or disobey the instructions, admonitions or teachings of the elders, except where the elders evidently depart from the law and order of Christ as settled by the apostles. Thus while the elders are required to be kind and gentle, and in submission to the authority of Christ in his church, as servants and not lords, all the members who are permitted to receive their services are in turn bound to appreciate their labor and be in submission to them.

"Yea, all of you be subject one to another." The church of God is one body, having one spirit; her members are called in one hope of their calling.

The movement of the body in obedience to the dictation of its spirit requires that there shall be harmony in all the members which make up the fullness of the body. To attain this harmony, no member can be independent of its fellow members; but all must be subject one to another, and all subject to the spirit by which the whole is governed. Otherwise there will be schisms in the body paralyzing all its actions. If, for instance, the eye refuses to see for the body, there is no other member that can perform that service for the body; or if the ear refuse to hear, or the tongue to express the sentiments of the body, or if the hand refuse to labor, the foot to walk, the body cannot travel. As a whole, all the members must obey the head, and each member be in subjection to the body. If in labor, one hand refuses to act in harmony with the other, the one builds, the other throws down; nothing is

gained. The one foot, in obeying the Spirit, would move Zionward, the other inclines towards Babylon, and will not be in submission – the whole body must be in confusion, and the Spirit which directs to Zion is disobeyed until the unyielding and offending foot or hand be cut off, or the offending eye be plucked out. As in the natural body, so in the church, all the members of the body are members one of another. The hand can do nothing without the cooperation of the arm, and the arm must have the cooperation of all the body; and this cooperation and harmony requires that all the members shall be in submission one to another.

A morose, haughty, selfish disposition in any of the members would involve all the body in perplexity, and therefore that spirit is forbidden, and the opposite is enjoined on all. “Be clothed with humility.” Clothing not only shields and protects the body and members from the cold and so contributes to the health and comfort of the body, but covers and conceals its deformity. The whole church and all her members being clothed with humility allows no manifestations of arrogance or want of unanimity to appear. And this seems to be the design of the figure in our text. “For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” No higher incentive can be known or felt by an humble child of God than to enjoy his divine approval. A proud, lofty or haughty carriage, especially when detected in a child of God, is sure to meet the marked disapprobation of our Heavenly Father. His rod will find them out; but he giveth grace or favor, beauty and support to the humble.

“Blest are the humble souls who see
Their emptiness and poverty;
Treasures of grace to them are given,
And crowns of joy laid up in heaven.”

The other text proposed for consideration (Romans 12:10) presents the same admonition, only in other words: “Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love: in honor preferring one another.” Both are addressed to the children of God, who, being born of God and led by his Spirit, are a spiritual brotherhood; but being also in the flesh which is born of the flesh, are liable to be led by the corruptions of their fleshy nature to a selfish and unlovely course, in which there is danger of biting and devouring of one another. Were it not that they have a law in their members, warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members, they would not need these admonitions with which the scriptures abound. But in their present condition they need to give the more earnest heed to them, lest they should fall out by the way. The ardent desire of Paul for the well-being of the saints seemed to enlist his whole soul, and in the most pathetic and imploring manner he says: “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,” (what a striking appeal!) “that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” This sacrifice of our bodies includes all our worldly interests, wealth, honor, fame, ease, or life itself, if need be, and all must be laid upon the altar, all surrendered and submitted to God to be disposed of as he shall direct; allowing nothing of a worldly nature to divert us from that course which we are called to pursue as the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. This living sacrifice requires that we shall not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God. Not indulging in vain conceit, or cherishing exalted views of ourselves; but regarding our standing in the body of Christ, as members of Christ, and as members in him one of another. Each member having its appropriate gift and measure of faith is for the benefit of all the body. “Let love be without dissimulation.” Let it not be feigned, or in hypocritical pretense; but the honest, sincere and unfeigned out-gushing of holy affection which comes welling up from the depth of the heart where God has shed abroad his love. “Abhor that which is evil.” Those who love God supremely, and by virtue of his love in their hearts, love his Word,

his people, his ordinances, and all that God approves, do not, as some seem to suppose, therefore, necessarily love everything. If they love truth, they hate error; if they love holiness, they hate sin; if they love God, they hate mammon; for God's love is discriminating. If we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us. And just as far as we love that which is good, we will hate and abhor that which is evil.

“Be kindly affectioned one to another.” As the possession of Christian love in our hearts to all the fraternity of the saints is the distinguishing and infallible evidence that we have passed from death unto life, are born of God, and belong to the brotherhood of the saints, it is therefore clearly established that all who are born of God do possess an undying affection for all the saints. But the peculiarity of the words of this admonition seem to imply something more than that the principle of love, or of affection shall exist in our hearts. To be affectioned, as we understand, means not only that we love; but that we should show our love. And to be kindly affectioned, means that our spiritual affection shall rule and control our actions, and that our affections shall be seen in acts of kindness, sympathy and devotion to those whom we love in the Lord. That brother who sees his brother in need, and shuts up the bowels of compassion, saying, Be warm, or be clothed, without ministering to his necessities, is not *kindly affectioned* towards him. “How dwelleth the love of God in that man?” Not the priest nor the Levite, but the good Samaritan was kindly affectioned towards the man who had fallen among thieves. Yet his might only have been a natural affection; still it was manifested by at least *neighborly* kindness. The kind of affection enjoined on the saints in our text is more than neighborly; for the admonition is, “Be kindly affectioned one to another, with *brotherly love*,” by that love in which our fraternal relationship is founded. “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God.” If love is thus displayed in our sonship, and our being the sons of God makes us brethren, then our sonship shows that God was kindly affectioned towards us. “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,” etc. “To be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love,” is to be so governed by that filial, fraternal, spiritual, and divine love which God has bestowed on us, that in all our deportment our actions should be marked with kindness to all our Father's children. No unkind, ungenerous, unfeeling, or reproachful word or action can result from the love of God in our hearts. The kindly affectioned brother loves with a pure heart fervently, can bear a brother's burdens, share his sorrows, seek his comfort, sympathize in his affections, weep when he weeps, and participate in his joys. He will not watch for his halting, nor exult in his downfall, nor make him an offender for a word.

“When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above;
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.

“Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above:
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.”

“In honor preferring one another.” The Christian who is kindly affectioned to his brother is not ambitious to monopolize the honors which distinguish some above others. It is a remarkable and a distinguishing trait in the children of God that each esteems others better than himself. The young convert in the fullness of the love of God newly shed abroad in his heart says, O how gladly would I mingle with the dear people of God if I were worthy. The lovely ordinance of baptism, how joyfully

would I lay my poor sinful body in the watery grave where Jesus laid, if I were worthy. The old travelers on our King's highway are often heard to say, If I had such a gift as my brethren and sisters have, how I would delight to improve it. They sometimes think all their brethren are far before them in all that is excellent, and themselves less than the least of all saints; unsparing after preferment, in honor preferring one another. A minister is to be called to the work, but O, not me. "Ah, Lord God, I cannot speak, for I am a child (Jeremiah 1:6)!" If a deacon is to be set apart to the work, every other brother seems better qualified than myself. Now while we hold that each member should be subject one to another, and abide the decision of the church as to where their place shall be, we still hold that it is a heaven-granted right each one saint may claim, in honor, to prefer one another. Oh that this spirit may prevail in all the church of God, and then what jealousies would have to die! What fires of hell would be quenched! What strife and bitterness would be banished from our borders!

What is more lovely in nature, in families, and in communities, than a kind and affectionate regard for the welfare and happiness of each other; a sight but too seldom witnessed. But in the church of God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth, it is superlatively glorious, and as delightful as it is beautiful. Especially so, when all around in the world and in anti-christian communities, all is hatred, malice, wrath, strife, seditions, envies, murders and every abomination. Then how beautiful for situation is Mount Zion, in the sides of the North; the city of the great King!

Middletown, N. Y.
March 1, 1866.

THE CHURCH OF GOD: WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the Living God; and how various are the applications of the word *church* in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations, by almost universal consent, is called a *church*; and by that name, with great ceremony, is frequently consecrated, and with much parade given to the Lord! A church made of wood, or of bricks and mortar, so consecrated is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations; as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Mormon church, and these with very many other religious bodies are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike entitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways, real worshipers of God, and alike acceptable to him. But the scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder. The inspired apostle Paul says, "There is one body, and one spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the name, but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensable to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of brick, or lumber which men call churches, stand vitally united to Christ as their head? Have all the various denominations alluded to above kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Have they

all but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one spirit; and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not.

If these great popular denominations, when weighed in the balance, are found wanting, and when tried by the scriptures are rejected; does it not become us, who profess to the Old School, or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine, in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy scriptures identify the church of God?

When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light; when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members he ascended up on high; went to his Father and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of Righteousness and Priest of the Most High God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers; and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him; and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this he sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization; and was expressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way, the Truth and the Life; in whom is vested exclusively all legislative power. Second, the apostles of the Lamb are seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment, not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in judgment, as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles are evangelists, and pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize, and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by the enthroned apostles; with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules are to be recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the profit and benefit of all the church.

All the members which the church has power to recognize must come in by the door; all who would climb up some other way are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy.

As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevocable, the same rule which was observed at the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship are in force throughout all ages in Christ's church; and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize them is an harlot and not the church of God. This declaration may seem uncharitable; but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it.

We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside.

Second, there is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment. For he himself has said, "When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; (his Mediatorial throne is the throne of his glory) then shall ye also set upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh; for henceforth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine, order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King; for Christ

has further said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom or church.

Now then, let the laws of Christ embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and, it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ; for she is the ground and pillar of the truth. She is the perfection of beauty. She is the workmanship of God, and all his work is perfect. It therefore follows invariably that all who profess to be the church of Christ and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances, or his government, are base impostors.

In view of these well defined principles, let us look well to the order established by the apostles for the reception of members to church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction, and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonderful change was wrought in them; insomuch that the word which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold, in pictures of silver; as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine, which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now, they gladly received the word. It was perfectly adapted to their renewed state; for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine; but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which God had poured upon them, they not only received, but gladly received the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized, and added to the church. That is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles, and the apostolic church. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued *steadfast* in the apostles' doctrine implies that they encountered opposition; which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution. But so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth, that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution, nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing, or other teachers, could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine, and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one we are equally so in both. But if we depart from the one, we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine, we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of anti-christ; but we cannot depart from their instruction, and still retain their fellowship.

Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. And being thus steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers, and in

breaking of bread; and they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the First Born, from those humanly constructed religious organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the “Seven women, who shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach (Isaiah 4:1).” They dislike to be called anti-christian, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating; but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles’ doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world, and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please; conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please; get religion when they please, or whatever kind of quality they please; keep it as long as they please, and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such *churches*, as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-righteousness enough to live upon and only desiring to have a name to live while they are dead. For them the apostles’ doctrine is quite too stale; it is behind the age of progression in which we live; it is too slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved; while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved; or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1866.

TEST OF FELLOWSHIP: A RESPONSE TO CHARGES.

A brother writing us from Illinois speaks of our making politics a test of fellowship. He is mistaken, and will probably discover his misapprehension of our position if he will re-peruse our article with a little more care and candor. We make *infidelity*, not *politics*, a test. A rejection of the divine testimony contained in the inspired scriptures on any subject whatever is with us a ground of disfellowship. We are a member of no political organization; we belong to a kingdom which is not of this world, and therefore have no political point to gain. But we are an advocate of the scriptures, as the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the Christian church; and “if any man teach otherwise,” (than the divine instructions of the Bible) “and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness,” in obedience to the express command of God, by his apostle, we withdraw ourself from such (1 Timothy 6:3-5). What God has said of the relationship of servants and masters, parents and children, husbands and wives, rulers and ruled, with all relative duties by him enjoined, we hold to be imperatively binding on all the saints. To deny what he has said, to teach otherwise, or refuse to consent to what is plainly written in the holy scriptures is infidelity, and with infidels we are not permitted to be yoked. “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord

hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel (II Corinthians 6:14,15).” All we ask of any brother, or ever have asked, is that just what God has said in his word, shall be accepted and complied with. This we ask as our terms of fellowship. We ask no more, and if sustained by grace, we will accept no less.

We have no disposition to establish any of these institutions where they do not exist; nor to abolish them where they do exist; but we are bound to recognize them as the Bible presents them. If the Bible says nothing about them, then neither should we. But if what God has said of them in his holy word be disputed; the very fact of their being disputed is sufficient reason why God’s ministers should reiterate what he has said, though men or devils should oppose.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1866.

MANUFACTURED SERMONS

“Rev. Dr. Demarest, one of the leading clergymen of the Dutch Church, left a very eligible charge in Newark, N.J., to settle in Chicago. One of the main reasons for leaving Newark was that he had ten years’ labor, in the form of sermons, of which he was desirous of availing himself. But alas! Literary wealth will take to itself wings. The car of the American Express Company, in which were his clothes and sermons, took fire, and all were consumed.”

Exchange Paper.

What a disaster to the Rev. Doctor! Did any of the apostles ever experience the like? Only think, ten years labor in manufacturing sermons, and only ten years salary realized from them; and that perhaps at the starvation rate of a few thousand dollars per annum! And just as the Doctor was moving them to a new market, without one shilling insurance on them, either in heaven or earth, in one fearful hour, alas! they are all dissolved in smoke. We suggest to the Doctor that he import from Holland or Germany a few barrels of Fire Proof Dutch Reformed Sermons, which can be bought very cheap in the old country; and as there is but very little *weight* in them, the cost of importation will not be much. Should our plan *take*, the Doctor could still fill his contract with the clever people of Chicago; and in consideration of the Doctor’s misfortune, we will charge him nothing for the suggestion.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1866.

JOHN 15:6

“If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

To the appeal for our views on this text made by sister Force, in our last number, we promised to respond in the present issue. The instructions of our divine Lord and Master, his admonitions and words of encouragement to his disciples, are frequently expressed in figures and parables, selected and employed by his infinite wisdom and most graciously adapted to our finite minds and very limited capacities. Yet although the most familiar things in nature are used to illustrate spiritual things, unto none but the saints is it given to know the things of the kingdom of Christ, and to all others all the instructions of our Lord are but parables, or dark and mysterious sayings which they can by no means comprehend. Hence, will-worshipers and Arminians generally profess to find in the beautiful figure of the vine and its branches only an implied threat of damnation to the children of God to be used as a scourge to lash them to vigilance from fear of falling from grace and sinking down to the perdition of the ungodly. But the child of God, taught by the Spirit to understand the true design of this cluster of figures, is thoroughly convinced that so far from sustaining the doctrine of free-will, human power or creature merit, its application tears them all up, root and branch, and that the idol of human agency in procuring the salvation which is in Christ Jesus must fall before it as Dagon fell before the Ark of God. In the connection of our text, Jesus says, “I am the true vine; my Father is the husbandman,” etc. The eternal deity of Christ, his independent, self-existent Godhead, abstractly considered, is incomparable, “Unto what shall we liken him?” We are forbidden to make any image, picture or comparison; but Christ in his Mediatorial glory is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person; and is therefore the image of the “Invisible God,” or Godhead. God is therefore never visible to men in the flesh, only as he is revealed in the person of his Son. In the Son of God dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; or *embodied*, and in that embodiment he is revealed to the faith of God’s children.

“God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our (the saint’s) hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.” They, therefore, and they alone who have seen the Son have seen the Father also; for he is in the Father and the Father is in him; he and his Father are one. So also as the one Mediator between God and man, is he One with his church, and every one that has seen his church, has seen Christ. For his church is one with him, even as he is one with the Father.

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” That kingdom which is invisible to all who are not born again is the body of Christ, and the fullness of Christ. And in his church dwells all the fullness of Christ bodily, or embodied, even as the fullness of the Godhead is embodied in him. Now the vine and branches are in our figure, Christ and his members, and his Father is the Husbandman, having the full charge, care and culture of it. And he says, “In that day sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day (Isaiah 27:2,3).” It is very evident then that the vine in our figure signifies Christ in his Mediatorial identity with his church. The same figure is applied by the Holy Ghost both to Christ and his church. David and Solomon, and Isaiah and others, speaking by the Holy Ghost, calls the church a vine, having tender grapes, etc. But the church cannot be found out of Christ; nor, we bless God, can Christ be found out of the church which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Then when Christ says I am the true vine, we understand that he is the true vine, including all his branches. The same is expressed in a figure of similar import, used by Paul: “For as the body is one, and hath many

members, and these members, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.” So also is the true vine. National Israel was the typical vine which God brought out of Egypt; but Christ is the true, anti-typical vine and his members are the branches of Christ, and are so identified as to bear his name.

Now, having thus far dwelt upon the figure of the vine and branches, and its application, we will pass on to notice that its introduction by our Lord, in this fifteenth chapter of John, was for a practical application, principally to impress the more forcibly his admonitions on those members of himself whom he recognizes as the branches of the vine. Having premised that the vine is Christ, in his mystical body, the church; and the branches of the vine are the members of Christ, being members of his body, members of his church, and members one of another, he says to his members, the branches, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” For a branch to abide in the vine it must be identified with it, as a part of it, deriving all its vitality and vigor from the parent vine. The figure is full of instruction. We all know that a branch cut off, or separated, from the vine must wither and cease to bear fruit. What is it then to abide in Christ and bear fruit; and what is it for a branch to abide not in the vine, be cut off, wither, be gathered of men, and cast into the fire, and be burned? To abide in Christ implies a restriction to certain limits which are not to be transcended, all beyond which is forbidden ground. As he is the vine, our vitality and fruitfulness depends upon our abiding in him. To all the members of his body, the church, her exact boundaries are immutably staked out. Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed. Not one of her cords shall ever be broken. They mark and define the curtains of our habitation in Christ, beyond which we may not go; they measure to us the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. To exceed these stakes which God has set is to depart from Christ as our abiding place. These stakes, cords, or measurements, are designed to signify the laws, ordinances, doctrine, examples, precepts, admonitions and instructions which are found in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Hence, in the connection, Jesus explains to his disciples what it is to abide in him; thus “if ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” This and other explanatory expressions of our Lord, in the same chapter, very clearly show in what sense he speaks of his members’ abiding in him as the true vine. We cannot be thrown out of, or cut off from, our election in him, which was before the foundation of the world; for that would be to overthrow the sovereign, immutable and eternal choice, purpose and predestination of God; for “whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son.” A failure in this would disarrange and indeed destroy the divine government; but a separation from his mystical body, the church, or vine, may be effected by disobedience to his commands, departure from his doctrine, or by a rejection of his words; or by disorderly deportment. To keep, or abide in his commandments is to abide in his love. So abiding we shall observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded us. Without his instruction, or authority, we will turn neither to the right hand nor to the left. To abide in him, in his word, his house, his church, his laws, and ordinances, mean that we remain permanently in them. Not as visitors, or occasional guests, but permanently settled and established in them. Ruth was admonished to *abide* in the field of Boaz, close by the reapers, which signified that she was to glean in no other field. It is said of anti-christ that “Her feet abide not in her house (Proverbs 7:11).” But the abiding branch or member will say, “Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem (Psalm 122:2).” “They that dwell in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1).” To go beyond the word of the Lord, to do what he has not commanded, or to leave undone what he has commanded, is to depart from him. To embrace doctrine which he has not taught, or to repudiate doctrine which he has taught in his word, is a departure from him in the sense of our figure. If we abide in him, that is, in his word, in his love, in

his doctrine, then he also abideth in us. That is, his word abides permanently in us, his love abides in our hearts, as the life and sap of the vine abides in and invigorates the branches, so when his members go not out of his word, but keep within the precincts which environs his kingdom, then he, in his word, laws, love, life and healthful presence, by all the fruits of his Holy Spirit, dwells in us as the sap of the vine flows to all the branches fructifying and invigorating them. As Christ and his Word, his Spirit, his truth and grace are inseparable, if they abide in us it is because he abides in us. But if they abide not in us, then neither does he, in this sense, abide in us.

The branch, whether we apply the term to a single Christian or to a branch of the kingdom of Christ (for it can apply to none other) that abides in Christ, and Christ in him, or her, the same bringeth forth much fruit. “And herein,” says Christ, “is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.” The fruits of this abiding union with Christ, the true vine, are the legitimate fruits of the vine, which are “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” And these are the true clusters of the true vine, very unlike the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah, whose grapes are gall, and whose clusters are bitter, the wine of which is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps (Deuteronomy 32:32,33), as we have painfully witnessed during the last four or five years. But these fruits of the true vine, borne by the branches which abide in Christ, are fruits which are unto holiness, whereby the Father, the Husbandman of the vine, is declaratively glorified. The love abounding in all the abiding branches is the love of God, shed abroad in them through Christ the vine; their faith is the faith of the Son of God who hath loved them and given himself for them. Their peace is from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Their joy is in the Holy Ghost. So their gentleness, goodness, meekness, and all their fruits are of God, for “their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” None of these grapes can be gathered from thorns or thistles, nor can the Christian bear them, only so far as he abides in the vine. The people of Israel, married to Moses, brought forth fruit gendering to bondage; but being now dead to the law by the body of Christ, the true vine, they are lawfully married to him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruits unto God.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N. Y.
April 1, 1866.

JOHN 15:6 (Concluded)

“If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

The very same acts performed by any others than the children of God would neither develop fruits of the true vine nor could they glorify God. Who hath required these things at the hands of those who are not branches of the true vine? It is not keeping the commandments of Christ for unbelievers to be baptized; for those who know not God to profess religion; for those whom he has not authorized to preach, even if they should preach the truth. Nor are any of the laws of the kingdom of Christ enjoined on the ungodly. The obedience of the saints is the obedience of faith, and without faith it is impossible

to please God. And all men have not faith. The son of the bond-woman was but a slave, although begotten by Abraham, nor could he ever be an heir with the son of the free-woman. Fruits produced by Christians are not fruits of the Spirit, unless they are fruits of vital union with the living vine. They are but the fruits of the flesh if produced independently of the true vine. And against all the fruits of the flesh there is law. The law is as weak through the flesh to produce fruits unto God, as Abraham was weak through Hagar to fulfill the promise of God that Sarah should have a son.

Christians sometimes make powerful efforts to do something for the Lord. But if they do what he has not commanded, their doings cannot be accepted of God, or if they do even what he has commanded, and do it from any other spirit or influence than that which comes to them through the vine, it is unavailing. For instance, Christ has commanded his children to pray; but how often do they ask and receive not, because they ask amiss? This they are sure to do if they breathe forth any other than the aspirations of the Spirit in their prayer; they ask only for things that they may consume them on their carnal lusts, and God, in great mercy to them, refuses to grant them their desires. But when the healing virtues of the vine inspires them, they ask only for such things as God has in store for them. The Spirit, through the vine, maketh intercession for them according to the will of God, and then their prayers ascend like holy incense before the Lord. To abide in Christ, the true vine is, then:

First: To abide in his Spirit; and this requires that they be born of the Spirit, “because the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” The saints, in abiding in that Spirit, must crucify the old man with his deeds, and be governed by, and walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Second: They must abide in his love; for no other than that love which God has shed abroad in them will do. To abide in his love requires that they shall put from them the affections as well as the lusts of the flesh, and if they walk in the love of God they will love God supremely, and his people, his word, his service, and all that is approved of God himself, and lovely in his estimation.

Third: To abide in Christ as the true vine is to abide in his Word. He said, when lifting up his eyes to heaven, and addressing the Father, “I have given them thy word, and they have received it, and the world has hated them,” etc. “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.”

Fourth: They in abiding in his word abide in his truth, because the word is truth. All who depart from his word depart also from the truth, and abide not in the vine.

Fifth: They must abide in his law; that law which he hath written in their hearts: cheerfully obeying his precepts, and submitting to its authority in all things.

Sixth: They must abide in his doctrine, as stated and expounded by the holy apostles. For we see that the primitive disciples continued steadfast in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer. They must abide in fellowship with the vine, strictly conforming to the rule which he has given for their doctrine and practice in all things.

Now, “If any man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch.” A nominal membership, or connection with the vine is not sufficient to secure a permanent abode in the church of Christ, the true vine. In that typical vine which the Lord brought out of Egypt, and planted, and made a hedge around it, and built a vine press for it, etc., a fleshly qualification conforming to the law of a carnal commandment, and a strict performance of the ordinances in a worldly sanctuary would secure an abode. But in the true vine, the order and discipline which Christ has established will detect, not only those who are only foxes who seek to spoil the vine, but it will also exclude from fellowship and membership all such as depart from the laws and institutions of Christ and abide not in him. Those foxes are cast forth, or “taken” as foxes

that spoil the vine; but those who are cast forth as branches must mean those who have stood identified with the vine itself. And is not this clearly the case, that those branches or churches, or members who have had the confidence and fellowship of the saints, when they depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; who refuse to be governed by the laws of the kingdom, or oppose the doctrine of Christ, or walk after the flesh, and not after the spirit, abiding not in the vine, but going astray from the footsteps of Christ's flock, are in the due order of the house of God cast forth as branches? And do they not wither? That verdure and beauty which they once exhibited consumes away like a moth, and all that seemed lovely to them fades out, and they being no more in harmony and fellowship with the people of God, are expelled from communion and fellowship, and from membership in the organized church.

“And men gather them,” etc. As men gather and burn the withered offcasts of a vine, so there are those in the world who watch for the halting of the professed followers of Christ, that they may gather them to feed the flame of their carnal passions, and if possible, use them as fuel to increase the fire of persecution against the church of God. The dry and withered trimmings of a vine will make a sudden blaze, a glaring light, and produce a momentary heat, but all soon dies out, leaving the withered, charred branches blacker, and more unlike the verdant parent vine than ever. So we have often seen the backsliding members of the church, when lured from the pathway of holiness, departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, when by the faithful application of the discipline of the church excluded from the fellowship of orderly Christians, and separated from the vine, cast forth and withered. And men do gather them, for they look for the sympathy of the world, and there are those who will join them in their bitterness against the church of God, and for a time the lurid flame burns fiercely against the church and people of God, and like the crackling noise of burning thorns utter their malicious but incoherent maledictions against the faithful defenders of the truth of God.

Those who have been cut off from the fellowship of the saints for their transgressions of the laws of Christ have frequently, for a season, manifested more bitterness against the vine from which they have been cut off than those have been wont to show, into whose hands they have fallen, and by the accession which they make to the ever-burning fire of persecution, the furnace is, for a moment, made perhaps seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated.

But there is another sense in which those who abide not in Christ, in the sense explained in this figure, who by departing from his instructions, his laws, institutions, doctrine, examples, and from the communion and fellowship of his saints, are gathered and cast into the fire. God's children are not allowed to go into transgression unrebuked. When cast forth and withered, as excluded branches from the parent vine, they suffer the burning fire of divine disapprobation. They are cast into a place of discomfort and unrest; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, in which their beauty is consumed as a moth, and their comeliness becomes as ashes to them. How indescribably distressing must be the condition of a branch of the true vine, a child of God who has tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the joys of the world to come, who has enjoyed the companionship of dear loving brethren and sisters, who has shared with them all the privileges of the house of God, to be cut off from the vine, cast forth from fellowship, gathered up like a withered branch, joined to a citizen of a foreign country, far from his father's house, in wretchedness and famine of soul, reduced to such extreme want that he fain would fill himself with that which only the swine can eat.

Practical illustrations of this part of our Lord's parable are not infrequent. When those who have enjoyed the privileges of the church of God have become disaffected, have grown cold in their appreciation of the society of the saints, cease to prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy, and allured by

some sensual bait from the doctrine, practice or order of the house of God; become indifferent to the confidence and fellowship of their brethren, reject their counsel, spurn their admonitions and shun their company. In their wanderings from the footsteps of the flock, they become charmed with some gilded illusion which seems to promise them present gratification, they are taken in the fowler's snare, and soon become wedded to some idol. They follow the leadings of their carnal mind until alienated in their feelings and affections from their fellow-branches of the vine, bid defiance to the authority of Christ in his church, and madly throw off all restraints, assume to be independent of the church or vine in which they had once seemed verdant and fruitful. The commands of Christ are disobeyed, and his authority disregarded until the discipline of the church demands their expulsion from the vine or church. Now they are withered, barren of those fruits of the Spirit in which they once seemed to abound; like the salt which has lost its savory qualities by becoming filthy, thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast forth, and trodden under foot of men. In this condition men gather them. Men of the world of anti-christ, who feel malicious towards the vine, hail with fiendish gusto their apostasy from the faith and order of the gospel, and give them a warm reception. The powers of darkness exult in the momentary seeming triumph. But how soon the stolen waters grow bitter, the allurements fade, the promised gratification is not realized. The truant child begins to be in trouble. The easy down-hill-road from Jerusalem to Jericho is infested with thieves, and cruel merciless robbers are on the alert; the way of the transgressor is hard, the robbers strip him and wound him, and leave him half dead. The cup of promised pleasure is dashed. A famine has overtaken him, a storm has arisen, and his soul now vainly yearns within him for the tender sympathy of loving brethren; and, like Esau, he seeks repentance, and a restoration of birthright blessings before despised and unappreciated.

“I die with hunger here, he cries,
I starve in foreign lands.”

The society, and the element into which the prodigal has fallen is a burning furnace, and a devouring flame to every true branch of the vine, when separated from the fellowship and communion of the saints of God.

We know that the heirs of immortality cannot be so separated from Christ, or from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, as to cease to be children of God and joint heirs with Christ; all that being secured in Christ, independent of their good or bad works. Our abiding in Christ as our Savior, our Surety, our Everlasting Father, and as our Advocate with the Father is secured beyond the possibility of a failure. But to abide in him as the “True Vine,” of which his Father is the Husbandman, is to abide in him as the embodiment of the true gospel church, in his laws, ordinances, order and communion. “And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us (I John 3:24).” “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love (John 15:10).” “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live.” For the child of God to abide in the flesh is to abide in death; “For the body is dead, because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness.”

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1866.

CONFLICTS IN THE CHURCH

On reading the admonitions contained in the communication published in this number from the pen of our esteemed brother E. Rittenhouse, a train of reflections have occupied our mind. Of the expediency of giving them wings, or sending them forth for the consideration of our brethren, we are not perfectly certain. But as we profess to hold no secrets on the things which pertain to, or concern, the church of the living God, we venture to expose some of them. And perhaps now, while the communication of brother Rittenhouse, whose equanimity is not so easily discomposed as that of some of us, will be under the consideration of our readers may be the most appropriate time for us to vent our views on the same subject. Although we wish not to detract from his views or to controvert them, we nevertheless feel disposed to present our own.

There may be divisions, disorders and offenses in some of our churches, of which we are not advised, notwithstanding our very widespread correspondence; and certainly our Lord has admonished us of the impossibility of their total absence, but he has added, Wo unto him by whom they come. In almost fifty years experience as a Baptist preacher, we have seldom if ever known a time in which no cases of trouble or division could be found in any churches of our connection; but we had flattered ourself that, considering the dire confusion of almost, if not quite every branch of anti-christ, and the unusually stormy aspect of the religious and political world, the Old School Baptist Church, throughout the States and territories of the American continent, are enjoying a greater degree of quietude and harmony than can be found in any other community on earth. It is not, however, to be denied nor can it be concealed, that in some localities there are painful trials in the churches, in which the ministers of the gospel, if true and faithful to their charge, are necessarily involved more or less. We are now, according to the firm conviction of many of our most sagacious and far-seeing brethren, on the verge of the fulfillment of some important and interesting predictions recorded in divine revelation, in the fulfillment of which some of the most astounding events this lower world has ever witnessed are to be developed. Preparatory to which, Jerusalem seems now to be subjected to a searching as with lighted candles, and many hypocrites and nominal professors are being scourged from our ranks. The “Reed like unto a rod,” so appropriately referred to by our brother R., is being applied with astonishing effect; and all that is not really embodied in the temple of the living God, or in the altar, or found by actual measurement among his true worshipers is being passed over to the Gentiles, or to the uncircumcised.

Now we fully agree with our beloved brother that a factious party spirit should not be allowed to exist among the disciples of Christ; they are commanded to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and to follow after the things which make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another. But, let us not forget that the peace which is to be sought and cherished is that which comes to us from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. A perfect submission to the doctrine and government of Christ, as the Head over all things to his church, will secure a permanent and valid peace among all the members of his body. Any peace obtained by compromising or sacrificing a particle of the truth, or departure from any of the laws of Christ will prove as deceptive and worthless as that cried by the false prophets when there was no peace. “There is no peace to the wicked, saith your God. For the wicked are like the troubled sea, which continually casts up mire and dirt.” Better we judge that there be parties, and that discordant elements, if found in our churches, be attracted to their appropriate centers, than that we work *wood, hay and stubble* into a building which is to be tried by a fiery ordeal.

We do not believe that our esteemed brother Rittenhouse would be less opposed than ourself to a peace that would require a sacrifice of truth and righteousness; but we were in fear that some of his remarks would be construed to censure some of our ministers for their uncompromising war upon error. As watchmen whom God has placed upon the walls of Jerusalem, they cannot too vigilantly watch the introduction of counterband doctrines or pernicious heresies which any may attempt to introduce into the church. Their charge is solemn; their responsibility is great. Let them beware!

Should an honest difference of opinion arise among brethren as to what is and what is not counterband, let the reed which is like unto a rod be applied, and let that which will not bear the strict measurement of the scriptures be at once given to the Gentiles.

A comparison of those ministers who have encountered trials and even divisions with those, if indeed any there be, who never have any trouble of the kind, may reflect as severely on those who do not as on those who do have trouble. Paul had considerable trouble at Antioch, at Galatian, and at Corinth, in battling disorder and error among the churches, but we do not read of as much with John and some other of the apostles. The writer of this article has held the pastoral care of churches forty-three years, and never has witnessed a division in the churches of his charge, or any parties formed in any of them, until within the last few months; but this long season of tranquillity has been ascribed to the goodness and grace of God, not to the peaceable proclivities of his disposition.

The Captain of our Salvation, in righteousness doth judge and make war, and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful; and at his command they fight the good fight, contend earnestly for the faith, and shall ultimately triumph through him.

But still, they shall not be crowned except they strive lawfully. No strife for the mastery, no outbursting of passion will bear the measurement of *the reed like unto a rod*, nor receive the approval of our King. We are commanded to “Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:17,18).” Now, it is of this kind of disturbers of the peace of Zion we understand our brother to speak. But great care should be taken lest in pulling up tares, we do not root up the wheat also; or when we censure the wrong, we do not implicate those who are right. Here the reed which is like unto a rod measures off to us the exact ground which we are to occupy in the warfare. Those who cause division, make or join parties, and occasion offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned under apostolic tuition, are to be avoided or given to the Gentiles; not retained in the temple, nor allowed at the altar. But those who observe this charge are by it required to *mark* and *avoid* the non-conformists. This, indeed, will make what is called parties; but the division will be such as will purge the church from unruly and vain-talkers and deceivers, and consolidate more closely those who conform to the measuring rod.

But while it is unquestionably true that in all former time, not excepting the days when the apostles were on the earth, those who have stood firmly on gospel ground and refused to countenance or wink at any departure from the faith and order of the house of God, have been reproached and reviled as troublesome and pestilent fellows, tight-laced, contentious, bigoted and captious, it is also true that the opposite extreme has been reached by those who are of the Diotrephes school. Neither the ministers nor churches of Christ, nor any of the members of the churches, are permitted to yield any part of the doctrine or order of the gospel, even though it were to avoid divisions, reproaches, persecution, imprisonment, stripes, or death itself; but let it be remembered that the *spirit* as well as the letter of the law of Christ is indispensable, and no conformity to the letter of the word or rule, in the absence of the spirit and temper of the gospel, will be approved of God. Even the truth may be held in

unrighteousness. The apostle exhorts us to “Speak the truth in love.” Not that the heralds of truth are to love everything; for they should eschew evil, hate iniquity, and expose the hidden things of dishonesty. They are called to fight against error, and to contend earnestly for the faith; but this must be done in and under the influence of the love of God, the love of the truth, and the love of the saints. “In meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth: and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

Brother R. enquires, “Will not the ministration of the gospel, faithfully ministered in its own spirit, bring saints together and restore peace?” Such will undoubtedly be the tendency, and if all the parties involved are governed by the word and spirit of the gospel, there must be harmony. But it is a lamentable truth, that even Christians are not always under the benign influence of the spirit of the gospel; they are sometimes led by the flesh, and while so led may and do resist the faithful application of the word, even when it is ministered in its own spirit.

The importance of Christians or churches being governed by the word and spirit in all things, but more especially in all things pertaining to the order of the house of God, cannot be too highly appreciated. “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God.” It is a fearful thing to fall under the discipline of a gospel church. “God is in the midst of her.” The King Eternal sits enthroned in Zion, and it were better that any one of her members should have a mill-stone hanged about his neck, and he be cast into the midst of the sea than that such an one should fall under the discipline of the church of God.

“The Son of David holds his throne,
And sits in judgment there.”

We agree with what we understand brother Rittenhouse to mean, that a wholesale exclusion of members, when the laws of Christ and the spirit of the gospel do not direct such expulsion, is an outrage on the order of the church of God, and such exclusions are not valid. But such exclusions seldom, if ever, occur in the church of Christ, however frequent they may occur in communities claiming the name. But, unless our own observation has been at fault, we have witnessed the opposite extreme run into by a class of members who have seemed almost totally indifferent in regard to the authority of Christ in his church. Such have seemed never to have recognized the church as the Judgment Seat of Christ, or as holding any authority to sit in judgment over them. They seem to regard their membership only as a matter of convenience, to be repudiated whenever their inclination is crossed. We have been greatly pained to witness instances, especially during the last few years, in which members have regarded their allegiance to human governments much more sacred than their obligation to be in subjection to the laws of Christ, which govern the church. They will brand as a traitor, and consign to the gallows, one whom they denounce as disloyal to a human government and a seceder from a humanly organized compact, and yet bid defiance to the kingdom of Christ, in the execution of the laws of the King of Glory. In our understanding of this subject, when any, whether few or many, defy the authority of the church, refuse submission to the laws of Christ, and assume a defiant attitude to the church, that church ceases to bear the peculiar marks of a church of God if she fails to withdraw her fellowship from them. Let it not be said to such that their exclusion is not valid. What is bound on earth by the laws of Christ, as expounded to the church by the enthroned apostles, is also bound in heaven. We hold that the laws of men, so far as they do not conflict with the laws of Christ, are binding upon all who live under them; but the laws of Christ, who is the “Only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords,” are of infinitely higher importance. He that despised even “Moses’ law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment,

suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, whereby he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the spirit of grace?”

The solemn warning of the apostle Peter, in his second Epistle and second chapter, should be carefully read by those who may regard it as a small matter to forfeit the fellowship of the church of God; or a light thing to “despise government,” and speak evil of dignitaries, being self-willed. Such as have “forsaken the right way, and have gone astray following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness (II Peter 2:15).” “For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire (II Peter 2:18-22).”

Churches standing on apostolic ground are not responsible for the apostasy of those who leave her communion, disregard their order, or defy their authority. Better for all such to go out than that one particle of the laws and ordinances of the house of God should be violated. If the grace of God in their hearts, and the love of the truth as it is in Jesus, have not sufficient attraction to keep them within the gates of Zion, no unscriptural inducements should be employed. Being duly warned and admonished by the church, if still defiant and incorrigible, the law of Christ demands that they should be put away.

Nor are the ministers of Christ to be held responsible for the existence of divisions, disorders, or parties, provided he has faithfully ministered the word in its letter and in its spirit; for the faithful ministration of the word is designed to discriminate between truth and error, between the precious and the vile, between those who love and fear the Lord, and those who love and fear him not.

If a church becomes corrupted so that the faithful labors of her pastor are unavailing, he may be justified in going where his ministry promises to be more useful. Or if, in the honest judgment of a church, a pastor’s gifts have ceased to edify the church, or if his continuance is the cause of the disturbance, and his removal would secure a better state of harmony and gospel order, it is clearly expedient that he should go to some other field of labor. Indeed, we have been solemnly impressed that there are many excellent and able ministers, whose itinerant labors have been greatly blessed to the edification and comfort of the saints, who seem totally destitute of pastoral gifts. Comparatively few of the primitive ministers of Christ were settled pastors or bishops.

But we cannot regard it as a mark of a good minister of Christ if, when the pastor sees the wolf coming, he shall leave the flock exposed to his ravages and flee away. May the God of our salvation give us wisdom and prudence in applying the “reed which is like unto a rod,” that in ruling out of the temple that which is given to the Gentiles, we reject not that which the rule approves, nor retain that which it condemns; and “see that ye hurt not the oil and the wine.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1866.

THE CHERUBIM AND THE MERCY SEAT

Mr. Beebe: Please give your views of the Cherubim and the Mercy Seat, as set forth in Exodus 25. What do they represent or teach? Your compliance with this request will oblige.

Hannah Miller.

Penn Yan, N.Y.

December 28, 1865.

Reply: That the tabernacle, the ark, and all thereunto pertaining were designed to typify the spiritual things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are more clearly elucidated in the gospel of the Son of God, we presume will not be controverted or doubted by those who know and love the truth. But it is not always our privilege to comprehend their exact signification and application to the things which they are designed to represent. The Cherubim, and the Mercy Seat were very essential parts of, or accompaniments to, the Ark of the Testimony which is described in this chapter, and the ark would be incomplete without them. There is a divine beauty in the subject far beyond what we can express. The inspired apostle speaks of the figures of the old dispensation as patterns of the things in heaven. That is, as patterns of the things which are found in the spiritual Jerusalem, the gospel church. Some thing must therefore be found in the gospel church answering to the figurative import of every Old Testament figure.

The tabernacle, which God commanded Moses to make, was a portable building, or tent, designed to contain the ark, and the holy or consecrated furniture which he commanded to be placed within its curtains. A more solemn charge was given to Moses, to “Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount (Exodus 25:40).” It was designed for a sanctuary in which God would commune with Israel through their high priest. We will not now stop to comment upon the tabernacle; but devote this article more particularly to the inquiries made concerning the Cherubim and the Mercy Seat. The subject of inquiry is thus stated in the chapter referred to. “And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel (Exodus 25:17-22).”

In following the order of our subject, the mercy seat should first be considered and then the cherubim which surmount the mercy seat.

First, The Mercy Seat. How significant and imposing the name! There were no provisions of mercy found in the law of commandments. Justice with an even hand brandished a flaming sword, and “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy.” But in the new Covenant mercy has prepared her seat. “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more (Hebrews 8:12).” “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Psalm 85:10).” This seat and center of the mercy of God is the only place where Righteousness and Peace can embrace each other and establish everlasting peace in righteousness or without

infringing the stern demands of divine Justice. It could not be done on any other seat or basis than that of the atonement made for the transgressions of the people of God by our Lord Jesus Christ. For him, and all his members, in view of his perfect work, God has said, “Mercy shall be built up forever.” “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven (Psalm 89:1,28,29).” That the mercy seat in our text is designed to represent the atonement seems clear to us from the following considerations, viz.:

1. The ark of the testimony which it was to cover (and in which the testimony was held) with the rod of the priesthood, the golden pot of manna, etc., is evidently applied to the gospel church (Hebrews 9). This ark though made of wood, which was chosen and ordained of God for the purpose, was overlaid within and without with pure gold, and thereby rendered imperishable, and beautiful. And in no other place is the testimony of God’s truth preserved inviolate. No where else can the delicious gospel manna on which God’s spiritual Israel are fed be found, but in the gospel church, and it is only there the fruitful rod of the priesthood is kept. The ark was definite in its exact measurement; two cubits and a half long, and one cubit and a half broad. The mercy seat in measurement exactly corresponding shows the atonement for the church, ample, but without superfluence. The mercy seat as exactly covered the ark as does the atonement of Christ cover the church.

2. The mercy seat was required to be made of pure gold. Gold is emblematic of righteousness, and the atonement to answer the design contemplated required to be immaculately pure, and in all respects perfect. The atonements under the ceremonial law, by the blood of bulls, goats, and other victims, could make nothing perfect. The church is “redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” Could the divine law have found the smallest particle of alloy, dross or defection in Christ or in his propitiatory work, then would his work have failed to secure the salvation of his people. But as the pure gold will pass the fiery ordeal of the crucible, without loss, so the glorious High Priest of our profession was able to endure the scrutiny of the omniscient eye, was justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.

3. The atonement answers to the figurative import of the mercy seat, as showing the “new and living way” of our access unto God, which is consecrated for us through the veil, which is his flesh. Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, and the God of glory “laid on him the iniquities of us all,” of all the seed of Abraham, for, “if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” Here upon the basis of his perfect atonement the seat of reconciliation, acceptance, and communion is established through our High Priest. “And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark.” The atonement of Christ cannot fail of being applied to the church of Christ. It is the covering for the church, when God communes with her through her most holy Mediator, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. It is above the church, and what they never could have attained in any other way, but it is a perfect covering, and a safe protection. “And there will I meet with thee, and commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.” It is by the atonement that the saints are dead unto the old Sinai Covenant, and married to him that is risen from the dead. Hence through, or by virtue of, the atonement they are brought under law to Christ, instead of Moses, and on this mercy seat communion with God is secured through our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his Spirit his law is written in our hearts, and recorded in our mind.

4. It is the pure gold of the atonement that overlays the ark, or church, within and without. Her internal joy, peace, love, fellowship, devotion, and worship is by an application of Christ and his atonement to his church and people. On no other basis could we approach unto God. His terror would make us afraid, and his frowning justice would stop our mouths, but for the atonement which completely shields and covers us; but in this atonement we come boldly to the throne to ask for mercy and find grace to help us in every time of need. But our limits admonish us that we must pass to the other general division of our subject.

Second. The two cherubim. The name *Cherubim* is the plural of *Cherub*. When but one, it is called cherub, and if two or more they are called cherubim, which signifies an angel, or angels, but all angels are not designated cherub or cherubim. The word *angel* has a variety of applications in the scriptures. Sometimes it is applied to God's messengers who are sent to preach his gospel. Sometimes it applies to the spirit of a man, and sometimes to the spiritual life of Christians which always behold the face of God; sometimes it is used to signify those heavenly intelligences in glory, such as bore the message of the incarnation to the shepherds in Jewry. There are also several other applications found in the scriptures. But Cherubim and Seraphim express to us those mediums through which the presence of God, in some of his perfections, is set forth; as the *angel of his presence* which saved his people in all their afflictions.

The two cherubim which stand upon the mercy seat, we have thought were intended to represent to us the two testaments.

I. Their position: the Old and New Testaments, or covenants, and all revelation of God to men are based upon the great purpose of salvation by grace which centers in the atonement, as the cherubim of our text are in the mercy seat. So stand the two testaments. The first testament takes its position as early as the application of the atoning blood and justifying righteousness was made effectual in the salvation of Abel and Enoch. Its wings are extended forward signifying in all the prophets and typifying in all the ritual of the law the coming of the Messiah, his sufferings and the glory that should follow. As early as the time when man was driven out of paradise, the cherubim, and the flaming sword were placed to keep the way of the tree of life, and prevent Arminians from helping themselves to the fruits of that tree. The word of God communicated through the law, like a flaming sword, turned every way, intercepting all human agencies in their futile efforts to procure life and immortality independent of that atonement or mercy seat which their wings covered. There they are still found meeting the workmongrel tribes of the earth at every point, with the declaration. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins, no mercy seat, no atonement, no salvation in any other name or way.

II. The angel of the divine presence was in his holy law, but so far as his church was concerned, it stood as a cherub on the end of the mercy seat, testifying of Christ, and by all its types, shadows and predictions testifying that he should come as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of God.

III. The wings of this cherub were lifted over the mercy seat, or atonement, and from the one end of the mercy seat extending to its center, even as the law and the prophets were until John; but they could extend no farther, for here at the center were they to meet the wings of the other cherub.

IV. Their faces were made to look one to another. The law demanding, the gospel canceling all its demands. The one predicting, the other responding, so they faced each other, and saw eye to eye in the day of atonement, when God brought again Zion. The law and the gospel face each other and meet harmoniously in the priesthood which intervenes.

V. Their faces, while they were looking to each other, were at the same time both looking to the redemption which is by the atonement. All that the law demanded concerning the church, it looked to Christ, in the gospel, to perform. While the Gospel cherub from the other extremity of the church, or mercy seat, looked into the face of the Old Testament for the pattern of the things in heaven, so that all that was written in the law and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Christ should be fulfilled. All the jots and tittles of the one were promptly met and paid by the other.

VI. The New Testament with wings uplifted from the center of the mercy seat to its termination in the full complete and everlasting salvation of the church of God, meets the wings of the other cherub at the center of the mercy seat. The law and the prophets were until John; since that period the gospel is preached. Thus both cherubim met and centered in Christ our High Priest, whose advent was between them, yet covered by their wings.

VII. Between these two cherubim the God of glory sent his Son into the world. The Word was made flesh, and came, as in the volume of the book it was written of him, to occupy this gracious mercy seat. After the order of Melchisedec, as Priest unto the Most High God, the King of Righteousness, he put his priestly garments on. Between the two dispensations his priestly offering was made, when he offered himself without spot unto God. True to his word, the Eternal Godhead bowed his heavens and came down, and at the center of the mercy seat met the Great High Priest of his spiritual Israel between the cherubim and was manifest in the flesh. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," Christ was in the Father, and the Father was in Christ. Heaven and earth were brought together. Justice from the utmost throne of heaven was there, and smiling mercy was prepared to greet, embrace and kiss that Justice whose stern demands were inexorable; but at the mercy seat completely liquidated. And at the mercy seat Justice as fully demands the salvation of all for whom this mercy seat is a covering, as it demands the execution of the sentence of the law on all whose sins are not covered, and whose transgressions are not removed. Here at the mercy seat, where righteousness and peace have kissed each other, God has established his dwelling, and the inspired psalmist prays in the spirit, "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us. Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved (Psalm 80:1-3)."

Again the holy psalmist testifieth of the power and majesty of God, and of his infinite condescension. "He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies (Psalm 18:9-11)." Observe his wonderful advent to our world. Upon the Old Testament cherub was he borne; his descent from heaven was predicted by all the prophets, and witnessed by the law. On the wings of the wind (an emblem of his Spirit which was in his word) he did fly. "Who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky (Deuteronomy 33:26)." Yet in the darkness of the legal dispensation, he fixed his secret place, and around about him and his pavilion were dark waters and thick darkness. But at the brightness that was before him, beaming with inexpressible radiance in the face of Jesus Christ, the dark, dreary, portending darkness of Sinai passed, amidst the tempest of hail stones and coals of fire which spent their utmost fury upon his dear Son. Then were the channels of waters seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered; at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils, "He sent from above and took me, he drew me out of many waters (Psalm 18:16)."

In conclusion, for we must close this article, if we are right in regard to the figurative import of the ark, the mercy seat, and the cherubim; may the sound of their wings be heard by all the people of God, as in

Ezekiel's vision, "And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh (Ezekiel 10:5)." If we are right in our application of the cherubim's wings, they mean the testimony of the scriptures, in which the voice of the Almighty God is uttered. May it be ours to hearken to the things which are spoken in the scriptures, and sheltered under these wings of the cherubim, having a "Thus saith the Lord" for our protection, we may sit securely and hurl defiance to all the enemies of God and truth.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1866.

ROMANS 5:12,18,19

Elder Beebe: I have been a reader of your paper for the last few years, and am pleased with them. I would like to have your views on Romans 5:12,18, and 19. By giving them you will oblige,

Yours, respectfully,
John W. Ferguson.
Milton Ia.
March 4, 1866.

Reply: The scriptures referred to read thus: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Therefore as by the offence 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. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Romans 5:18-19)."

These scriptures have often been so perverted by those who neither know nor love the truth as to perplex the minds of some of the children of God. Universalists and Arminians exultantly repeat them, as insuperable obstacles in the way of establishing the doctrine of election and sovereign grace, and scoffing skeptics and infidels use them to prove a want of harmony in the testimony of the Bible. It would seem unaccountably strange to find Paul, in these passages of his testimony, laboring to prove that what he had, in the eighth and ninth chapters of this same epistle, and in his epistle to the Ephesians, first and second chapters, positively asserted, was not true; but such would be the case if these scriptures were justly liable to the constructions which the Arminians are anxious to establish. To prove their unscriptural dogma of general provision and offered salvation, they blindly seize these passages without observing that they are as fatal to their cherished heresy as are all other portions of the word. If the words *all*, and *all men*, in these passages, are to have the universal application they are so eager to establish, they would prove quite too much for their purpose. Instead of leaving the matter of justification to be brought about by the will and works of men, it would establish the justification and salvation of all mankind quite as independently of the volition, instrumentalities and works of men, as does that doctrine of the Bible which they desire to refute. And if Universalist can satisfy their own minds, and even succeed in perplexing the minds of others in regard to the true import of these scriptures, their delusions would not change the truth, nor better their condition. It could make them neither wiser nor safer, while to those who know the truth it would give fearful evidence that these

perverters of the word were among those to whom God has sent strong delusion that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.

In replying to our correspondent, who asked for our views on these passages, whether we can clearly, truly and fully elucidate them or not will not alter their true import and scriptural meaning; therefore our views will give no just ground of assurance or comfort to those who live in darkness and unbelief. As a safe maxim for us to adopt and observe, we should accept as true that the scriptures being inspired by the Holy Ghost, must be in perfect harmony whether we can understand them or not. Any interpretation therefore which conflicts with other portions of the whole volume of the divine testimony must be wrong; and if we can persuade ourselves to believe such interpretations, it only shows that we are permitted to believe a lie.

In the discussion of our subjects, and in giving our views on the passages proposed, it will be necessary to observe the grand theme of our apostle in the whole connection; that he is stating and demonstrating the doctrine of the redemption, and free, full, and everlasting justification of all the people of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and not by the good works which are or were found in them who are justified. (See Chapter 3:24.) And of this justification he says that he whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, that he, and not ourselves, is the justifier. That he, in his righteousness, as declared by the apostle, is just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus, and in such a way as to effectually exclude boasting; “not by the law of works, but by the law of faith.” And summing up, he draws the conclusion “that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.”

In illustrating this doctrine of justification by the faith of the Son of God, the apostle brings to view the two distinct headships of the natural and the spiritual creations. The one is a natural, the other a spiritual man. The first is of the earth earthy, and the head and embodiment of all his posterity as such; the second Adam, he says in I Corinthians 15, is the Lord from heaven. The one was made a living soul, and the natural progenitor of all living souls as his natural descendants. The other is a “Quickening Spirit,” and the life and immortality of all who are born of God. In the same chapter, which contains the passages under consideration, and inseparably connected with our subject, he says that Adam is the figure of him that was to come; and in pointing out the analogy disparity and of the figure to that which it represents, has employed the passages on which our views are required. Observe, when the term *man* is applied to Christ, except when applied to his incarnation, it is in speaking of his Mediatorial character as the Man, Christ Jesus; the Man which is the fellow of the Lord of Hosts, and is designed to identify the Head, body, and all the members of the church of God. It is in this mediatorial sense that he is called the “Second Adam,” for in his eternal Godhead, he is the Lord from heaven, in which character he can be resembled by no figure, for nothing in earth or heaven can or may be compared to him. Then as the Second Adam, there are points of analogy to which the apostle calls our attention, and at the same time carefully instructing us of those points of disparity wherein the figure is not applicable.

In the creation of man, God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” God is represented by no image but by him alone who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Christ is the only image of the invisible God; and the making of Adam in “our image” was the making him the type of Christ, who is that image; and Paul, as we have seen, sets that matter at rest by declaring in our context that he “is the image of him that was to come;” and Christ is him that was to come. Adam was not like the invisible God, in infinity, self-existence, independence, spirituality or

immutability, but he was clearly a type of Christ as the progenitive or seminal head of a progeny and the embodiment of a race, and in many other particulars which we will not now trace.

As the seminal head and progenitor of mankind, all the tribes of the earth were created in him, and were all embodied in him when he offended. He comprehended all the race of human beings which were created in him, and he was personally the whole human race before any of his sons or daughters were developed. Thus Adam and all his born or unborn seed or members are called *man*, and are embodied in the *one man*. It was thus, as a unit, the offence of *one man* was committed by us. “Wherefore, as by one man (embracing all his posterity), sin entered into the world; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” This declaration was made some four thousand years after the offence was committed, and all that had been born in that time had sinned; and all who have been born since this declaration was written by Paul, and all who are yet unborn, sinned. It takes them all to make this one man. They are this identical one *man*, by whom the offence was committed. And so *death passed* upon all men; for that all *have* sinned. Those who are yet to be born *have* sinned. So death passed. When God said to Adam, he said to us in Adam, and to us *as* Adam, “Dust *thou* art, and unto dust *thou* shalt return.” Death, in its irrevocable sentence then and there passed on all the kindreds of the earth. The dreadful reality *is* upon us. Our belief or disbelief cannot alter the fact. We cannot parley or argue to the contrary with death. From the decree by which death has passed on us, there is no available appeal. Passing now from the consideration of the twelfth, we come to the eighteenth and nineteenth verses:

“Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation,” or death passed; for that was the judgment which came to condemnation in this case. “Even so,” or “*exactly* so.” After this similitude, according to the true import of this figure, “by the righteousness of one,” which one, he says in verse 17 is Christ, “the free gift (not offer or sale) came upon all men unto justification of life.” Now, how must this be, to have the thing pre-figured agree precisely with its figure? Why it seems to us more difficult to pervert than to understand that as all the human family were in Adam, and were Adam, in committing the offence, and receiving the judgment or sentence of death, so all the spiritual family in heaven and earth were in the second, spiritual and anti-typical Adam, when he performed that righteousness of obedience by which the free gift came upon them all, unto justification of life. The grounds of relationship and identity by which Christ and his members are vitally and legally connected are two-fold. First, as their spiritual Progenitor, they have and do exist in him, as the human family existed and do still exist in the earthy Adam, and have so existed in him as long as he has held the Mediatorial office, which we understand to be from everlasting, or ever the earth was. And secondly, in his having assumed their nature and law place, by taking on him the seed of Abraham; being made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

I. As the “Second Adam,” and the “Lord from heaven,” his church existed in him from the beginning, just as Adam’s wife and posterity existed in him from his beginning. Hence, we read that “God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” “For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” “Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.” The vitality of this relationship is that eternal life which John says was with the Father, and was manifested. Jesus says, “I give unto them (his sheep) eternal life, and they shall never perish.” This imperishable and eternal life “is the gift of God, through our Lord Jesus

Christ.” “And this is the record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” And his Son is eternal life. “He is the way, and the truth, and the life.” He is the “Resurrection and the life.” “He that hath the Son of God hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” This life is manifested by a new and spiritual birth. Christ is the spiritual progenitor of all his members, as the earthly Adam was the natural progenitor of his posterity. But no progenitor can develop life that is not in him. Our very existence in the flesh proves that God gave us natural life in the natural Adam. And our possession of spiritual life demonstrates that God gave us spiritual life in Christ before the world began. By virtue of this, we are in due time “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” As this eternal life cannot be separated from Christ, it is hid with him in God, and Christ liveth in us. Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God; “a chosen generation;” “a seed that shall serve him, and that shall be counted to the Lord for a generation.” As in the book of the generations of Adam, God called *their name* Adam in the day when they were created (see Genesis 5:2). So, “in the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, all his members are written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them (Matthew 1:1).” When none of them had been brought into manifestation, and when none but the omniscient eye of God could see them (See Psalm 139:15,16). And as all the natural seed of the first Adam constitute but the body and fullness of the man Adam, so all the seed of Christ are but the fullness of Christ’s body. For God “hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:22,23).”

II. As the law which Christ’s members had transgressed, and from which they required to be redeemed was given them in their earthly or Adamic standing; to redeem them required that Christ should be made flesh and dwell among them; that he should come under the same law. Hence we are informed that “He was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law.” In doing this, we read, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:14,15).” In this chapter the first Adam is referred to as the type or figure of him that was to come. We see not all things put under the earthly Adam, “But we see Jesus, who was made (in his incarnation) a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Here again cavilers harp upon the words *every man*, as in our text, they play upon the words *all men*. But every man of whom? He is here brought to view as the second Adam, representing his own chosen generation and royal priesthood; not representing all the seed of the first Adam. He is the captain of the salvation of every man that is saved by him. But there can be no captain of the salvation of such as are not saved. A captain always represents a definite company, and when he says every man, it is understood every man of his company or command; but not every man in the world. Besides, these are more clearly and unmistakably designated as being one with him by whom they are sanctified, and his sufferings were to bring *sons*, not aliens, to glory. He took part of that same flesh and blood which his children were partakers of, and to deliver them. Instead of taking on him the seed of the first Adam, he took on him the seed of Abraham, which is comparatively a small part of the seed of Adam; but it embraces as many as the Father has given him; and he has given his word that they shall all come unto him, and he will raise them up again at the last day. And as their

captain, he will bring them all to glory. “For he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” And who are they? Not the children of the flesh; these are the children of God. But, “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Who, then are Christ’s? As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Who, then, have the spirit of Christ? Only they who are born of the Spirit; for, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Well, Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, as thus defined, them that were his; his sons, his seed, his sanctified or set apart, his members, his body, over which he presides as the head in all things; those for whom he, by the grace of God, has tasted death, and whom, being made perfect through sufferings, he will bring to glory.

“Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” All being in him, all are guilty, for judgment cannot righteously pass to the condemnation of the innocent, therefore the passage of this judgment from the infallibly just and holy Judge is proof sufficient of their guilt, and the certainty that all die is positive proof that all have sinned. “Even so, by the righteousness of one”, (or as the margin reads) “by one righteousness, the free gift came upon all men.” That is all his seed, all whom he had taken upon him; all whose iniquities were laid upon him. As Adam, by the offence, plunged head and body, all his seed or members, into condemnation and death, even so Christ, identified with all his body, seed, or members, which he took on him, and of whom he was the progenitor, high priest, captain of salvation, has raised up, and through him as their living head the free gift, which is eternal life has come to justification of life; for, “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,” even as the wages of sin is death, through our earthly head. “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” As a unit, Adam and all his posterity, by a single offence, were made sinners, guilty and subject to the judgment of condemnation and death, so as a unit, Christ and all his posterity or seed, by his righteous obedience, were made righteous. His blood cleansed them from guilt, took away their sins; for he was delivered for their offences, and was raised for their justification.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1866.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

Much Esteemed Brother Beebe: I once more drop you a few lines. We have passed through hard times, and troublesome times, and dangerous times, in this country, but through the mercies of an all wise Creator and Benefactor, we are yet alive, and among the living, and peace is now measurably restored, and we put our trust in him who said, “I am the Resurrection and the life.” If you will not think me troublesome, I would like to ask a few questions as you are an old man, and have been acquainted with Baptists and Baptist usages for a long time. Did they receive members in the church when there was no fellowship in the church, or did they go to and try to restore fellowship? The United Baptists have laid aside the call for fellowship, but the regulars still call

for fellowship here; and if broken, they try to restore it, and then travel on, when the cloud is taken up, or removed; but while the cloud of disunion or non-fellowship hangs lowering over us, we do not travel. If the Regular or Old School Baptists have done away with the rule of calling for fellowship, how long since? I learned from an old member of Double Spring Church it was done away there in that church in 1827 or 28, about the time the split took place, when nearly all went off with the Missionary movement. If it is not too much trouble, or too impertinent, please answer through the "Signs of the Times" and also which do you look on as the door in to the visible church, fellowship or baptism? I will not ask any more at present, lest it keep out more interesting matter.

Yours in Christian love,
Charles Hunsaker.
Oakpoint, Missouri.
April 15, 1866.

Reply to enquiries of brother Hunsaker: We are not sure that we fully comprehend the questions proposed by our brother, in all their bearings, but we feel bound to the extent of our ability, which is limited, to give such views as we have on any and all subjects relating to the faith, order, ordinances and discipline of the church of Christ, whenever called on to do so. In regard to fellowship, we hold,

First, that gospel fellowship cannot exist out of the church of God. Other religious bodies may call themselves churches as those blasphemers of whom John wrote in Revelation 2:9, and Revelation 3:8, calling themselves Jews, who were not, but did lie, for they are the synagogue of Satan, but their profession without gospel fellowship does not make them a gospel church. As no confederacy of persons can be a church of God but those who are born of God, and called in one hope of their calling, having one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all, so neither can the church of Christ be recognized as such where the unity of the Spirit is not kept in the bond of peace. In the organization of the gospel church at Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, all the constituent members gladly received, and steadfastly continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. They were of one heart and one mind. Laying all that they were, and all they possessed at the apostles' feet, calling nought that they possessed their own, they fully submitted themselves to be governed entirely, and in all things, by the rules laid down by the inspired and enthroned apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. All who can now be recognized as members of the church of God must hold themselves and all they possess subject to the instructions, orders and decisions of the same apostles, all of which will be found written in the New Testament.

Second, in the reception of members, the church should be in union, love and fellowship, without which they have no right to claim to be the church of the First Born, for how can any but the church receive members into the church? The various branches of anti-christ, who imitate the gospel mode of baptism, but who are not embraced in the fellowship of the gospel church, cannot receive members for her, nor administer ordinances which the church can consider valid; for how can they baptize or receive members into our fellowship, who are not themselves in our fellowship?

Third, in the reception of members, there are three particulars in which fellowship should be considered:

A. The general fellowship existing in the church, by which she must be identified as such. The fellowship being with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and this characteristic fellowship can only be manifested by a steadfast continuance in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. There may be disorderly and unruly members connected, if their disorder and disregard for gospel rule be not

approved by the church, without disqualifying her for the discharge of her duties; her travel is indispensable in the execution of the order of the house of God. She is not at liberty to stop her travel, because there are refractory members, under process of discipline, and she is not therefore disqualified from receiving members to her communion.

B. The unanimity of the church in regard to the reception of members has always, so far as we are advised, been considered indispensable in our Old School Baptist churches. Still should the church generally feel satisfied, and one or more should object, the church should carefully investigate the objection and decide whether it be right or wrong, and the objector in such case should submit to the judgment of the church in that case.

C. The applicant for membership should give satisfactory evidence that he or she is in fellowship with the church, born again of the same Spirit, and led to rejoice in the same Christ, trust in the same finished salvation, feed upon the same spiritual food, and believing the same doctrine, an evidence of which is desiring to take the yoke of Christ, and willing and ready to give up all things else which are incompatible with the Christian walk, and be subject to all the laws, ordinances, rules and regulations of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. All who can bring these evidences will be most cordially received, however weak, trembling, or unworthy they may feel themselves to be.

We know of no Old School Baptist churches that have suspended or laid aside any rule which is laid down by the apostles; for should they do so, they would cease to be Old School Baptists. All the school recognized by them in religious matters is the school of Christ and his apostles. We know of no Old School churches who receive members without the unanimous agreement of all the members present.

If by the door into the visible church our brother means the public and formal recognition of persons uniting as visible members of the church, we regard baptism as the ordinance by which they are so made visible. We may, and do, gain a fellowship with those who give evidence that they are born of God and led by his Spirit, but we can have no unbaptized members in a visible Baptist church. As Jordan separated between the wilderness and Canaan, so Jordan, or gospel baptism, divides between the world and the anti-typical land of milk and honey to the spiritual Israelites now. Baptism without fellowship, however *visible*, can only fill up the church with nominal members, but fellowship for the persons who desire membership, as to their being subjects of grace and proper subjects for baptism, without baptism cannot make them visible members, nor gratify them for a seat at the Lord's table, nor for any other of the peculiar privileges of church members.

As to the order of usages of the so-called Missionary, Free Will, or United Baptists, we know but very little, and we care still less. The church of Christ is a unit, with the faith and practice, given by Christ, and expounded by his apostles.

We may have missed in our remarks the points on which our views were desired, but we have replied according to our understanding of them, and what we have written we submit to the consideration of brother Hunsaker, and our readers generally, with strong desire that they may be useful to some extent at least to some enquiring minds.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1866.

RELIABLE EVIDENCES

Perhaps there is no subject in which the feeble, fearful, trembling, tempted and doubting children of God feel a greater interest than to know what are the scriptural evidences of being in a quickened and regenerated state; as there can be no subject in which they feel so much concerned. One brother writes that he would be in despair if it were not for one bright spot in his life, alluding to the time when Christ was first revealed to him as his Savior, but recalling to mind his happy frame on that occasion, his hope is frequently revived. In reflecting on this remark, we have felt inclined to enquire, Can it be possible that the brother has never had but one reliable evidence in his long life, that he is a subject of saving grace? We know that it is very natural for us to revert to our first experience when doubts and fears assail our faith and hope in God. We do not object to this calling to mind God's former loving-kindness unto us as evidences of his saving grace. Jeremiah remembered the time of the wormwood and the gall from which God had graciously delivered him, and his hope was thereby revived. But is it right to overlook all other evidences and rely only on the first displays of God's love and mercy to us? To such exclusive reliance we object, because it under rates and overlooks the daily experience of the saints, which, although in many instances they may not be as vivid and satisfactory to us as the first, are equally important and reliable, and should therefore be as fully appreciated, not only for the comfort of the saints, but also for the praise of the glory of God.

Sometimes it tends to be a repudiation of all subsequent evidences as being less conclusive and reliable, or worthless. How many have hung down their heads despairingly, because their first experiences were not so distinctly marked as those of others of whom they have heard or read; and although they can keep even pace with others in every subsequent step of their religious travel, are all their lifetime in bondage, through fear that they have started wrong, and therefore all subsequent experience has been but a delusion.

It may be that the general practice of our churches in the examination of applicants for baptism and membership has been faulty in making the first experiences of the candidate far more important than other exercises. While we love to hear related the more wonderful displays of God's power and grace in bringing sinners to a knowledge of the truth, we should also listen very attentively to the "still small voice" which has whispered peace and salvation to the trembling ones. According to our own observation for more than fifty years in the church of Christ, those who have been the most fearful and trembling have proved the most watchful and prayerful among the followers of Christ. Some have made us doubt the genuineness of their evidences, by the extravagant marvelousness of what they have related, while others who could scarcely say they had a hope have showed such evident marks of the spirit of humility, self-abasement, and fear of being a disparagement to the church, that they have taken every step with the greatest fear and trembling, have given us the more satisfactory evidence of the work of grace wrought in their hearts by the finger of God. But we need not advert to observation, nor to feelings of satisfaction, for we have a more sure word of prophecy or instruction, to which we do well to take heed. The scriptures of truth do not leave us uninformed as to the heaven-stamped and sealed evidences of a quickened state. Let us examine some of them. The case of Philip and the Eunuch (Acts 8:26-39) is in point. Here is an application for the ordinance, and the great question, What doth hinder me to be baptized? is asked. The man of God, who was full of the Holy Ghost, is amply qualified to decide this matter, which concerns all others as well as the Eunuch. How does Philip settle this question? Whatever impediment might be in the way to hinder the Eunuch is still in the way of all others, and whatever qualifications entitled him to the privilege are equally applicable to all others who

possess them. Philip did not say, If you can distinctly call to mind your first religious exercises; if you saw the flaming gulf open to receive you; and all your sins were distinctly presented to your terror-stricken soul; if you were held in that distressing state a certain length of time; and can distinctly tell how you felt and what you thought during this time of bitter anguish of your soul; and if you know just when and where and how you were delivered, and how you felt at that time; and if you do not now feel too unworthy to be numbered with the saints. These are not the questions proposed, nor the prerequisites demanded. If they had been, it would have debarred thousands of the precious children of God from that holy ordinance, and perhaps the Eunuch himself would have been rejected. But observe; the only question was as to the then present state of the Eunuch, and not a question was asked in regard to his former exercises of mind. “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.” Shall any one now dare impose any other requisite than that which the Holy Ghost, through Philip, then required? That which applied to one equally applies to every subject of grace. But let it be remembered that the question implied more than a former profession of belief. It is not enough that the natural judgment or understanding should assent to the truth, for it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. This belief must come from the heart, not the head; for the law of Christ is written in the hearts of the children of God. A new heart is given them, for the old heart is destitute of the faith of the Son of God; and a new spirit is put within them, for their faith is the fruit of the Spirit; if, therefore, the candidate believes with all his heart, it is an infallible testimony that he has received this new heart, and a new Spirit is given him. Now, according to this example, we insist that the church and the administrator should be satisfied that the candidate has passed from death unto life – is born again, and has that full belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, which can only result from the faith of Jesus Christ dwelling in his heart.

There are many who without any change of heart, without any love to God, or knowledge of their own lost and helpless condition, with no saving knowledge of God, of Christ, or the way of salvation, may say, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and speaking after the manner of men, they do; that is, they have a traditional belief; knowing no reason why they should disbelieve what they have read or heard others say. But in the case of the Eunuch, there were strong circumstantial evidences that God had wrought this faith in his heart. His mind was directed to the scriptures; he is found reading the book of the prophet Isaiah; he is buried in deep thought; he is earnest to understand the scriptures. He has a thirst for a knowledge of him of whom the prophet wrote, and although a man of high standing, and in great authority, he had a child-like humility, and desired that some one of clearer understanding in divine things should guide him. The minister of Christ is gladly received into his chariot; he has a hearing ear, and an understanding heart, and as he hears of Jesus, as preached by Philip, in his heart receives the testimony, gladly receives the word, and most unwaveringly believes that this Jesus is the Son of God, of whom the prophet testified. Another evidence of his heavenly birth is given in his desire to take on him the yoke of Jesus, to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. Absorbed in thought as he heard of Jesus, and transported with new light upon the subject and theme of prophecy, and attentively listening to the preaching of Jesus by Philip though he was at that time, he did not pass the baptismal waters unnoticed. “See here is water!” Never before had water presented such attraction to his eyes. Wonder, ye heavens! what heavenly beauty his faith discovers in that water; the footprints of his Savior; the bright example for all his children are seen. Did water ever before seem so lovely? The Savior’s high command, “If ye love me, keep my commandments,” is applied with power. O what a joyful privilege it would be, he may have thought, if I were worthy to follow Jesus in that delightful ordinance! Nay, I cannot be denied, unworthy though I am. Thou man of God, “See here is water! What doth hinder me to be baptized?”

Indeed, we know of no authority in the scriptures for attaching more importance to past than to present evidences of our having passed from death unto life.

The apostle John says, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” Not because our first evidences were so clear, or strongly marked. Not because we have acted so well our part; not because our natures have become better than they were before, nor because we feel that we are now worthy of a place in the house of God, and communion with his saints; but simply because we love them, and desire to be with them.

And Paul says, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” The test is not laid on what is past; but what is present. If we are led by the Spirit of God, it will lead us to Jesus; to his work; to his laws; his ordinances; and to his people. It will make us feel that we are very, very unworthy of his favor, and to admire and gaze and wonder at the manner of love which God hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God.

Another present and reliable evidence that we are the children of God is that “God dealeth with us as with sons.” “If ye endure chastening,” then have ye the evidence. “But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.”

How many present evidences are found in the scriptures of our sonship, and heirship, as sons of God and heirs of glory; and who shall tell us that any one, or all of these are less reliable than the first that we ever received?

We would by no means depreciate or under-value the first evidences which were given us in our new birth; for without that birth we should be forever destitute of all the other evidences. But if we can not find in our first experience the extraordinary exercises that some others can, we are fully warranted in relying on those which our God has seen proper to give us. If because we cannot tell when, where, or under what circumstances we were born into the natural world, would we be reasonable in concluding that we never were born? The very fact that we are now alive is sufficient evidence that there was a time when we began to live. If today we love God, it is because he first loved us. And if we ever have loved him, the evidence is the same, for we could not possibly love him from any other cause.

There is one other evidence we will name, and that is, If we are involved in the Christian warfare, then have we the same evidence of a heavenly birth that Paul had. Until we were born of God, the whole current of our nature ran in one way; our element was sin; it was sweet to our taste, and we drank it like the ox drinketh water. There can be no war where there is but one party. In the Shulamite we see as it were the company of two armies. So in every Christian is seen two opposite determined hostile parties. The one is born of the flesh and is flesh; and he held his palace in peace, without opposition, until another party came to occupy the same house, or person. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. These are opposite one to the other; for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and so terribly does the battle sometimes rage that we cannot do the things we would. All who are born of God, but no others, will so long as they are here in the flesh find a law in their fleshly members warring against the law of their mind, which will at times bring them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. All the doubts and unbelief that ever assailed or troubled a Christian in regard to his interest in Christ arises from his fleshly nature. Doubts, fears and temptations, unbelief and despondent fears are the artillery of the flesh and of Satan, planted against the law of their mind; but however the faith of God’s people may be stormed, faith shall most assuredly triumph ultimately, for God giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dead fish will float down with the current; only the living fish will stem the tide. Those who never have any

conflict can never know the joys of victory. Those who have no temptations cannot appreciate deliverance. And those who have no clouds must live in a very dry pasture.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 15, 1866.

II CORINTHIANS 5:21

Brother Beebe: Will you please give your views on II Corinthians 5:21. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” I am aware that you have many such requests from brethren and sisters; but I am so situated that I have no preaching except that comes to me in the “Signs of the Times.” The “Signs,” with my Bible and hymn book supply all I receive. There are no Old School Baptists within fifty miles of me, that I know of. Elder T. H. Owen is the nearest, and I have not seen him for eighteen months.

Yours as ever,
B. Newkirk.
Yola County, California.
April 11, 1866.

Reply: The apostle in the connection of this text is treating upon the subject of the complete redemption of the people of God from the curse and dominion of the law, the guilt and punishment of sin, by the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. That all for whom Christ died were sinners against God, transgressors of his righteous law, and, by nature, children of wrath even as others, is fully demonstrated; for if they were not sinners, no expiation of sin would be required on their behalf. This apostle informs us in Romans 4:24,25, that Jesus, the Lord, was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. And in our context, verses 14 and 15, he says, “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”

Our views on this subject, which we believe are warranted by the scriptures, are that the immaculate Son of God, who was delivered for our offenses, was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. He was a Lamb without spot or blemish, who knew no sin in his nature, or in his works. Shining in all the brightness of his Father’s glory, he was the express image of the invisible God, and he was and is the Lord from heaven, and filled with all the fullness of the Eternal Godhead. All the infinite perfections of the eternal deity were embodied in him. He was one with the Father, and he was in the Father, and the Father was in him. In his eternal identity with the Father he knew no sin. His will was and is the will of the Father, and that will is the supreme standard of holiness, according to which God worketh all things. On his unsullied purity and absolute holiness all holy beings love to contemplate; angels adore, saints extol, and devils tremble before him. If he had known sin, as attaching impurity to himself, it must have disqualified him for the great work of our redemption.

“For he that could for sins atone,
Must have no blemish of his own.”

All the victims required to be slain under the ceremonial law, and indeed all that were offered from the foundation of the world, as typical of Christ our sacrifice, including that of Abel, were required to be without blemish, to show that we, the church of God, are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot or blemish, as set forth from the foundation of the world, pointing to that one offering wherein he through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, and by which he hath obtained eternal redemption for us.

This holy and spotless Lamb was made sin for us! How? By himself coming under that law of which he was the author and superior, and which his members in their Adamic nature had transgressed. “When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his own Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them (his members) that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” In thus coming under the law he took on him the seed of Abraham. “Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels,” (for angels were not in the nature of those to be redeemed, or to receive the adoption of children) “but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” That is, as explained by Paul to the Galatians, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” In taking on him this seed, he took on him all their transgressions. “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities (Isaiah 53:4-11).” Thus he was made sin, or, if we include the supplied words of our text, he was made to be sin for us. He was not made to sin, or to do that which was sinful; but in taking on him our nature, he took on him our infirmities; was made like unto his brethren (Hebrews 2:17).

Much has been said and written in modern times of the immaculate conception of the Messiah, as though his design had been only to take on him the seed of Abraham, and not their sins. But the very object or design was to bear the sins of his people in his own body. Imbodied in the seed of Abraham, which body was prepared for him, with that seed he stood identified, as its life, and he was recognized by the law and justice of God, as being responsible for their sins. Should a capital offense be committed by a man’s hand, would not the life of the body of which that hand is a member be held in law and justice for the offense? In the typical illustration of this sublime subject, the priest confessed the sins of Israel over the head of the scape goat, and it was said their sins were laid upon the head of the scape goat, and borne away. It is in this way we understand that Jesus was made sin for us. And he was made a curse for us, as it is written in the law, “Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree.” Mere substitution could not meet the demands of the law. To condemn and punish the innocent, or to justify the guilty, were alike forbidden by the law which Christ came to fulfill. Yet the head being identified

with its body may be held for the transgressions of the body. The right of Christ to redeem his people, as the one nearest of kin to them, and holding, by virtue of higher claim, a right of property in the seed of Abraham, before they were partakers of flesh and blood, and before they had sinned, rests on their spiritual existence in him, anterior to their becoming partakers of flesh and blood; but his qualifications to redeem them with his blood required that he should take part of the same flesh and blood in which they had offended, that he might be recognized as being under the same law by which they were condemned. Hence he was made flesh and dwelt among them. With them identified as the head with its body; the life of the body was prepared for him. He was made sin. See him whom the heavens adored arraigned before the bar of justice, now in the form of sinful flesh, with all the iniquities of all his members found on him, not merely by imputation, as some suppose, but by actual identity of head and body.

He has taken on him that body, that seed, and in that body crushed with the mighty weight of all the sins, which with the body he assumed, the law with unabating fury pours on him the wrath that was due to the sins which were laid on him. An arbitrary act of imputation could not suffice. He is made sin, or made to be sin, *for us*. For whom? For the seed of Abraham: for his body, his bride, his sheep, his seed, his members, and for them only. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:3-4).” But we pass to consider the great purpose or design of this wonderful condescension and unparalleled humiliation of the Son of God.

We are told in the sacred word that God sent his Son to redeem them that were under the law, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; to save his people from their sins; to redeem them unto God. But justification as well as redemption is contemplated in our text. Merely the putting away their sins would not secure to them the righteousness of God. It could only restore to them their original innocence in which they stood in Adam before sin entered. Hence to make the redeemed seed the righteousness of God himself required that the same relationship should exist between Christ and his members which we have found to be indispensable for their redemption.

Theological speculators talk of justification before God in a variety of ways. Some look for justification by the deeds of the law, or by the righteousness of their own works. But God has informed us that in that way no flesh shall be justified in his sight. As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Others speak of the righteousness which Christ wrought out by his active and passive obedience to the law. This was indispensable in our redemption from sin. “By the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous.” And so far as legal righteousness is considered, it is secured by the obedience which Christ has rendered to all the jots and tittles of the holy law. This legal righteousness redeems and saves us from wrath and condemnation, but does it qualify us for communion with God, for fellowship with the Spirit, and for an inheritance with the saints in light? Our text contemplates a higher order of righteousness than the mere satisfaction rendered to the law for our transgressions. “That we might be made the righteousness of God.” Much more than an acquittal from guilt and condemnation is required to bring us to God, and prepare us to stand before him in the perfection of his nature. God has told us by the mouth of Daniel that Christ should not only “finish transgression and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity,” but also “*bring in* everlasting righteousness.” To work out is one thing, but to bring in is quite another. Without the former, the latter would be impossible. It was indispensably necessary that Christ should redeem us from sin, and death and hell; but having so redeemed us, it is no less indispensable that we be made the righteousness of God, and partakers of the divine nature. We are therefore assured that Christ is of God “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness,

and sanctification, and redemption.” This is the name wherewith he shall be called, “The Lord our righteousness.” “For their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” So then as Christ was made to be sin for us, in the putting away of our sins, and as he was made sin by taking on him the seed of Abraham, so the seed of Abraham are made the righteousness of God in him who is the righteousness of God. Christ is our life, and he is the true God, and Eternal Life. We are in him, and he is in us, that all his members should be made perfect in one, that the world may know that God hath sent him, and that he hath loved us even as he hath loved him.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 1, 1866.

DEACONS AND DEACONS’ WIVES

Brother Beebe: Will you please give your views, through the “Signs” as to whether it is indispensable that a Deacon’s wife should be a member of the church with her husband, and oblige some

Enquiring Brethren,
Alabama.
May 27, 1866.

Reply: No rule given by the apostles for the faith, order, or practice of the church of God may be dispensed with. All their instructions are imperative, and should be so regarded and obeyed. The apostle in I Timothy 3, says, “A bishop must be the husband of one wife;” and of the deacons he also says, “Even so must their wives (the deacons’ wives) be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husband of one wife,” etc. This is about all the instruction we can find in the New Testament bearing on the subject of enquiry. The term, or word, *bishop*, clearly and beyond dispute signifies an overseer of the flock, the same as the pastors among us are held. Of those the apostle says, “A bishop *must be* the husband of one wife.” As polygamy was tolerated to some extent in Oriental countries in the apostles’ time, it is thought by some that the apostle only designed to restrict the bishop or deacon to one wife, or to prohibit their having more than one wife at the same time. But this seems to us hardly probably, as it would seem to imply that other members might have a plurality of wives, which we find most clearly forbidden by our Savior himself. (See Matthew 5:27,28; Mark 10:2-12; compared with Hebrews 12:4, and Romans 7:1-3.) To us it seems that, while every pastor or bishop is required to be the husband of one wife, who with his children and household are to be judiciously ruled by him; that the other ministers of the word were not so required, as Paul himself, and others were not included, for they were without wives. The same qualifications here stated seem to be equally required of the deacons. This we infer from the words, “Likewise (or in like manner) must the deacons be grave,” etc. “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own house well.” Such are the instructions and rules laid down. We have neither authority nor disposition to diminish one jot or tittle.

We are aware, however, that in many of the small churches such deacons cannot be found, and the propriety of appointing others, approximating the rule as nearly as possible, is to say the very least,

exceedingly doubtful. It seems to us better to wait until the Lord shall supply the church with members possessing these scriptural requisitions than to appoint others. Expediency is a very unsafe guide for us in matters relating to the kingdom of Christ. The propriety of attempting to organize churches when and where the proper gifts are not to be found is very questionable. Would it not be safer for the little clusters of brethren and sisters to retain their membership in the nearest churches of our order, even if somewhat remote, than to attempt to organize without the requisite organic members?

An organization is not indispensably essential to the communion, fellowship, edification and social worship of the twos and threes which may be gathered together in Christ's name for communion and social devotion. The ordinances of the gospel may be observed, baptism administered, and the supper received by those in churches in fellowship duly qualified and authorized by their respective churches to administer them to such groups of disciples who cannot attend with the organized churches.

A deacon possessing all the qualifications of gravity, honesty, veracity, obstinence, indifference to the wealth and honors of the world, will be still better prepared to fill the office, having a wife of the character required. They are to occupy a position in the church accessible to all the members who may wish for counsel, and if the deacon be the husband of a wife who is also a believer, and equally interested in the welfare of the saints, it will greatly promote his usefulness as an adviser and counselor in the church.

If the seven men which were set apart to attend to the widows in the primitive church were, as is generally believed, deacons, their calling was to relieve the administrators of the word from any cares or burdens which embarrassed them in the preaching of the word. In such a calling a wide field of labor is assigned them. The widows, and all who require aid from the church are to be sought out, and their temporal circumstances ascertained, and suitable appropriations made at the expense of the church, for their relief. In visiting and enquiring of the conditions of the widows, a deacon who has a wife of the right disposition and piety would greatly aid him in his duties. There seems to us to be sufficient apparent reasons why a deacon should be a married man, and that his wife be a discreet and spiritually minded believer. Her faithful labors with the sisters in the church, as well as making provisions for the relief of the ministry, looking after all the temporal affairs of the church, are scarcely less important than his. Those are greatly mistaken who suppose that the deacon's work is only to wait on the table at the administration of the Lord's Supper, for we have no special direction given that they should officiate at the Lord's table more than in attention to the tables of the poor of the churches.

Of course we give what we have written only as some of our own views on the subject of enquiry. So far as we know, the order of all our churches is not entirely uniform on the subject, and we only submit the suggestions embodied in this article to the consideration of our churches, and more especially in reply to some Enquiring Brethren.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1866.



ACTS 17:30

Brother F. A. Chick, of Maine, has desired us to give our views through the “Signs” on Acts 17:30. “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.”

Reply: In reading this text and its immediate connection, we are sensibly impressed with the striking analogy which the circumstances here presented bear to the time, place and circumstances occupied at the present day by those few who contend for the truth, and against the superstition and idolatry of the present hour in our own country and throughout the world.

Paul was a stranger and sojourner at Athens, waiting the arrival of Silas and Timothy. Driven by persecution, he came to Athens, and found that whole city was given to idolatry, and his spirit was stirred in him, and he disputed with the Jews and in the market daily with them that came to him. God’s ministers and witnesses are now strangers and pilgrims in the world, driven about at this time by persecution, and shocked at the abominable idolatry which they encounter at every hand. Their testimony, like that of Paul, is in direct contradiction of that which is popular, involving them continually in disputation with legalists and idolaters. The doctrine of God our Savior, as preached then by Paul, was new and strange to that people: and their curiosity was excited, and they brought him to Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is? For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or hear some new thing. Perhaps from that to the present time there has never been a greater disposition manifested in the religious circles for telling and hearing new things: but with all their relish for new things, the gospel which was both new and strange to their ears, had no attraction for them, as the sequel will show. None can deny that in the present time in which the invention of human ingenuity has been upon the rack to forge new theories of divinity and new machinery for what they profanely call evangelizing the world, while everything of human invention has its admirers and advocates; the simple truth as it is in Jesus is today about as unpopular in the world as it was in Paul’s time at Athens.

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ Hill. Let us notice and compare his stand-point with that of the servants of God who preach the same doctrine which Paul preached then. *Mars*, in pagan mythology, was the imaginary god of war, which was worshipped and relied upon to give success to human butchery, and Mars’ Hill was an eminence probably which was so named and consecrated in honor of that idol. Among the thousands of heathen deities to whom they had built altars and offered sacrifices, none seemed to be more popular than Mars.

Brother Chick, ascend the hill of Mars, and look around you, and report what you see. There stands an altar inscribed, Missionism; or the god of missions, calling loud and pathetically for men and money to save a sinking world. Millions have been offered upon this Missionary altar, and yet its avarice is not satisfied. No soul has ever yet been saved by it; no soul ever will or can be saved by it, for there is salvation no where else but in the name of Jesus. Hence all the men, and all the money offered upon this idol’s altar is offered in vain. Yonder, yet near the first, towers up another; go read its superscription. The Sabbath School, as a means of grace, is chiseled upon its front. Like Moloch of old, it has received its hundreds of thousands of children which have been offered upon it, and although its flaming claws have not consumed the bodies of the victims which have been offered, they have consumed in them all that respect for the truth of divine revelation and reverence for the God which made the heavens and earth that they naturally possessed, and has seared their consciences as with a hot iron, and fostered in them the spirit of delusion, infidelity and bitter persecution.

Hard by, your eyes rest upon another magnificent altar, on which is inscribed Tract Society; its god is made of paper daubed with ink. Costly sacrifices are laid in grand profusion upon it, and the salvation of souls is accredited to it.

Turn yet again, and you gaze upon an altar bearing the title Theological Seminary, and on the other side the engraving reads Educational Society. This idol is by all the modern Athenian worshipers regarded as the lord of their harvest, to whom they cry for all the ministerial laborers they desire. From this altar proceed such flattering titles as Reverends, Doctors of Divinity, Right Reverends, Holy Fathers, Popes, Cardinals and Bishops, Chaplains, Deans, Monks, Friars, Colporteurs, and numerous others which are forbidden to be used in the church and kingdom of our God and of his Christ.

We are told that the pagans had some thirty thousand gods canonized, and held in sacred veneration; but how the number will compare with those of modern times, we will not presume to say; for time would fail us to speak of all the sculptured altars that may be distinctly seen and read from the summit of Mars' Hill.

Stained with the blood of millions, we shudder as we behold the altar of the god of war, who from the days of Cain has crimsoned the earth with human gore: yet this detestable monster has in all ages had his votaries; but never in our own beloved country so many, so violent and so cruel as in the last few years. Pile up the mangled ghastly bodies of two millions who have been slain in the late war with our sister States, and heap on that frightful pile one million Negroes who have perished since the war began in consequence of being forced or allured away from comfortable homes, and you will have a hill for Mars which will suffer nothing by comparison with that Mars' Hill on which the holy apostle stood. Let any one who fears God rise to the summit of this hill of Mars, and we doubt not that his spirit will be stirred as was the spirit of Paul, to protest in the name of the Lord against the abominable idolatry and superstition of the present times.

But we will not now stop to institute a further comparison between the number or qualities of the ancient and modern imaginary gods which are made and worshipped by what our apostle calls *art or man's* device. Seeing that they are all alike condemned by divine authority as superstitious and idolatrous, we will pass to notice more particularly the verse on which our views are solicited.

“And the *times of this ignorance.*” What times? And what ignorance? Observe, the apostle does not confine the application of his remarks to any one particular time, but speaks of the *times*, as though they were many; and then contrasting all former times when this abominable idolatry has prevailed, with its prevalence in subsequent ages, says that the former he had winked at; but henceforth a righteous judgment should mete due recompense to the offenders.

Under the former ages, especially while national Israel stood the type of Christ's spiritual kingdom, while Israel was sorely punished for the sin of idolatry, the heathen nations of the earth were allowed to worship their idols without rebuke. The punishments inflicted upon Israel for worshipping idols were all temporal judgments, such as sword, pestilence and famine, captivity, and final extinction as a nation; but no such punishments were visited upon any but that typical people. It was thus that God had winked at the idolatry of the Gentiles. But *now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent. *Now*, or from the time the separating partition between Jews and Gentiles was removed. Now that the Jewish organization and Jewish rites were abolished, from that time the apostle has taught that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles; all were alike to be judged and punished for the sins of idolatry.

Here, lest our views be misapprehended, we will observe that we do not understand that it was in point of guilt before God, or exposure to everlasting damnation any less criminal for the Gentiles to worship

the works of their own hands before than subsequently to the abolition of Judaism; nor in the sense any more abominable for Jews, than for the heathens to worship idols. But Israel, as a covenant and typical people, were called in distinction from all other nations to be a peculiar people, and were held under a conditional covenant, which required that they should maintain the character of a peculiar people, consequently their special obedience to the law, and the severe chastisements for their disobedience were specially provided in the law of a carnal commandment.

But now, as Paul stands addressing the Atheneans, and in all subsequent ages of the world, a just and righteous retribution for idolatry shall be inflicted alike upon Jews and Gentiles without discrimination.

The times of this ignorance included the time in which the giving of the law, the prophets, the priesthood, etc., were all confined to Israel, giving them instructions, line upon line, and precept upon precept: but no law nor prophets were sent to the Gentiles, consequently these were times of ignorance to them. But now that the authorized apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, by divine authority, were sent forth to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, the plea of ignorance could no longer be made nor admitted. The repentance now commanded is to desist from the worshipping of idols: from paying their devotions to gods which are like unto gold or silver, or stone graven by art and men's device. Of course, it is not that repentance which Christ as a Prince and Savior is exalted to give unto Israel, with the remission of sins: for that they have no power to obtain; for it requires the same display of the divine power of the exalted Savior to give it as to forgive their sins. But as rational and intelligent beings, creatures or offspring of God, now that the gospel is preached unto the Gentiles, and light has come into the world, they have no cloak for their persistent adherence to the worship of dumb idols. Christ said, on one occasion, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:22-24)." The light which they then had beyond what they had in former ages is expressed by the apostle in connection with our subject. "Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." The resurrection of Christ from the dead afforded incontestable evidence of the supreme power and government of the God which raised him up and set him far above all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, giving him a name which is above every name in this world or in the world to come; so that at his name every knee shall bow, both of things in heaven and things in earth, and of things under the earth. Thus fully demonstrated that God would hold all men answerable to him for their transgressions, and that he would judge them at the day appointed by that man whom he hath ordained. In the day appointed "he will judge *the world in righteousness*." That is, he will execute the judgments as already recorded in his word, against all unrighteousness. The righteousness of his judgment and of the final execution of his judgments will be measured by his law as the righteous standard of righteousness, which law forbids the worshipping or having any other God than the true and living God. The proclamation in all the world, to every creature, that the Lord is God, and beside him there is no other, implies a command of God that men should no longer bow down to idols, or worship the work of their own hands.

The judgment of God against idolatry is now already pronounced: the irrevocable sentence which was before published to Israel is now proclaimed to earth's remotest bounds, that "they shall all go to confusion together who are makers of idols." That "the wicked shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God."

This fearful judgment and sentence applies as well to those who at this day ascribe salvation to imaginary gods, or to the works of men's hands, as to those who gave form and shape to masses of gold, silver or stone, and called them gods, or ascribed the works or attributes of God to them in former times. Those who are today worshipping *Mars*, the god of war, and ascribing salvation to the bloody works of their own hands, and exulting in what they have accomplished by the spirit of Mars, will not be found guiltless when arraigned before him whose Spirit proclaims peace on earth and good will to men. "Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not."

The idolaters of the present time, as well as those of former ages, ignorantly worship the God who is to them unknown, when they presumptuously call on him to assist them in doing the very things which he has forbidden them to do. They pray to him who has said "Thou shalt not steal," or "covet," to prosper them in dispossessing their neighbors of their men-servants and their maid-servants, their oxen, asses, and every other description of property. Such worship is idolatrous and vain: for it is written, "In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Like the too superstitious Athenians, modern idolaters all perform their religious service as though they believed that God needs something which can be supplied by them, and can be worshipped with men's hands. May God preserve his children in these dark and trying times from all evil, and make them valiant for the truth. His word says to them, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Middletown, N. Y.
August 1, 1866.

REVELATION 3:12

Brother Beebe: If congenial with your feelings, I would be pleased to have your views on Revelation 3:12, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

G. W. Brooks.

Clay's Village, Kentucky.

July 3, 1866.

Reply: The subject proposed for consideration so far transcends our limited understanding that we feel a hesitancy in attempting an elucidation of it, and should utterly decline an expression of any views upon what seems so awfully sublime and profound, if anything more than *our views* were solicited. Let it be well understood that we feel and confess our incompetence to comprehend the depth of the subject, and desire that what we may express as our views may be carefully and prayerfully compared with the scriptures of truth, and accepted only so far as found sustained by the unerring standard of truth as clearly revealed in the scriptures.

Three things are indispensable necessary to be considered in approaching the subject. First, the speaker; second, the person addressed; and third, the true sense and meaning of what is said.

First. The speaker is described as “He that is holy, he that is true; he that hath the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth.” These characteristics cannot be found in any one short of the Son of God himself. He is holy and true, he has the key of David, he openeth and no man shutteth, and he shutteth and no man openeth. These distinguishing attributes belong to Christ alone. He is holy and harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. (See Hebrews 7:26; Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27; Acts 13:35; Psalm 89:19.) He is the Holy One of Israel; the fountain and fullness of all holiness of which his redeemed people are made partakers. Aside from him, they are all destitute of holiness, and he is therefore distinguished as him that is holy. Christ is also known as “Him that is true;” “He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life;” “the Faithful Witness;” “the True God and Eternal Life.” He is true not only in regard to his veracity, “The strength of Israel cannot lie,” and as to his reliability as the Messenger of the Covenant, and the infallible certainty of the full and complete accomplishment of all his Mediatorial work, but also in distinction from all the types, figures, and shadows which were given under the ceremonial dispensation concerning him. He asserts his claim thus: “I am the *true vine*, and my Father is the husbandman (John 15:1).” Other vines were used as figures; but he is the real, the true and living vine. He is the true bread, which was prefigured by the manna in the wilderness. And he is true in distinction from all who ever came before him. He also hath the key of David; or the power to rule, to open or shut without the possibility of being successfully resisted by any man, as typified by David. He says, “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify these things in the churches; I am the Root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” Typified by Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, of whom God said, “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open (Isaiah 22:22).” In his first revelation of himself in this vision to John, he said unto him, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death (Revelation 1:18).” It is the key, or power to execute his will, to open and shut, to shut and open without the possibility of being thwarted in doing his pleasure in the armies of heaven, or among the inhabitants of the earth. He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. Is there any other being in earth or heaven to whom such power is given; who bears the keys of omnipotent power, having all power in heaven and earth given into his hands? All the heavenly hosts revere his power and acknowledge his majesty; the elements of nature, the winds and seas obey him, and devils tremble at his presence. With all these credentials of his eternal power and Godhead, he utters the words of our text.

Second. The subject of this address is the angel of the church in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia is the sixth, and next to the last of the churches of Asia, to the angels of which, severally, John was commanded to write the things which he had seen, and the things which are, and the things which should be hereafter, etc.; to each, however, a distinct communication was dictated, in which the situation of the churches respectively and of the angels of the churches, was clearly indicated. The seven golden candlesticks in the first chapter of this vision, or revelation, are interpreted to mean the seven churches, and the seven stars which were in the right hand of him who is the Alpha and Omega, were the angels of the seven churches.

It is thought by some of our most gifted brethren that these seven churches are designed to represent the church of Christ in her different phases, as she should appear at different periods and circumstances until the end of her militant state, and that the order and circumstances are to show a succession of phases in which she should appear from the Ephesus to the Laodicean state, and point to so many periods and conditions of the church in the order in which they were addressed. Of the correctness of this theory we have no certain knowledge; but, in view of the number seven, as used in other parts of

this vision, as applied to the book sealed with seven seals, the seven angels with the seven trumpets, the seven thunders, the seven vials of wrath, etc., all seem to point to distinct and marked periods of the church and of her trials and the development of the mystery of God, and we are led to regard the views of brethren which we have referred to, as entitled to serious consideration. If this theory be correct, the Philadelphian, being the next to the last, indications of the condition and development of the church must, we think, point to the present period of time; as the opening of the seventh seal must uncover and reveal the last manifestation that shall be made of her on earth.

As the name *Philadelphia* signifies *a family or fraternity of love*, it may, at first thought, seem very inapplicable to the present state and condition of the church of the living God; but on a more critical and full examination, the name with its signification may not seem so inappropriate.

The Philadelphian state never was, nor ever will be, applicable to any of the numerous branches of anti-christ, nor is it ever applied in scripture to any but the church of God; and perhaps there never was a time since the organization of the gospel church that it has not to some extent been applicable to her. But the title in this case seems to have been given as a special indication of the prevalence of brotherly love, as forming a very obvious characteristic of the church of God, in striking contrast with the very opposite developments of anti-christ at the time referred to. The difference at the present time between the church of Christ and false or anti-christian pretenders is the more apparent by the contrast, as stars are only seen shining brightly when all is darkness around. The elements of the dragon, the leopard, the bear, and the lion, with their insatiate howling and thirsting for blood, persecuting those who know and love the truth, and biting and devouring their own kindred and kind, how strikingly apparent is the spirit of love and fellowship which binds the family of our God in her Philadelphian state, keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. What revolting examples have been witnessed in our country during a few of the past years! All the Protestant denominations, as far as our knowledge extends, have divided and engaged in deadly conflict with each other, fighting like demons with the most destructive and deadly weapons, and in their professedly religious character gravely sat in ecclesiastical council, enacting the most cruel decrees, and hounding on their fanatical minions for the extermination of those of their own communion. Which, if any, of all the Protestant religious denominations have not divided asunder, and distinguished themselves as the church North, and the church South? The Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopalian, New School, or Modern Missionary Baptists, Congregationalists, and those of every other name or stripe, the ring, streaked and the speckled have all shown the same rancorous spirit with which they were branded by our Savior as the children of the devil; whose works they are so zealous to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; and from him they inherit the murderous and untruthful disposition by which they are so indelibly marked in their foreheads and right hands. But how great has been the contrast, while hatred, variance, wrath, strife, sedition, envyings and murder, have so unmistakably proclaimed their religious paternity, causing the earth to reek with human gore, the little persecuted flock of the meek and gentle Savior has quite unmistakably borne the inscription of his name, and implantation in their hearts of his spirit of love, gentleness, good will, and kindness. They are known as his sheep and lambs; not his tigers and wolves. And they have sought the suffering who have been lodged in gloomy prisons, and hospitals, and ministered to the suffering all the aid and sympathy their cruel opposers would allow them to afford, without even discriminating among the suffering between their friends or foes. The Philadelphian character of the church of God has not only identified the true church from all others in the display of the Spirit of Christ, as expressed by the song of angels, "Peace on earth and good will toward men;" but there is a peculiar bond of Christian love and gospel fellowship by which they are always to be known. "By this," said the Prince of Peace, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for

another.” Would any sane person have taken any of the religious denominations of our country for the disciples of Jesus, from their love one for another, while they were striving and praying for the destruction of each other? Or would any fail to discover this trait as peculiarly characteristic of the Old School Baptists?

We do not know if the disciples at the present time love one another with a purer heart or more fervently than on former occasions; but it does appear to us that the surrounding admonitions of anti-christ, and the peculiar trials through which the church has been wading of late, has served to make the love of the brethren the more clearly apparent. And the kind, Christian and heart-felt greetings of the brethren from the South and North, East and West, now after a tedious, cruel, and devastating war has closed and facilities are again open for correspondence, really makes it seem as though the brethren love one another more fervently than ever before.

The condition of the Philadelphian church as indicated by the special message of her angel was that of comparative weakness and conflict with hypocritical professors. “I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man shall shut.” Her works, like her name, were works of love, in which she was opposed, not only by anti-christian organizations without, but also by false pretenders within, who said they were Jews, and were not, but did lie. This seems to be a fair description of the opposition which the church and her ministry have encountered in their works of obedience to Christ, in loving their enemies and refusing to kill or rob them, and in contending for the peaceable doctrine and practice enjoined by the gospel. They have been violently opposed, and threatened, slandered and abused, and every effort has been made to bring down upon them the wrath and persecution of their enemies; but Jesus says, “I know thy works.” He cannot be deceived about it. And he knows their perplexities, trials and persecutions. But he has made a way for their escape. He has set before them an open door; and no man, however malicious or treacherous, shall be able to shut it. And weak as the church and the ministry may feel, they still have “a little strength.” For, “As their days, so shall their strength be.” Truly, it may now be said of the church, “Faint, yet pursuing.” Her strength, though small, shall be increased as her necessities shall require. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. The grace of God is sufficient. Nothing perhaps can be more discouraging to church or pastor than to find the church infested with unreliable members; such as say they are *Jews*, that is, they are of the circumcision which is not outward in the flesh; but that which is of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is of God and not of men. This they may profess to be, and say they are; but he who searches the hearts, and trieth the reins of all, detects their hypocrisy, and says *they do lie*; and that they are of the synagogue of Satan. That such is their real character and proclivity will be seen not only while in the church they give their influence to the enemies of God and truth, but as soon as they are cast out from church recognition they at once go to their own company, and seek for sympathy from the avowed enemies of the church. Can there be any doubt that they do lie, when they come to the church and profess to give up all for Christ; to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, and after a solemn profession of faith, as soon as conflicts arise, show that they have a greater regard for their worldly interests, their politics or their earthly associations, than they have for the laws and authority of Christ in his church? Do they not lie when professing to be circumcised in heart and ears, cut off from the fleshly influences that war against the truth; and yet hold a more sacred regard for their allegiance to human governments, however corrupt, than for the authority of Christ and fellowship for his people? Some of these marks seem to us peculiarly applicable to the present state and condition of the church, and of her ministry. But God, who has reserved vengeance in his own hands, will humble the adversaries of his people, and in due time they shall bow before the majesty of his truth, and know that he has loved his people with an everlasting love.

Third. We come now to consider the true import and meaning of what is said in our text. The plain import of the message is that of Instruction, Admonition, and Encouragement.

Instruction is given of the watchful care of Christ which is always devoted to his church and people; that he knows their works, their trials and their persecutions, and he knows how and when to deliver them, and how and when to dispose of their adversaries. The door of deliverance from all their sorrows and tribulation is opened and shut by his sovereign and resistless power and wisdom, and their trials are almost over, he is coming quickly, when all his angels or ministers, who have finished their course with joy, and the ministry which they have received from him to testify the gospel of the grace of God, shall receive a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give them at that day.

Admonition. The church and the ministry, and all who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches, are admonished to hold that fast which they have, that no man take their crown. That which the saints have sometimes seems to them to be so very small as hardly to be worth such terrible conflict; sometimes they feel almost tempted to give it all up. But the admonition is to hold it fast. It is but a little longer the conflict can last, and the crown of triumph shall be given. Men, and devils too, are in the field, and with determined malice aim to deprive the saints of their crowning joy and victory; but we are admonished to be watchful, prayerful, and patient a little longer, and then enter into uninterrupted and everlasting joys.

Encouragement. How full of encouragement to the poor wayworn child of God, when almost overwhelmed by the opposition of hostile foes without, and still more treacherous and false-hearted foes within; and when conscious that his strength is very little, to receive such a message of consolation from him who holds the keys of death and hell in his own hand. "I have made a way for thy escape." "I have set before thee an open door." "To me the porter opened." "I have opened for thee the doors of death and the grave, and brought thee up out of thy prison-house, when no one else had the key; the doors of immortal life I have opened before thee, and it can never again be shut." Let faith behold it and rejoice in God, your deliverer. "I have supplied thee with a little strength, so that in the most trying hour thou hast not denied my name, even when, for my name sake, persecution and sufferings were heaped upon thee." "A little strength;" had he given us a great deal of strength we might have boasted or been vainly puffed up; but just enough, and none to spare; that we may every moment know and feel our dependence on him. And while hated by the world, and while we find in ourselves so much that in our inmost soul we detest, to have assurance that he loves us, and that he will make our enemies also know that he has loved us, is blessed encouragement indeed. To know and be assured of our God that we have kept his word, the word of his patience when that word has been rejected by the world, by the synagogue of Satan, and by false and treacherous professors, is a very comforting assurance indeed. It is called *the word of my patience*, because that all who receive and keep it shall suffer persecutions. Jesus said to his Father, "I have given them my word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (John 17:14)." He has given them not only the word of life by which they were quickened, but his word, as the man of their counsel, the standard of their faith, and rule of their practice. The grace of patience is necessary for the world and false Jews, and all the powers of darkness, will oppose; and not only do we need patience to endure their opposition, but if we become impatient we are apt ourselves to leave the instructions of the word, and try our own inventions. But the Philadelphians are commended in that they had under all their trials and discouragements kept the word of his patience; therefore they have the comforting assurance that their God will keep them from the hour of temptation that shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. We come now to speak on that part of the message on which brother Brooks desired us to write, viz.: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he

shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.

To him that overcometh five most precious promises are given. Let us consider first the triumph, and then the promises.

The triumph contemplated implies a conflict and struggle, which evidently refers to the warfare already noticed with anti-christ, and those lying Jews, who belong to the synagogue of Satan, but more especially to the hour of temptation in prospect, seems to refer to a most trying period to be accomplished during the time of the Philadelphian church state. Not only shall it so try those who dwell in the secret place of the most High, as to call into active manifestation their patience, but it shall try and detect those who, whatever may be their lying professions, dwell upon the earth. Those who received orders from the two-horned, or Protestant, beast to make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live, are designated as “them that dwell upon the earth.” That is religiously, as John says, “They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them (I John 4:5).” While the true worshipers of God are not of the world, but redeemed from the earth, their dwelling is on high. The hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth will, as we believe, expose the deception and falsehood of all those who profess to be Jews, while they are of the synagogue of Satan, and whose religion is altogether of the earth earthly; and drive them from connection with the church of God. Him that overcometh, or they that overcome the torrent of iniquity of the hour of temptation, and keep the word of the patience of their Lord, and resist the tide of mad fanaticism, shall realize the blessings promised in our text.

First. “I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.” This gracious promise or pledge is from Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of his body, the church; his God is the God of all his members; as he said, “I go to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and to your God.” “The Temple of my God” is that which is of lively stones built up a spiritual building consecrated as the dwelling of the Most High God. In the construction of this temple, or organization of this church, every part is fitly framed, and every child of God has a place to fill; some are more and some less prominent. It is said of the building of Wisdom, “She hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven (or perfect number of) pillars (Proverbs 9:1).” So in the organization of the church, the same idea is figuratively applied. James, Cephas and John, among the apostles, seemed to be pillars, or parts of the spiritual structure so arranged as to afford support and strength to other parts of the same building. So Christ has set in the church an ample variety of gifts, and all are designed for the common edification of the whole, the strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak, and all in their measure to strengthen one another in the Lord.

Our own observation teaches us that those angels, or messengers, or pastors of the churches, who keep the Word of Christ and overcome all opposing influences, are unmoved and unshaken in the hour of temptation, do afford much strength and stability to the building; while such as are driven by winds of doctrine and are easily switched off the gospel track at the approach of trial, temptation or persecution, are like broken reeds, unreliable and altogether incapable of affording strength or consolation to the tempted and trembling weak ones of the church. There are some angels, and among them not a few who are transformed as angels of light, who can make a plausible show of devotedness to the cause of God and truth when they have nothing to lose, or when that cause is not assailed by opposing foes; but the moment they are required to suffer losses, crosses or persecution, they will show you that their name, fame, worldly interests, comforts, lusts, or ease are more to them than any attachment they have to the truth, or reverence for the name or authority of Christ. Such are not like pillars in God’s holy

temple; for no reliance can be placed on them. But those who can endure hardness as good soldiers, are reliable and trusty, and shall afford much support to the faint and trembling children of God.

The second promise to him that overcometh is that he shall permanently abide in his honorable and useful position in the temple of God, and go no more out. While all those vacillating, unstable souls who cannot endure the hour of temptation shall be sifted out, and every wandering star and rainless cloud shall be driven by the tempest, to whom is reserved the mists of darkness forever and ever.

“And I will write on him the name of my God.” Who can describe the greatness of this promise and the certainty of its fulfillment? Who can describe what it would be like to be one of those who bear the imprint of the name of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, be endorsed as his own, and forever distinguished from those on whom is written the mark of the beast, or his image, or the number of his name? John saw this and said, “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God (Revelation 14:1-5).” When Jesus writes his Father’s name upon his ministers or upon his children, the hand-writing is easily recognized by all who are taught by his Spirit; it cannot be counterfeited by the art of men, or can the writing be erased by all the malice of devils. They are marked as his chosen, redeemed and saved people, and sheltered from all harm under the protection of his great name. Unspeakably great as this privilege is, it is sure to all who overcome, who keep his word, and who deny him not before the sons of men.

A further promise is that he will also write upon him that overcometh the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from God. The chosen and redeemed people of God, both ministers and churches, who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth are so identified with the holy Jerusalem, that they bear her name. She is the mother of them all; and it is meet that they shall bear her name. The word Jerusalem signifies *vision of peace*. And this New Jerusalem is truly a peaceable habitation and a quiet resting place to those who bear her lovely name. She is very unlike the churches which are gotten up in modern times by the inventions and zeal of men; for she came not up, but cometh down from heaven. All the materials in this building came from heaven. Her King came down from heaven, her subjects were all chosen in Christ before the world began, and are brought into manifestation when born of God; her spirit is heaven-born, her doctrine, laws, ordinances, food and defenses are all from God. The anti-christian beasts rose up out of the earth and out of the sea, and out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition. But the New Jerusalem came from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. But:

Lastly. “And I will write upon him my new name.” As Jesus, in his Mediatorial work, entered the field of conflict, he took on him the form of a servant, and learned obedience. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But when he had overcome all opposing principalities, vanquished death, and brought immortality to light; he ascended up on high, and now sits enthroned in glory at the right hand of the majesty of God. And in his deathless victory, God hath given him a name which is above every name which is in heaven or earth, or under the earth. At the supremacy of his name every knee shall

bow, and every tongue confess. Thus mounted on his white horse, with his bow, and with his crown, in righteousness he doth judge and make war. He goeth forth conquering and to conquer. But emerging from his conflict with all the powers of darkness, wearing a vesture dipped in blood, he bears a name that no man knew but himself. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:11-16).” His new and secret name declares his finished work, his perfect triumph, and in his new name he ascends to heaven with a shout; the gates thereof lift up their heads, and the everlasting doors are lifted up, that the King of Glory may enter in. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne (Revelation 3:21).” His new name, which he will give to him that overcometh, is the same which is mentioned in Revelation 2:17, in the message to the angel of Pergamos. “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it.” The name and fame achieved by Christ with all the glory of his perfect triumph shall be written in living characters upon his vesture and his thigh, and stamped indelibly on all the members of his mystical body, and in name and in glory they shall be one with him, even as he is one with the Father.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1866.

JOHN 14:21

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”

On that solemn and eventful night in which our Lord was betrayed, and but a little while before he suffered on the cross, these words were spoken by him to his disciples. Although pressed in spirit, crushed beneath the ponderous weight of all the sins of his people which were laid on him, groaning in spirit with his soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and having a baptism to be baptized with, and pressed until it should be accomplished, with all the mighty anguish of his own soul wringing from him, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground, he did not for a single moment forget the dear objects of his love for whom he was about to pour out his soul. As with his omniscient glance he

comprehended the mighty billows of overwhelming surprise and grief into which they were about to be immersed, when they should see the dearest object of their love rudely torn away from them by a murderous mob, and see him buffeted, insulted, spit upon, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, nailed to the torturing cross, and put to death by wicked hands, when his dying groans should seem to put out the sun, and veil the earth in darkness, rend the rocks, startle the slumbering dead, and convulse the universe. Knowing, as he did, the willingness of their spirit, but the weakness of their flesh, he gave them words of comfort against the trying hour. “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.” How seasonable was this admonition. Nothing could be more directly calculated to shake their confidence in him as the Messiah whom they had believed him to be, and make them fear that they had mistaken his true character, than what they were now about to witness. They verily believed that it was he that should redeem Israel, that he possessed almighty power, but now to see the powers of earth and hell appear to prevail against him must certainly try their faith in him as the Mighty God and Everlasting Father. But though he bows his mighty head in death, his Father’s throne in heaven is not more firmly established than his ultimate and complete triumph over sin, death and the grave; nor is he less reliable for their faith and confidence than his Eternal Father. As they therefore believe in God, they have his warrant to believe in him. This assurance of faith should shield their trembling heart from trouble. Had they understood and remembered what he had told them, that he should rise again on the third day, and that it was expedient for them that he should suffer, and rise again, they would have been less disconsolate. And it is even so now with the saints, when our faith and confidence is unwavering in Jesus, our heart is protected from trouble. It is only when the surging waves of temptations and trials assault our faith that cruel doubts and fears prevail against us now. Whenever we believe as firmly in Jesus as our Savior as we believe in the existence and perpetuity of the government of the Eternal Father, our joys are unspeakable and full of glory.

Truly he was going away, but it was for them, “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.” Could we but know and understand that our trials are all designed to secure this result, that where Jesus is, there we may be also, how cheerfully could we submit to them all. What trouble would be too great for us to endure, if necessary to secure to us the abiding presence of our dear Redeemer?

We love to trace the whole connection of his words of instruction and consolation recorded in this most interesting chapter, but we designed to dwell at this time more particularly on the text presented at the commencement of this article.

“He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” In the fifteenth verse he says, “If ye love me, keep my commandments,” and in this verse he tells us who they are that love him. It is sometimes a point we long to know, whether we love Jesus or not. Our love, if indeed we have any, seems to us so cold and languid that we can hardly satisfy ourselves that we are the people who are distinguished from all others by this peculiar mark. Let this question be settled, and all will be right with us. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, if we love the brethren,” and, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This very important question is settled by our Lord. “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” Observe:

First. The commandments of Christ spoken of in this text are not the precepts of Moses, which were given to the carnal seed of Israel, unto whom pertained the covenants, the giving of the law, etc. (See Romans 9:4.) The law of carnal or *fleshly* commandments was given to them, and they had Moses

preaching to them every Sabbath day; but they were not thereby characterized as lovers of Christ, for the law made nothing perfect. Nor yet the law under which the human family was created in Adam, for all have fallen and come short of the glory of God; but the commandments of Christ are those which indicate his spiritual dominion as the King of saints. And these embrace all his laws and ordinances which he has enjoined upon his redeemed, called and quickened subjects, as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. A perfect record of his commandments are found in the New Testament, and a transcript, a perfect duplicate of them, is written in the hearts of his spiritual subjects, embracing all that he requires of them in faith or in practice. To neglect or disobey anything which he has commanded, or to do anything religiously that he has not commanded, is equally perverse and reprehensible.

Second. These commandments of Christ were never given to the world, but to the subjects of this spiritual kingdom which is not of this world, which is diverse from all the kingdoms of this world, and which he has redeemed from the world. “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples (Isaiah 8:16).” His commandments require spiritual action, and are totally inapplicable to all such as are not born of the Spirit. “The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God (to this law of the Spirit of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord), neither indeed can be.” Repentance, faith, spiritual mindedness, baptism, communion, fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with the church of God, are not given to the ungodly. They have never received, and therefore they who hate Christ have not his commandments. As the covenants of the law were placed carefully in the consecrated Ark of the testimony, so the laws of Christ are hidden in his church, and in the hearts of his people.

Third. The kingdom of Christ has its well-defined boundaries. “Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion (Psalm 114:2).” No one can so much as see this kingdom except he be born again; and except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The laws of no prince or potentate extend beyond the bounds of territory over which he presides. While Christ’s providential government extends over all beings, all worlds, and all events, his Mediatorial government, as the Prince and Savior of his people, is confined to his spiritual subjects, who are known in the scriptures as “A seed (that) shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30).”

Fourth. In the preaching of Christ and his apostles, none of the commandments of Christ were ever addressed indiscriminately to saints and sinners. When the Good Shepherd putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they follow him, and he leadeth them out. He knows his own sheep, and he is known of them. He calleth his own sheep by name, they hear and know his voice, and they follow him, and he giveth them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of his hands. (See John 10.)

When, in the beginning of the gospel, John came from God with a commission to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, some who were not prepared for the Lord came to him for baptism, and although he had commanded those to whom he was sent to “repent and be baptized,” he demanded of the Pharisees and Sadducees who had warned *them* to flee from the wrath to come. They must first demonstrate to him that they were prepared for the Lord; that is, for the kingdom and spiritual government of Christ, by fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say that Abraham was their father. For Pharisees or Sadducees, willworshippers, or any who were not quickened, to be baptized would be to obey no command of Christ. He has never commanded any but believers who love him to be baptized. It would be sacrilegious for any but believers, whether infants or adults, to be baptized. Philip

said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." Let it be observed that the Holy Ghost sent Philip and inspired him to give this very answer to the direct question of the eunuch, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" That which should hinder the eunuch would hinder any one else: and that which qualified him is a sufficient qualification for any one else. "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." His profession of faith was plain and clear. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Enough; Philip is satisfied. The chariot stops, and the eunuch is baptized, and then goes on his way rejoicing; and the Spirit caught away Philip to labor elsewhere. Now the eunuch was not required to say, I feel worthy of the ordinance, I am satisfied I shall do honor to my profession, or I have Abraham to my father. He was a believer, which he could not have been if he were not born of God, and being a quickened believer, he had the commandment; he did love Jesus, and it was therefore his happy privilege. But to settle this matter effectually and forever, we have only to observe what Jesus says in verse fifteen, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The commandments of Christ are given only to them that love him; they only have his commandments who love him; and they love him because he has first loved them. The commandments of Jesus are not confined to baptism, but all is embraced that he has enjoined on them. But baptism is the first in the order of the commands which are given to believers who love him; and they cannot live one hour after he has revealed his love in their hearts in neglect of the holy ordinances, where a door is open for them, without involving disobedience. His commandments which they have require them to deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and to follow the Lamb, to walk in love and fellowship with those in his church who have obtained like precious faith, and given evidence thereof by obedience in like manner to Christ. He commands them to be separate from the world, to renounce its vanities, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints: but he commands them to use such weapons as belong to the armor of God; not carnal weapons, for they are forbidden to render evil for evil to any man, but to love their enemies, pray for them who despitefully use and persecute them. The whole code of Jesus' commandments are now upon them. They take his yoke in baptism, and before heaven and earth declare their allegiance to him as their supreme Potentate and King. His vows are upon them, and it becomes their privilege, as it is their duty, to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded them, whatever amount of self-denial it may require, or whatever of persecution it may involve. But one preliminary question is allowed, "If ye love me?" This settled, and all his commands are imperatively binding on all such.

Thus we see that inasmuch as the commands of Christ are restricted to those exclusively who love him (for he will have no subjects in his kingdom but such as love him), therefore he that hath them, 'and keepeth, or obeyeth them, is really and manifestly him that loveth him, and to all such loving and obedient children the gracious assurance of our text belongs.

"And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father." This is an assurance and guarantee of the perpetuity of the love of God to all such as bear the description already given. Not by any means as a consequence of their love to Christ, nor to be regarded as a reward of merit, for:

1st. God's love is eternal, immutable, sovereign and self-moving, beyond the power of any influences that can possibly be brought to bear upon it. Had this not been the case, it could never have reached any of the degenerate and guilty sons of men. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) (Ephesians 2:4-5)."

2nd. The love of God the Father was given to the saints, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as

he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1:3,4).” And in John 17:23,24, “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.” The positive declaration that God’s love to his people was before the foundation of the world forbids the idea that it was ever induced by any influence brought to bear since the foundation of the world.

3rd. It is of too high and holy a character to be moved by influences necessarily of an inferior order. Besides, if it could have been induced by any agency whatever, it might by the same agency be repelled or wholly withdrawn.

One may then inquire, why is it thus said, “And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father.” We understand it to be given as a comforting assurance of the perpetuity of the love of the Father to those who are so clearly identified as the members of Christ. As the love of the Father to them is *even* with, or equal to, his love to Christ, although they may seem to themselves, and to the world, so unworthy of such manner of love as God has bestowed on them, that they should be called his sons, still the world shall know that God has loved them even as he has loved Christ. And furthermore, we understand the declaration to embrace the manifestations of his love to them. Many things occur to make us fear that God’s mercies are, so far as we are concerned, clean gone forever, and that he will love us and be gracious to us no more. So it appeared to the reasoning capacities of the Jews in regard to our suffering Redeemer on the cross. “He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God.” His sufferings were regarded by carnal men as evidence that God did not love him, and so our own carnal reason insinuates to us that if God loved us, he would save us from such dreadful temptations as we sometimes endure; but to fortify the disciples for the dreadful trial, he assures them that his Father will love them. How inspiring the assurance! What could so well fortify us for sore afflictions, bitter persecutions, or strong temptations, as the assurance that God will manifest his love to us? If then we have the commandments of Jesus, and are enabled through abounding grace to obey them, such manifestations of the love of the Father are made to us as to revive our faith, confirm our hope, and banish our doubts and fears.

“And I will love him, and manifest myself to him.” Even when he rebukes and chastens his people for their disobedience, or for the trial of their faith, he loves them, and in love he scourges them for their good; but the tenderness of his love to them is not so manifest to their understanding as when they have his commandments, and walk in obedience to him. “The way of the transgressor is hard,” but the pathway of the righteous shines brighter and brighter. The experience of all the children of God agrees with this instruction. We cannot expect to enjoy the smiles of our Savior, and realize the glowing manifestations of his love flowing into our hearts when we forsake his law, and walk not in his judgments, when we break his statutes and keep not his commandments; for then he will, in covenant faithfulness, visit our transgressions with the rod, and our iniquity with stripes. He will not only give to his obedient children gracious and cheering manifestations of his love, but he will manifest himself to them. “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.” He comes by his Spirit, in his word, and manifests himself as their Prince and Savior, the Captain of their salvation; as their Deliverer, their Protector, and their all. In all his relations to them, he manifests himself, and in all his offices he reveals himself to them for their comfort, safety and encouragement.

It is a blessed thing to have his commandments; to be a subject of his spiritual government; to feel his love shed abroad in our hearts, drawing us to his embrace, and inclining us to honor and obey him. Thrice blessed to abide in his love; for he says, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love (John 15:10).”

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1866.

TEST OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

If all who profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ were really what that profession implies, walking in the faith and order of the gospel, no *test* would be required in order to separate the precious from the vile, the genuine from the spurious, or the believer from the infidel. But, as many false prophets are gone out into the world, it has become expedient that the saints of God shall try the spirits, which may from time to time claim their fellowship, whether they be of God. This they are commanded to do, and that they may try them fairly and decide righteously, an infallible standard is given in the word by which we are to know every spirit that is of God, and every spirit that is not of God. The apostle John says, “We (that is, the apostles) are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (I John 4:6).”

Admitting this apostolic rule to be a divinely authorized test of Christian fellowship, no change of time, place or circumstances can release the members of Christ’s kingdom from its authoritative application. By this rule all who profess Christ, and give evidence that they are of God by adhering to and being in all things governed by the teaching of his apostles, are to be held in fellowship by the church, and all who reject the doctrine and order as taught by them are to be rejected. From the days of John the Baptist, the people of God have recognized the instructions of the apostles in the admission of those who have applied for baptism, fellowship and communion. Repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ have been held as indispensable prerequisites to admission. By a faithful application of this test the Pharisees and Sadducees were rejected by John when they demanded baptism, on the plea of pious parentage, or that they had Abraham to their father.

When the gospel church was organized on the day of Pentecost, those, and those only, who had received of the outpouring of the Spirit, had been pricked in their hearts and made to cry out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” and who, on hearing the apostles’ doctrine faithfully proclaimed, gladly received it, were baptized and received into the apostles’ fellowship, and so added to the church; “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.” A cordial reception of and continuance in the apostles’ doctrine was then and there established as the test or standard of fellowship, and the standard there established as a test is the only test of which we have any knowledge as existing among Primitive or Old School Baptists to this day. We have never asked for more, nor accepted less than this. It is true there are some who claim, or have claimed, to be Old School Baptists who have formerly professed fellowship with us in the views herein-above stated, who have recently gone out from us, who charge the churches from which they have apostatized with setting up new tests of fellowship. But this charge is wholly gratuitous and unfounded in truth. Such

departure and reproach we had reason to look for; for the scriptures have foretold us that the time would come when many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, by reason of whom the way of truth should be evil spoken of.

The apostles in their doctrine have not only established the great principles of salvation by grace, but they have also given rules for the order and practice of all the saints. These rules apply to all our relations in life, in the church and in the world; and none of them can be disregarded or repudiated without a breach of apostolic fellowship. The relationship of parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, magistrates, governors, kings and potentates, and their subjects with all relative duties involved, are all embraced in the apostles' doctrine, and in no case are the saints permitted to disregard their instructions; not even to avoid persecution, reproach, or even to preserve their lives. The recent tornado of fanaticism which has swept over our country with a most terribly devastating violence, has assailed and denounced as sinful and abominably wicked one of these institutions which the apostles have commanded the people of God to respect as ordained of God. Paul, as an apostle of Jesus Christ has enjoined on every soul in the church of God to be subject to the higher powers. (See Romans 13.) And he has warned us that to resist any so ordained power is to resist an ordinance of God. And in nearly all of his epistles he has carefully defined and explained to us what these powers or authorities are, and in what manner, and to what extent Christians are required to respect and obey them. We cannot therefore, without disobedience to God, refuse to be in subjection to any of them. Among these divinely instituted powers vested in men, we find none more clearly stated and defined by the apostles than that of the master over his servant. We do not, however, learn from the apostles' doctrine that Christians are required to institute this relationship where it does not exist, any more than they are to abolish it where it does exist. With its institution or abolition they have nothing to do; but they are required to accept and be governed by the law of Christ as laid down by his apostles, concerning this as well as all things else. As the admonition to children to honor and obey their parents does not apply to those who have no parents living, and the command to husbands to love their wives has no application to those who are not husbands; so neither does the precept requiring "servants that are under the yoke to honor their masters in all things" apply to those who are not servants under the yoke. But where any or all of these relationships exist, Christians are, by the law of Christ, required to recognize them as divinely instituted and ordained of God. By divine institutions, we mean such as have been instituted by divine authority, by the authority of God. As such we hold all human governments which God has given to Jews or Gentiles, including that of kings, governors, judges, parents, husbands, masters, etc. As God gave the institution to the Hebrews, granting a right of property in men-servants and maid-servants (see Leviticus 25), so the apostles found the institution existing in their day among the Gentiles, and instead of justifying any attempt to denounce or to abolish it, they admitted to their fellowship both masters and servants, and gave explicit rules by which both masters and servants were to be governed in their relations one to the other in the church.

Whether modern Abolitionism, in denouncing the institution as wicked and sinful, and to that degree as to justify them in slaughtering hundreds of thousands of their fellow men to effect its abolition, and involving all succeeding generations in a debt of millions to put it down, is infidelity or not must be determined, not by how men feel, or what they think, but by what God himself has said in his Holy Word. What we mean by *infidelity* is a disbelief and rejection of what God has said in the scriptures. To denounce any ordinance of God, or anything on which he has set his seal of approval as sinful, is in our judgment infidelity; if it is not, we are unable to say what infidelity is. As there are comparatively few who have become sufficiently bold in infidelity to deny that God gave the institution to the Hebrews, that he blessed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with a very great number of bondsmen and bondswomen,

that he said his man-servant and maid-servants were his money or property; that he authorized the children of Israel to buy both bondsmen and bondswomen of the heathen around them, and of the children of strangers that sojourned among them, saying, "Of them shalt thou buy; and of their families," etc. "And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; they shall be your bondsmen forever," etc. That they should discriminate between them and those bought of their Hebrew brethren for debt, in favor of the Hebrew bondsmen which should be treated as hired servants, and not with rigor as bondsmen bought of the heathen, we will not now multiply testimony to establish. We will only ask, Are we at liberty to denounce as wicked any institution on which God has set his seal of approval?

But as our test of fellowship is more clearly laid down in the New Testament by the enthroned apostles, and their doctrine was steadfastly continued in by the primitive saints, and handed down for a test of fellowship to the church to the end of time, we will present from what they have authoritatively enjoined, the following: "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort (1 Timothy 6:1, 2)." Is this a part of the apostles' doctrine, or is it not? Will any one deny that Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote this to Timothy? If it be admitted that this is a part of the apostles' doctrine, will any one dare to deny that the primitive saints steadfastly adhered to it, and continued in it, in the apostles' fellowship, in breaking of bread and prayers? If this be admitted as the apostles' doctrine, is not a rejection or denial of it infidelity? Or can we repudiate, reject, denounce and deny this, and yet in truth be said to continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked."

Again, should this instruction of the apostle be rejected and denounced, and the opposite doctrine of Abolitionism be taught by any, how shall they be regarded as to their standing and character? Listen to the further instruction of the apostle in the same connection. "If any man teach otherwise (otherwise than what? Than the instruction contained in the first two verses of this chapter), and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." Reader, can you denounce the words of the apostle in this connection as unwholesome words? Will you deny that they are even words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that they are the doctrine which is according to Godliness? If so, what does the apostle say of you? He said of such an one, "He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness." This is not a very desirable character to be branded with by an inspired apostle. But should such a monster of wickedness ever be found in connection with the church, what shall we do with him? Just let him alone, and "from such withdraw thyself." So reads I Timothy 6:1-5. What! Make this a *test of fellowship*? Shall a man be deserted of us, and we withdraw from him just because he differs from us on what he calls *politics*? It makes no difference what he calls it; the reason why we are commanded to withdraw from him is because he consents not to wholesome doctrine; because he rejects even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine that is according to godliness; because he is proud, and knows nothing; because he dotes about questions and strifes, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings, etc. We are to withdraw from such simply because Christ, by his inspired apostle, commands us from such to withdraw ourselves.

Now is a strict compliance with this apostolic instruction the setting up of any new test of fellowship? Was not this test set up by the apostles and enjoined on all the saints in all their epistles? The word

doctrine means *instruction or teachings*. The apostle not only taught this, but commanded Timothy and all other ministers of Christ also to teach and exhort the same things; and, as we have seen, he commands that all orderly apostolic saints shall withdraw from all who teach otherwise, or who consent not to this instruction. With those who have rejected this counsel of God against themselves, and have gone out from us, repudiating the authority of Christ, we have nothing to do. Toward them we are not conscious of entertaining any but the very kindest feelings. We would cheerfully labor to rescue them from the snare into which we believe they are fallen; but the apostle has said, and they have verified his words. “They are *proud*,” too proud, alas! to listen to any admonitions we would give them. Some of them once esteemed us as a minister of Jesus, were not too proud to listen to the words of Christ and his apostles when uttered by us; but now they shun us, and charge us of being only influenced by political motives. Could they be reclaimed to that childlike meekness which they seemed to possess when we led them down into the baptismal waters, we could reason with them; but now we must leave them in the hands of him who alone is able to give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

The object of this article is more especially to reach such as are inquiring after truth, if possible, to prevent their being misled by those who misrepresent our position.

Some have expressed alarm because we have called the relation of master and servant a divine institution. By divine we mean that it is given by divine authority, as we have shown from the Old Testament scriptures, that God gave it to the children of Israel. All institutions are either divine or only human. This is divine because God has authorized it. We classify all earthly governments which God has given together, including that of masters over servants, parents over children, magistrates, governors, kings and potentates over citizens. All these powers, the apostle informs us, are of God; and that there is no power but of God. He is the only source of power, all being derived from him, therefore, “Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.” These powers ordained of God and vested in men are limited and definite, varying in grades, so that every soul is required to be subject to the higher power. All are divinely instituted, but none of them are supreme; none have a right to require disobedience to any of the laws of God, for God’s power is infinitely higher than any of them all. We speak of the institution of master and servant as being divine only in the same sense that all other grades of human governments are being instituted and commanded of God. Christians are by the law of Christ required to respect and obey all these institutions of power, or authority, as God has given them. Children must obey their parents, servants their masters, wives their husbands, and citizens the constituted governments under which they live, so far as such authorities do not conflict with their higher obligations to obey God rather than men.

Should a child object to obey parental authority and denounce it as arbitrary and cruel, and wicked, or should the wife refuse to obey her husband’s lawful commands, or should the citizen refuse to be subject to the legitimate authority of the national or state authorities; we should dis-fellowship such rebellion as a denial of our faith, and repudiation of the apostle’s doctrine. So far it might be regarded as a test of fellowship, inasmuch as it would be a rejection of the apostle’s doctrine, but no further.

Now this test does not require the existence of these relationships where they do not exist, nor the abolition of any of them where they do exist. Marriage is an institution which God has given. If any who claim our fellowship should denounce it as an abominable sin, and attempt its abolition, we could not walk in fellowship with such a declaimer. Still, as a test of fellowship, we require no one who is single to marry. So if one is called of God, being a servant, we require that he shall comply with the apostle’s injunction to honor and obey his master. Still if he may be free, he is at liberty to choose it rather.

The abolitionism which we dis-fellowship is that, and that only, which rejects the doctrine of the apostles on the subject, and thereby involves the sin of infidelity. One might be led to suppose by the misrepresentations of our views that we hold it to be the duty of Christians and churches to labor to establish the institution where it does not exist, and strive to perpetuate it where it does exist; but we hold nothing of the kind. Our understanding of the scriptures is that Christians should have as little as possible to do in the political affairs of this world. Where good governments exist, thank God that we are permitted to live peaceably under them, and pray for their continuance. If we are situated under bad governments, or such as we consider despotic or oppressive, we are still to respect and submit to them, so far as we can without disobedience to Christ and his apostles. We do not hold that Christians should even prefer a government in which the relation of master and servant exists. All, or nearly all the original States of our Union once held the institution; but as soon as they preferred to dispense with it, by universal consent it was discontinued in our Northern States, without marring our fellowship or repudiation of the apostles' doctrine.

It is not the honest aversion one may feel to any of these institutions of human government that we oppose, discountenance or dis-fellowship, so long as they admit the force of what God has said of them, and conform to the instructions of his inspired apostles. We hold that according to the divine rule, a man may as lawfully hold property in servants as in any other description of property; and we have no more right to covet our neighbor's manservant or maidservant than we have to covet his wife, or his child, or his ox, or his ass, nor to seek to deprive him of that kind of property more than of his house or his land. To secure the fellowship of the church of Christ, it is not required that a man shall have wife or child, servant or house or lands. And a person possessing all these has a perfect right, if so disposed, to set all his servants free, without violating any scriptural rule.

We disavow all tests of Christian fellowship except those set up by Christ and his apostles, and recorded in the New Testament. And we challenge the world to show that we have ever required or advocated any other test of fellowship than this given by the apostles.

We accept all human governments as we find them, recognizing the providence of God in casting our lot under whatever form or kind of government to him seems good. All human governments being ordained of God are divine institutions; that is, they are based on divine authority. Yet all kinds of human authority may be, and too frequently are, abused by those invested. Parents do sometimes abuse their authority, and require unjust, unreasonable and unrighteous things of their children. Masters may maltreat and abuse their servants; husbands may tyrannize over their wives; magistrates and judges may be unjust in their exactions; and kings and potentates of the earth may enact unjustifiable laws. But because this is so, we are not at liberty to deny that all these powers are institutions of God, claiming our respect as such. We hold that none can abide in the apostles' fellowship only so far as they abide steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. A cordial reception of and faithful adherence to the doctrine of Christ, as taught by his holy apostles, is essential to Christian fellowship; for John forbade the saints to entertain any who come unto them and bring not this doctrine. (See II John 10.) And Paul says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:17-18)." This test of fellowship was established in the primitive church by Christ and his apostles from the beginning, and is not new. Their doctrine, not in part but in whole, must be received; no part of it can under any pretense be rejected, and apostolic fellowship maintained. No more, nor any less stress or importance should be laid on any one part of the apostle's doctrine than upon all the other parts of it. It is all equally important, and all to be received, maintained and obeyed as essential to Christian fellowship. If

any man contends for more, he is a transgressor; and if he accepts less, he is equally an offender. If, therefore, we ask as a condition or test of fellowship only what the apostles have established, we can readily point to the scriptures in justification of our position. If we go beyond this rule, we are wrong. If others refuse or reject this rule, they are wrong. “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8:19-20).”

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1866.

CHRISTIANS AND WAR

If the saints are forbidden to participate even in *defensive warfare* at the command of earthly governments, how is it that they are to be subject to the powers that be?

2nd. What is meant by the direction of Luke 22:36?

3rd. If it is wrong for the saints to bear the sword in obedience to their governments, does that man who forfeits his possessions rather than violate that law of Christ subject himself to the condemnation of I Timothy 5:8?

These questions occur to me in reading the Warwick Circular.

William L. Beebe.

Reply to Elder William L. Beebe: *Dear Son:* The questions suggested to your mind by reading the last Circular Letter of our Warwick Association, on which you ask for further light are of very grave importance, involving considerations of more than ordinary magnitude in their bearing on those who are called to be followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. While on the one hand Christians should be exceedingly cautious in receiving any new theories in regard to the doctrine and order of the gospel, we should be equally careful to reject all error however popular or time-honored. On every rising question our only infallible standard is the scriptures of truth. Whatever God approves will find support in the holy oracles, and whatever the Bible does not sustain, however plausible or long-cherished, stands disapproved of God, and should be discarded by all his children. But as we are jealous of our own ability to correctly interpret the scriptures in all their bearings, and as we are not allowed to follow any man only so far as that man follows Christ, we should heed the admonition given by an apostle to any man who lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God who is the Father of lights, the true and only source of revelation to his children. As we are liable to mistake the true import of what God has spoken, it behooves us to search the scriptures diligently, and call mightily upon the Lord to open them to our understanding by his Holy Spirit.

The object or design of the Warwick Association in calling the attention of the churches of which she is composed to the subject of carnal warfare as incompatible with the laws of Christ or the Spirit and temper of the gospel of peace was to bring the subject before our churches, that they may examine the subject and decide as the word of God directs. We wish to set up no new theory, lay down no new laws,

introduce no new customs among the children of God. Whatever laws Christ has enacted for the government of his kingdom and whatever decisions his inspired apostles have made as to the true meaning of his laws, we desire that they may be accepted and complied with to the exclusion of all other rules, customs or usages, whether new or old. We are well assured that, however much Christians may differ in their light upon certain portions of the scriptures, all who love God sincerely desire to know and do his will; to be guided by his counsel and led by his Spirit. Our brethren in Georgia, or elsewhere, have the same Bible that we have, and the same unerring Spirit to unseal its sacred pages to their understanding. We do not assume to possess a particle of wisdom, light or understanding that is hidden from them. We charge them, therefore, in the fear of God, that they receive nothing as coming from us that they do not find clearly established by a “Thus saith the Lord.”

In venturing to give such views as we have on the several questions submitted we wish it to be distinctly understood that we give them only as our views, holding none responsible for them but the writer of this article, and if we are wrong, we hope to be corrected by the clearer light of our brethren. If we are right, it is only because our views are scriptural, and not because they are our views. The words which God has spoken owe no part of their power and majesty to the concurrent testimony of any of his creatures; they are of themselves omnipotent whether understood and received or not. With this understanding premised, we will attempt to reply to the questions proposed, in the order in which the questions are written.

I. If the saints are forbidden to participate even in defensive warfare at the command of earthly governments, how is it that they are to be subject to the powers that be?

An intelligent answer to this question will involve the consideration of what are the powers that be? In Romans 13 it is enjoined on every soul to be subject to the higher powers, and we are told that the powers that be are ordained of God; and that whosoever resisted the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and shall receive to themselves damnation. If we rightly understand our apostle, he means by power, or powers that be, such legitimate authority as God has invested in kings, governors, parents, husbands and masters, and in any or all others to whom he has given power to reign, rule or govern their fellow men. And we further understand him to deny the existence of any legitimate power or rights to govern except just what power God, by ordinance, or express provision, has invested in men. He admits of no other legitimate source of authority but God himself, “There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.” And so ordained of God that none of them can be resisted without resisting the ordinance of God. Now let these words have their plain and simple meaning, and say, “Did Daniel, or the three Hebrew children, resist any ordinance of God when they resisted the decrees of those kings which required of them to disobey their God? In other words, is there any ordinance of God expressed or implied in any of the laws he has given for the government of mankind, which empowers or invests any man with a power, authority or right to require of their fellowmen to disobey him? Now when the apostle says, “There is no power but of God,” but such as he has invested men with, we cannot understand him to say or mean that their usurpation of such power as God has forbidden them to exercise, is by any ordinance of his; but in direct violation of such ordinance or investment. He refuses to recognize any power to rule, except that power or authority expressly defined in his ordinance by which kings reign, and princes decree judgment.

To illustrate (we are no lawyer), a sheriff comes to us with the decree or ordinance of the supreme court; his writ or summons distinctly defines his power, and he has no power but that which is vested in him officially, as an officer, which power is distinctly defined by the laws which he is required to execute. Now should that officer receive from the proper authority a warrant to execute the sentence of

the court, in taking a man and in hanging him by the neck until he is dead; no man or men could resist that sheriff without resisting an ordinance of the court which issued the warrant of death against the victim. But should that sheriff usurp the right to hang men, without trial, without judge or jury, would not every intelligent citizen deny his power to do so? His powers are definitely described and limited; beyond such power he has no right to go.

God, who is the only rightful source of power, has instituted regal and other forms of governments, not to be a terror to good works, but to evil, and over all these rulers so invested with power he has set his King upon his holy hill Zion, and written “upon his vesture and upon his thigh, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” God has made him to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, and has exalted him not only over, but far above all principalities, thrones and powers, and commanded all the subjects of his spiritual government to honor him as their “only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” God has said of him, “Let all the angels worship him.” He has put all things under him, and set his power above the heavens, and charged the potentates of earth to “touch not mine Anointed, and do my prophets no harm,” etc. Now, to return to our first question, we answer, The command to be subject to the powers that be cannot be righteously so construed as to mean that a child is required, by ordinance of God, to obey the unlawful commands of his parents. Should a parent command his child to steal, lie, murder or burn his neighbor’s house, that parent possesses no such right of power, and the child in being subject to the *higher* power, which requires his obedience to the law which says, Thou shalt not steal, kill, nor covet, is justified in refusing obedience to the usurped power or unlawful commands of his parents. The same argument and the same principle holds good if applied to wives, to servants that are under the yoke, and to the subjects of any form of human government. Should a child be convicted of a crime against the law of a state, would he be justified or excused by proving that he committed the crime in obedience to his parent? Should a wife commit murder, should she plead and prove that her husband commanded her to do it, it would implicate him as accessory to the murder, but unless she prove that he actually compelled her against her will, the mere command of the husband could not justify the act, for God has given no husband any such power or authority. No man who owns property in servants has a right to require of them to commit acts which are forbidden by the laws of the state, and should they usurp such a right, the servant would be justified in disregarding such an unlawful command. “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.” There are different degrees of human power given by divine ordinance to men. The power of the husband over the wife is not as great as the power of parents over children; that of parents over children is not so absolute as that of masters over their servants which are under the yoke; nor are any of these powers as high as that which is held by a state or nation over its citizens; nor are the powers of kings and rulers of the earth in any department to be compared with that of him unto whom the Father has given power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him.

So far then as the commands of earthly rulers do not conflict with our obedience to God we are, by the ordinances of God, required, if children, to honor and obey our parents; if servants under the yoke, to count our own masters worthy of all honor; if citizens, to obey the laws of the land where we dwell. Even if the commands of parents, masters or other rulers seem to us to be unjust, cruel or tyrannical, if they do not conflict with our higher obligations to our God, we are by the laws of Christ to be subject to them.

Therefore if the saints of God are commanded by human governments to participate even in defensive warfare; if it can be made clearly to appear from the scriptures that Christ has forbidden them to so participate, they are by the very scripture referred to (Romans 13) required to be subject to the *higher*,

instead of the lower or minor power. They are to obey God rather than men, and leave the consequence with God.

II. What is meant by the direction in Luke 22:36?

Whatever may have been intended by our Lord in giving this direction, it cannot be supposed that he designed to countermand the orders which he had given them in all his previous instructions, in which he had forbidden them to resist evil. “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away (Matthew 5:39-42).” Peter had probably understood the order to mean a preparation for defensive warfare, and when he saw an armed force come to arrest his King, he drew his sword and used it in a defensive manner; but he had evidently mistaken the meaning of the direction. If Jesus had designed to resist his persecutors with the sword, and had given orders to that effect, he would not have reproved Peter, and ordered him to put up his sword, or said to him that “They who take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?” An attempt to defend Christ from the violence of his enemies with carnal weapons would have betrayed a want of confidence in God to defend him. While all the armies of heaven were at his command, and quicker than the lightning would come to his defense if it were not the will of God that he should suffer. How feeble would the resistance of his little handful of disciples armed with two swords have been against the whole force of armed men who had come to take him, and how much more insignificant would that force appear if contrasted with heaven’s full artillery which only waited the order from the throne to launch the bolts of vengeance, and sink the foes of Christ into perdition. When he told them who he was, they who came to take him went backward and fell to the ground. How easily could he have paralyzed all their powers, for as he said to Pilate, “Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin (John 19:11).” To have attempted an armed resistance would have been virtually to resist the power and purpose of God himself. And if a defensive war could not be justified for the protection of Christ, how can it be for the defense of his members. To us, the whole matter seems to be forever settled by the words of our Lord to Pilate, “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence (John 18:36).” It follows then that as his kingdom is not of this world, his servants should not fight defensively nor offensively. The apostles are enthroned in judgment to expound all the laws of his kingdom to his subjects, and they have decided that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual – that in the whole armor of God which we are to put on no carnal implements can be found.

After thus showing why we think that the directions given in Luke 22:36 do not mean to justify his disciples in participating in even defensive warfare, the question returns, What does it mean? We do not know that we can tell. The direction may have been given for the very purpose of affording occasion for condemning the use of the sword, even defensively by his disciples, as also for showing that the trial into which the disciples were to be plunged that night would be far more severe than that which they encountered when he sent them forth defenseless like lambs in the midst of wolves, and also to show that all his disciples, even when armed with carnal weapons, were unreliable and unavailing in the protection of their Master or of themselves; for armed though they were, they all fled in the hour of conflict and left him alone.

III. The third question is thus stated: If it is wrong for the saints to bear the sword in obedience to their governments, does that man who forfeits his possessions rather than violate that law of Christ subject himself to the condemnation of I Timothy 5:8?

We think not. The case stated to Timothy is one of criminal neglect, involving a denial of Christ, the other is an acknowledgment of him. "If any man provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." Paul was speaking of provisions made in and by the church for the support of widows, and such as are poor. This provision is not to be misapplied on those who would excuse themselves from working for a living, or on such widows as have children or nephews in the church who are able to support them at home, and thus show piety by requesting the care and expense they have been to such mothers or aunts, and not cast them upon the church to be supported. The faith of the gospel teaches the saints to avoid covetousness; hence for a member to ease himself from the burden of supporting his own family, and taxing the church with that burden, is a denial of the faith, is unnatural, unjust, impious, and worse than the mere infidelity of simply denying the faith. We can perceive no bearing this instruction has to the subject of defensive warfare; unless it be said if a man will not fight to defend his rights, he may become so much impoverished by robbers or extortioners as to be unable to support his family. But this argument will not weigh much if we read the charge given to the disciples in his sermon on the mount. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." In that sermon he has forbidden them to resist evil, and commanded them if smitten on the right cheek to turn the other also; and if sued and robbed of thy coat, give up thy cloak also; and if compelled to go one mile, go two. These precepts indicate the righteousness of God; they are his precepts, and the righteousness of them exceeds the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees, without which we shall in no case enter into that kingdom which we are commanded not only to seek, but to seek it first, before any other consideration whatever.

Those rules are not given to the world, or to the kingdoms of this world; but to a people redeemed not of the world, and a kingdom that is not of this world. Worldly governments may require armies and armed forces on the land and on the sea to fight offensively and defensively, and if the kingdom of Christ was of this world, his servants would fight defensively, but as it is, it is enough for the saints to know that their heavenly Father knoweth all their necessities and has promised that he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

Having answered the several inquiries, we will conclude this article by asking, Has Christ forbidden the members of his kingdom to fight, to kill, to covet, or to resist evil? If he has, has he given by ordinance the right to any beings in earth or heaven to require of them to do what he has expressly forbidden? If he has not, can we be blameless before him in obeying men rather than God? Again, has Christ commanded his people to love their enemies? To sympathize with them in their afflictions, to render to them good for evil, when they hunger to give them bread, when thirsty to give them drink, when naked to clothe them, and when they spitefully use and persecute us, to pray for them? If he has, may we, to obey an earthly government or to save our lives, disobey his precepts? Such conflicts between his and the governments of the world have been anticipated by him, and he has said, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (See Matthew 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; and 17:33.)

The qualifications for a soldier in carnal warfare are the very opposite to those which qualify a man for a place in the kingdom of God. The soldier should be bold, fearless, defiant, cruel, unfeeling for the woes which he is called to inflict; breathing slaughter, etc. But the disciple of Christ should be meek,

possessing Godly fear, harmless, kind, sympathetic, and breathing prayer, even for his bitterest enemies. Should a Christian carry with him into the field of slaughter these Christian graces, he would subject himself to death by military rule for loving his enemies, sympathizing with them, and for giving them that aid and comfort which Christ commands him to extend to his enemies. On the other hand, should the warrior come to the church, bringing with him his military ardor for fame as a soldier, with all readiness to shed blood (which military law requires), holding it to be criminal to sympathize or give aid or comfort to an enemy, could he be admitted to membership without a repudiation of the laws of Christ?

We repeat what we have already said, We wish to introduce no new rules into the church of God. If what we have suggested are not the law of Christ, let it be rejected. If the laws of Christ will allow the saints to participate in carnal warfare, under any circumstances, let those who can point to the scriptures that will sustain them in so doing.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1866.

MATTHEW 5:25,26

(Reply to inquiry of M. R. Langford.)

“Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing (Matthew 5:25-26).”

It should be remembered that what is commonly called Christ’s sermon on the mount, in which this passage occurs, was addressed exclusively to his disciples. At the commencement of this chapter we are told that “Seeing the multitudes,” which thronged around him, “he went up into a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them,” etc. This discourse, occupying the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters, is filled with instructions to them, as disciples, and such instructions as were not by him designed for any but disciples, or he would not have purposely avoided the multitudes, and sought seclusion for the purpose of administering them. After giving them many reliable evidences of their blessed state, and many precious assurances that they should inherit the kingdom of heaven, that they should be comforted, should inherit the earth, be filled with righteousness, should obtain mercy, see God, and be called the children of God, he taught them in regard to the spirituality of the laws of his kingdom as contrasted with the letter of the law as taught by the Scribes, and enjoined upon the disciples of Moses under the former dispensation. The traditional instructions given to the carnal Israelites, with which they had been familiar, had failed to impress them with a proper knowledge and appreciation of the righteousness of the law of God, as fulfilled in the spiritual subjects of the grace of God; for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin to condemn sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It had been said of them in old times, in expounding the law to the carnal Israelites, “Thou shalt

not kill.” But the instructions given by Christ to his disciples not only forbids them to kill, but forbids that they should be angry. “Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” As said the prophet Samuel to Saul, “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” As the gifts or offerings required of the children of Israel under the ceremonial law were typical of the gifts which are required to be employed in the church of Christ for the general edification of the whole body, we learn by this admonition that the offering or exercises of our gifts in the church cannot be acceptable to God, nor edifying to the church if we neglect the order of the house of God which requires us to “Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” As Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, so we are required to love one another, and if need be, to lay down our life one for another. In the absence of this pure and peaceable spirit and disposition, our gifts, which we offer for the edification of the saints, and in the worship of God, are like the lame, the blind, or the sick of the flocks which were offered under the law. “If thou bring thy gift to the altar.” Thy gift may be the preaching of the word, prayer, exhortation, singing, or some other gift. Before it can be offered with acceptance upon the altar of the Lord, obedience to the command of Christ must be rendered. If we are angry with a brother without a cause we cherish the spirit of murder, and are in danger of the judgment of the church, or the apostles, which says, “We know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” Should the church pronounce this judgment on us, it will exclude us from their fellowship. Or, if one brother shall say to another, Raca (vain fellow, or “thou fool”), he shall be in danger of the council, or of the judgment of the church, or of *hell-fire*, in the sense in which these words are used by the apostle James (see James 3:6) defiling the whole body, setting on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.

Seeing then the importance of these instructions, and what dreadful consequences result from disobedience, or neglect, of the command of our Lord in this case, “Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him.” *Thine adversary*, we understand to be the brother whom we remember has aught against us. While we are in the way with him is while the matter is between the offender and the offended brothers, and has spread no further. How much easier it is, generally, to settle a difficulty when it first occurs than after allowing our feelings to become fretted; it is like a sore that becomes worse from long neglect. In all personal grievances between brethren, there is a time when it is between them, and when by proper concession and lenity an agreement may be effected, and the harmony and peace of the church preserved. There is no time to be lost; before you offer your gift, before you attend to anything else, however important, go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Lest at any time the adversary, the offended brother, deliver thee to the judge. The church is invested with power to judge and decide all matters of difficulty between her members, according to the laws of Christ, and her judgment, when rendered according to the word and spirit of the gospel, is final, and from it there is no appeal. When the offended brother has laid the matter before a gospel church, it is out of his hands, he cannot recall it, it is in the hands of the judge, and cannot now be settled by the two with whom it originated.

And the judge deliver thee to the officer. This is figurative language, as judges always first adjudicate the case, and pass the sentence of the law upon the convicted before he delivers him to the officer to execute the sentence. So the church as the judge in this case having given her decisive judgment against the offender delivers him over to the discipline of the church, and he is cast into prison. A prisoner is one whose liberties are taken from him, and who is shut up and cannot walk at large. And is it not so with one who has enjoyed the liberty of the sons of God to mingle in sweet fellowship with the saints, to offer his gifts on the Lord’s holy altar, to preach, exhort, sing and pray in the fellowship of all his

brethren? Shut out from communion and fellowship, he is like the Israelite who was put out from the congregation of the Lord for his transgression or uncleanness until he should be perfectly cleansed, and be approved by the priest, and then come with the offering required in his case by the law. Though a child of God might hold at his command all the treasures, society and vanities of the world, he is a prisoner and must deeply feel that he is so in very deed if he is shut out of the liberty of the church. "Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." As the convicted Hebrew could not be released from his embarrassment, and restored to the congregation of the Lord until the priest had pronounced him clean, and then with his offering he was permitted to return, so until God shall give the excluded person a sufficient amount of repentance and humility to satisfy the whole church, and fully restore him to their fellowship, he cannot come out of his prison, or again enjoy the liberty of the saints. But when Ephraim is filled with his own ways, and is sufficiently humbled under the mighty hand of God to bemoan his condition, and smite upon his thigh, and come humbly back to the church with his offering of confession, and give full evidence that his heart is broken, and his spirit is contrite before the Lord, then the uttermost farthing is paid, and nothing more is or can be required, and there is more joy in heaven (the church) over this repentant sinner than over all those who have not transgressed.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 15, 1866.

GALATIANS 4:4,5

Brother Beebe: I have never troubled you for your views on any passage of scripture; but I will now ask your views on Galatians 4:4,5. There we read that Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Now I wish to know if the church of God with all the posterity of Adam fell under the law in the same sense spoken of in the text; or whether the apostle is here only speaking of the church of God? May the Lord spare you long to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and may you never shun to declare all the counsel of God is my prayer.

Jacob Richards, Sr.
Grant County, Ia.
September 23, 1866.

Reply: The words proposed for consideration are, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

We understand the apostle to be addressing the church of God exclusively. All the epistles are addressed to the people of God, or churches of Christ, and none to the world. As the law and prophets were all given to the people of Israel under the old dispensation, so the ministry of the gospel is exclusively addressed to the spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation.

Neither the church nor the posterity of Adam came under the law by the fall; but all came under its penalty by disobedience of the law under which they were created. If man had not been under the law

of God he could not have fallen at all; for sin is the transgression of the law. If Adam and his posterity had been created (as some contend) free *agents* to act out unrestrained the freedom of their own will, they could not be condemned for so acting. But the very fact of their falling from a state of innocence into sin and under condemnation and wrath proves that they were not free agents, but were held amenable to the law of God under which they existed before their fall. Neither did Christ come under the law by a fall, but was made under the law by being made flesh, or by his incarnation by which he was legally identified with his members whom he came to redeem. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” In doing this he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

It is true that all the human family sinned in Adam, and fell under the condemnation of the law of God, but it is not true that Christ identified himself with all mankind in his assumption of flesh; but we are told that he took on him the seed of *Abraham*, not *Adam*. Abraham was called out from his kindred, and from all the families of the earth, made the father of the faithful; and his seed, the faithful, were not reckoned in the fleshly descendants of Abraham for the children of the flesh, even of Abraham, “That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:8).” “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29).” In the passage before referred to in Hebrews 2:14, we learn that the flesh which Christ took on him was the same that his children are partakers of. And of these children he said in verse 13 of the same chapter, “And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me (Hebrews 2:13).” These children, which were the special gift of God to Christ, are partakers of flesh and blood, and he, in being made flesh, took part of the same. And this assumption of their flesh was for the suffering of death, and to bring many sons unto glory.

Let us examine our text: “But when the fullness of time was come.” The fullness of what time? In the context we are told that in this subject the children which God had given to Christ are Abraham’s seed, in the true meaning of the type, and that these children, until an appointed time, differed nothing from servants, though joint heirs with Christ himself; but were under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. At that appointed time they should attain their majority, or become of age. At that time (the fullness of the time appointed of the Father), “God sent forth his Son.” In whom was secured their life, their sonship, their relation to God as children, in whom they were chosen, sanctified, or set apart, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1:3-4).” That his advent was delayed until the fullness of the time was come shows that there was a purpose of God going before; that he came as it was written (or decreed) of him in the volume of the book. It was not a mere adventure, experiment, or uncertain enterprise, but it was the fulfillment of a promise which God, that cannot lie, had promised before the world began. It could not be hurried on prematurely; the time must be fulfilled, and not a moment lost or wasted. God sent him forth; “Made of a woman.” Not only in that by a miraculous conception he was born of a virgin; but in full harmony with the declaration of God, as the seed of a woman, that should bruise the serpent’s head. The church of God is called a woman, and of her it is said, “For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called.” The name, or title, *woman*, was given to Eve because of its signification. “She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of the

man.” As Adam is the figure of him that was to come, so Eve was a figure of the church. As such, Christ has recognized her as the bone of his bones, and as the flesh of his flesh; and as having her origin, her creation and spiritual existence in him before she was ever seen coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband; and she is called woman to signify that her life and immortality are hidden with Christ in God. To the church the promise was made that “a woman shall compass a man.” “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Romans 11:26).” “And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren (Matthew 12:49)!” “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.” From these, with many other scriptures, we learn that while in Christ all his members are made partakers of the divine nature (see II Peter 1:4). So Christ, in being made of a woman, has taken part of the flesh of which his children are partakers; and in our flesh he has taken on him our infirmities; and has so identified himself with his children in their flesh; as to be legally held responsible for their offenses; and made to bear our griefs, carry our sorrows, be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and have the chastisement of our peace laid upon him, so that with his stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:4,5). But to pass:

In being made of a woman, he was necessarily made under the law that the woman was under. Had he taken on him the nature of angels, that nature would not have brought him under any other than the law which holds dominion over angels; but in becoming the seed of the woman, the church, he becomes a subject of the law which she was under in the flesh of which she was a partaker; for “he likewise himself also took part of the same.” In doing this, he took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience, and became obedient unto death.

All this was, as our text assures us, “to redeem them that were under the law, that we (the children) might receive the adoption of sons.” We, though sons of God, as created and existing in Christ, sons in his sonship, being secured in him as his seed; that should serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30), yet being partakers of flesh and blood, in our relation to the earthly Adam, differed nothing in our fleshly relation from servants, were by nature children of wrath even as others. His advent was to save his people from their sins; and he took part of our flesh, for the suffering of death, that he might bear our sins in his own body on the tree, and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, being put to death in that flesh, and quickened by the spirit of immortality in which he embodied and represented us in his Sonship, before the mountains were brought forth or ever the earth was. In this mediatorial work he has been perfectly successful. By one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart; and we are freely justified, through the redemption that is in him. Now the impediment is removed; the fullness of the time of our minority has elapsed; and the Spirit of adoption is given, and the redeemed are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. No more servants under the law, but as sons in union with the risen Jesus, are we admitted into the family of God, and under law to Christ; whom God hath raised from the dead, and exalted far above all principalities and powers, and given him to be the head over all things to the church which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 1, 1866.

ELDER SAMUEL TROTT: DIED AT AGE 83.

Elder Samuel Trott has laid off his armor, received his passport, and gone, as we fully believe, to the bosom of his God and Savior. For several months his strength has been gradually declining; so much so as to prevent him from visiting the churches, as he has been confined to his house or immediate neighborhood ever since last May. At that time we met him at the Baltimore Association, where we heard him for the last time, preach a short but very impressive sermon from John 3:3, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." His voice was feeble, and his physical power scarcely sufficient to support his debilitated frame. He remarked that that was in all probability the last time he should ever attempt to preach to us. But the ardor of his spirit arose to an irrepressible earnestness, in solemnly impressing upon the brethren the important doctrine of his text, that whatever amount of human wisdom, literary acquirements, or human talent a man may possess, or however sound in theory, none are competent to preach the gospel of Christ, who have not seen the kingdom; and none can possibly see that kingdom who are not born of the Spirit. His last solemn admonition to the saints on this important subject fell upon our ears, and sank deep in our hearts, as our dear aged father was summing up in a few words what had been the burden of his ministry for more than sixty years. His stand point, bordering on the verge of the eternal world, with the eye of faith uplifted to the glory of the upper skies, and wings expanded for his rapturous flight from earth, only waiting to pronounce the finishing sentences of the ministry which he had received of the Lord, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. If we mistake not that was the last time he in a formal manner attempted to preach. But as long as he continued in the flesh, he ceased not, as opportunity presented and his receding strength would allow, to speak of his Redeemer's kingdom, and to talk of his power.

We called on and spent a night with our dear brother in August last, in company of Elders Leachman and Durand, after the close of the Corresponding Meeting in Loudoun County, Va.

In our last interview, as far as strength would permit, he reaffirmed the position he had so long held, and the testimony he had so long and faithfully born to the truth of prophecy, and of what he had understood to be its import.

To us, his clear and lucid interpretation of those prophecies concerning the twelve hundred and sixty days of the papal beast, and the corresponding time of the two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, was wonderful. And that he should have published his views nearly forty years ago, and that he lived to see that his views were correct, in the literal humiliation of the pope, and extinction of his temporal, or secular power, just twelve hundred and sixty years after the inauguration of that power in the year 606, is evidence that he was endowed with more light upon these subjects than had ordinarily been enjoyed by his contemporaries.

We have been personally acquainted with our dear departed brother about 45 years, and from our earliest acquaintance, have looked up to him as to a father, for counsel, and instruction, which he has been enabled to give. We have always found him ready to speak a seasonable word to us when occasion has required. Like David and Jonathan, we have loved each other; facing the same foes, bearing the same testimony, engaged in the same conflicts and participating in the same victories, suffering the same reproaches, encountering the same persecutions for the truth's sake. Is it strange, now that he is taken from us, that we should exclaim, as did Elisha, when he saw Elijah taken up to heaven in the fiery chariot? "My father! My father! the chariot of Israel, and the horseman thereof."

More than an ordinary tribute to the memory of this dear servant of God is due from us, and a very large space in our columns should be devoted to a becoming notice of his departure. No other correspondent has contributed so liberally to our columns from the first number of our first volume, until prevented from writing, first by the late war, and since the war, for debility. Indeed it is doubtful if we could have succeeded in sustaining our publication had he withheld his support; and now that his pen shall no longer write for our edification, it is meet that we should record how greatly we have been aided by him, and how sadly the announcement of his departure has fallen on us.

Elder Daniel L. Harding, who was present with our dear brother R. C. Leachman at the funeral of brother Trott, has brought the sad tidings to us, that on Tuesday, October 30, 1866, brother Trott breathed his last, being about 83 years of age.

An appropriate obituary will be prepared by brother Leachman, as we understand, which will be inserted when received.

Brother Trott leaves a widow and one daughter, and has one surviving son residing in Texas. His first wife and all his children, except the one son and one daughter, had been called away before him. With our dear bereaved sister Trott, and the surviving daughter, who were with him to the last, we most sincerely sympathize in this, their deep affliction, and may their sore bereavement be sanctified to their good, and may they, with the absent son, be divinely sustained by the strong arm of the Lord. To the churches of our order, especially those who have enjoyed the labors of the departed, we would speak words of consolation. It is the Lord, and he is able to comfort you, in this and in all your sorrows. Look up to him and pray him to send forth faithful laborers into his harvest.

To the readers of the "Signs of the Times": we shall greatly miss that familiar signature and those deeply edifying epistles of love, which, for thirty-four years have afforded so much instruction and comfort. But our God hath raised up many other witnesses, and has assured us that he will not leave himself without witnesses. Long will you cherish the memory of our dear departed brother.

To our brethren in the ministry: a valiant soldier has laid aside his armor; a veteran has received his passport to his mansion in the skies; our hearts are saddened, because the places that knew him once shall know him no more; but he is not dead, but sleepeth. His trials and conflicts are over, and all his tears are wiped forever away. A few more days of trial, temptation and conflict remains for us to fill up, and then, like him, shall we close our weary eyes on all the vanities of earth, and go to dwell forever with the Lord.

The 1252 hymn, of our Baptist Hymn Book, seems to us so very appropriate, we are constrained to copy it, in the conclusion of this article.

In hope of life eternal given,
Behold, a pardon'd sinner dies;
A chosen blood-bought heir of heaven,
Called to his mansion in the skies.
He left the world, with all its toys,
For better, brighter worlds on high:
His faith embrac'd substantial joys,
Soaring beyond the starry sky.
From Pisgah's top, by faith, he saw
The land where milk and honey flows;

Nor can the power of hell below,
Prevail to break his sweet repose.

He trod the shades of gloomy death,
Could set his seal that God was true;
Finish'd his course, and kept the faith,
And died with glory full in view.

Methinks I see him now at rest,
In the bright mansion love ordain'd;
His head reclined on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin or sorrow pain'd.

Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh!
When Jesus calls, the saint must go,
'Tis his eternal gain to die.

'Twas through the strength of Israel's King
He proved a conqueror when he fell;
'Tis to the praise of grace we sing,
Though of the dying saint we tell.

Fearless he enter'd death's cold flood,
In peace of conscience clos'd his eyes;
His only trust was Jesus' blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise.

Since the foregoing was in type, we have received the following obituary, written by brother Leachman, in which he proposes for us to prepare a biography of our deceased brother. We are very certain that such an article as would do justice to the subject would be highly appreciated by all our readers, and if no one more competent shall perform the sad duty, we will, as soon as we can command the time to examine our files and other documents, do the best we can.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1866.

Dear Brother Beebe: Our aged and beloved brother, Samuel Trott, quietly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus on Tuesday morning, October 30th, at his residence in Fairfax Co., Va., in the 83rd year of his age, leaving a widow, (his second wife) and only two living children, one of them in Texas.

Where ever the "Signs of the Times" has circulated, from the commencement of its publication, the name of S. Trott has been familiar to every reader; and generally at the end of some communication worth far more to every lover of truth than the subscription price of the paper. I feel that no language that I can employ can contribute aught to his worth, and I have not the materials at hand to enable me to furnish a correct biographical sketch. But as you are more familiar with his ministerial history than perhaps any one else, and have all the back volumes of the "Signs" to refer to, it is the wish of the family, in which I unite, that you should prepare and publish such an article as to you may seem proper. He has been actively engaged in the ministry for more than sixty years. It was not with him as, alas! it is with too many, a work of convenience or of secondary importance, but regarded as the great and

leading business of his life. Through sunshine and storm, winter and summer, he was faithful to his appointments, and seemed to be always laden with gospel treasure. No man seemed to feel more sensibly his dependence upon God, and not seemed to be more constantly furnished unto every good word and work. To a naturally strong and logical mind he had added a liberal education, and a rich endowment of spiritual gifts rarely found combined in the same individual. I remember with virtuous pride and heartfelt pleasure that twenty-nine years ago he buried unworthy me in the baptismal grave; that two years later in connection with others, he ordained me to the work of the ministry; that we have traveled many thousand miles together, and I have heard him preach more discourses than I have any other man, and I think I can truly say that I never heard him preach that he did not say something I had never heard him say before. It was my privilege and pleasure to hear the last discourse he ever publicly preached, which was at the Baltimore Association in May last, from the words, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," and it seems to me then like a voice from the grave rebuking the foul spirit of fanaticism, and testifying that the boasted and boastful religion of the times amounted to nothing, and was no substitute for being born again.

Brother Trott was in many respects a remarkable man; with the meekness and simplicity of Moses he combined the boldness and independence of Paul.

While always ready and willing to profit by the views of the least, he was yet able to instruct the greatest among the children of God. While such was the simplicity of his character, that the child could approach him, the aged and infirm stood in awe before him. If any man in modern times deserved the appellation of father in Israel, surely he did. Never remarkable for large gatherings in the church with which he stood connected, yet he has left a record and a testimony which can but tell upon future and unborn generations. He has cast bread upon the waters, which shall be seen after many days.

It is generally known that brother Trott has been looking for important events to transpire, in the course of the present year, in connection with the destruction of the man of sin, and it is a little remarkable that his own death should occur at the very time that he was looking so confidently for the development of some of those mysterious things brought to view in the book of Revelation. Yet it was some satisfaction that he lived to see the published report that the Pope of Rome had about lost all his temporal power. But I will not enlarge upon this and desire not to anticipate the article expected from your much more able pen, but would simply remark that he remained firm to the last, in the conviction that his views upon these important subjects were in the main correct. He might err in some unimportant details, and the changes that have been made in the measurement of time might vary the period, but of the general results, and their speedy accomplishment, he seemed to have no doubt. His last moments were marked by no special demonstration. Yet his death was just such a one as I would wish to die; with no particular disease, his body not racked with pain, his mental powers in full exercise to the last expression he was able to give, he quietly fell asleep like an infant in its mother's arms.

A discourse was preached at his funeral, to a large and solemn assembly, from Genesis 49:33, "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."

Brother D. L. Harding was providentially present, and made some appropriate remarks. We shall see his face and hear his voice no more, but there are many of the children of God that never can forget him while life and mind endure. Yours lone and sad.

R.C. Leachman.
Manassas, Va.
November 3, 1866.

CHRISTIANS AND WAR AGAIN

Covington, Ga.
December 1, 1866

My Dear Father: I have read attentively your reply to the three questions I submitted, relative to the propriety of those who have publicly professed to be subjects of the kingdom of our Redeemer, bearing arms in obedience to earthly governments, or in self defense.

In yours of the ult. you requested to know if your reply should not be satisfactory. I will say that I do not deem it advisable to enter into a full discussion of the subject through the "Signs", yet I may be emboldened by your uniform paternal kindness, freely to express my thoughts to you. Indeed, if it had been only myself that took exceptions to the position to the position of the Warwick Circular, I should not have requested the publication of those questions. You must know that we, who have been robbed, and seen our wives and children rendered homeless by the mercenary invaders' torch, see things from a different point from those of our brethren who have only heard the sound of war at the distance of a thousand miles.

Your arguments are sound, and if your premises were sure, I see no way to avoid not only the conclusions you have deduced from them, but the further consequence, that all human natural relations are abrogated, and that the words of our Lord, recorded in John 6:27 are to be regarded as a literal prohibition of all worldly employment. But this conclusion is evidently erroneous, as it conflicts with express apostolic directions. The commands of the Savior rightly understood can never be at variance with the directions of the same spirit through the apostles. Then the language of the Lord on the Mount must not be construed to conflict with the duties enjoined on the saints in the support and protection of those who are of their own households. Providing for them certainly includes their protection. (I Tim. 5:8)

Hence, in accordance with the solemn charge you gave me when, on the behalf of New Vernon church, you gave me the hand of fellowship, I had thought that "*my relations in life were unchanged,*" "*that I still owed the same obedience to my parents,*" etc., as formerly. I presume that it is hardly contended that non-professing citizens do not owe military service to their governments. If so, why is there no explicit direction to that effect on record, but rather the direction of John, Luke 3: 14, seems to imply that their avocation is as legitimate as that of any other class of people.

As regards the command in the Decalogue, "*Thou shalt not kill,*" I do not recollect that it is enjoined in the New Testament. If its enunciation in the law of Moses makes it binding on the church, does it not equally enjoin the *seventh day Sabbath*? That command, you will say, is figurative, and is fulfilled in the gospel rest. Why not also understand the other command in a spiritual sense? If the command in the Sinai law is to be regarded as absolute, what can be understood from the record in I Sam. 15? The war therein authorized seems to have been vindictive, and yet it was not only justifiable, but the failure of Saul to render it bloody as he was commanded, was punished by the rending of the kingdom from him, and the holy prophet himself hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord. If a vindictive war of extermination in retribution for the unfriendly conduct of their ancestors four hundred years before was right, surely *defensive* warfare cannot be wrong by the same rule. But you may say, all this was under the legal dispensation. True, but it was hundreds of years subsequent to the injunction relied on to sustain

the doctrine that a Christian must not forcibly defend himself against aggression and violence. The spirituality of this command I understand to be fulfilled in the gospel kingdom as described in Isa. 11:9, and 65:25. Yet while spiritually we are the subjects of that kingdom of peace, in the flesh we are still subject to the law of our natural existence, the same as unregenerate men. Fire will burn us, water will drown us, or starvation will kill us the same as other natural men. I mean to say that the Christian possesses an earthly nature while here on earth, as well as a heavenly existence spiritually in Christ Jesus. When you solemnize the marriage contract do you not require the husband to promise to protect his bride? If so, what do you intend to require of him in fulfillment of that promise? If a villain attempts to outrage my wife or child, am I not solemnly bound before God to protect them? And if I am bound to protect them against an individual assault, is it my duty to quietly submit to the outrage if committed by a million assailants, when by combining with others I might successfully resist them? Self-preservation is an innate principle placed by the Creator in every living creature; is this principle ignored or forbidden by the law of Christ? Is not he who willfully starves himself as guilty of suicide as he who pierces his heart with a knife? And does it not amount to the same thing if God has bestowed on a man the necessaries of life, and he supinely suffers them to be wrongfully taken from him or destroyed?

I have written the above for your own consideration, and it is at your disposal. If I am in error I desire to be enabled to see the right. Of course you know that I reverence the opinions of yourself and brother Durand, as well as all the dear brethren who may concur in them, but you never taught me to receive anything as gospel truth because of my veneration for the brother by whom it may be advanced. I rejoice to know that the spiritual children of God shall all be taught of the Lord, and he will cause their peace to be great.

Wm. L. Beebe.

IS DEFENSIVE WARFARE COMPATIBLE WITH CHRISTIANITY?

Reply to Wm. L. Beebe: It is not our desire that our views on this, or on any other subject, shall be accepted by any of our readers, any further than they shall be found in harmony with the sacred scriptures. Whatever of vain ambition may have possessed our mind or perverted our judgment in earlier life, we are now too profoundly sensible that our earthly pilgrimage is drawing to a close, to indulge in aspirations for the mastery on those subjects which are vitally important to be known and practiced by the people of the living God. What the scriptures clearly teach, not the construction which we may put on them, should be the standard of our faith, and rule of our practice, in all things. We are glad, therefore, that our son, or any other of the household of faith, shall scrutinize closely what we have or may advance, and carefully compare it with the Record of divine truth, and reject all that shall be found to conflict with the word or Spirit of the Lord.

It was far from the design of the Warwick Association, or of the brother who wrote our last Circular, or of ourselves, to set up our judgment as a standard for others. We merely wish to call the attention of those who fear the Lord, and who tremble at his word, to a faithful investigation of the subject involved in the interrogatory at the head of this article. Is ever *defensive* war compatible with Christianity? Is it sustained by the laws, example or teachings of Christ or his apostles? Whatever arguments may be suggested by human reason, or a supposed necessity, should weigh nothing against what is taught by the spirit of divine inspiration.

Without designing to detract from any argument presented in vindication of the right of self-defense, we will briefly notice some of the objections stated in our son's letter, against our premises.

First. The different stand points from which this subject is viewed. Brethren at the North are supposed to have been so far from the scenes of conflict that we cannot be so well qualified to comprehend the full merits of the subject.

But is this so? If we should concede that the South alone have felt in the late conflicts of the country, the aggressive invasion of their rights, have seen their homes invaded, their property destroyed, their citizens slain, and their most sacred rights trampled upon, would all these provocations qualify them to judge more dispassionately of the teachings and admonitions of our Lord? It is said that oppression will make a wise man mad, (Eccl. 7:7) but where shall we find it written that oppression shall better qualify a man to understand the laws of the kingdom of Christ? The dreadful cruelties and sufferings which have been inflicted on the people of our Southern States, show that they have suffered great and terrible hardships; but did this justify the saints at the South in an attempt to avenge themselves? Are they not forbidden to do so? Read. "Dearly Beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." (Rom. 12: 19) Will any of our brethren say that they have averted any of these horrors by their defensive opposition? In other words, is it safer to trust to our own ability to repel the invader, and to protect ourselves, our wives, our children, and our property, than to trust in God, who claims the exclusive right to avenge and to protect? Although the South and not the North was invaded, still the same pressure was brought to bear upon the saints at the North, as at the South, but differing in form. Those who were drafted to go into the war, were driven to the necessity of determining whether to obey God or man in the premises. And trusting in God to protect them from the consequences of refusing to obey the authority of men, they have been delivered; while those at the South who have had more confidence in their swords than in the Lord, have suffered a most terrible fate. So much for the stand points. We still contend that the position occupied by the three Hebrew children was the correct one. They knew that the God in whom they trusted was able to deliver, if it was his pleasure to do so. But said they, "If not, be it known we will not worship the idol which the Government had set up."

Second. We think a little reflection would satisfy every candid inquirer after truth, that neither our premises, our arguments nor our conclusions on the subject of avenging ourselves, would lead to an abrogation of *all* human natural relations, or to *any* such relations. The reproof administered to the zealous followers after loaves and fishes, in John 6:27, could have no such bearing. Their error consisted in following Jesus for the sake only of gratifying their carnal appetites, and for a selfish and unworthy purpose. It could not be reasonably construed to mean that they should not, like others, labor with their hands to procure in any lawful manner what was needful to sustain themselves and families.

Third. You are perfectly correct in saying, The commands of our Savior, rightly understood, can never be at variance with the directions of the same spirit through the apostles. This admitted, and you very justly infer, "Then the language of the Lord on the mount must not be construed to conflict with the duties enjoined on the saints in the support and protection of those who are of their own household." Now we freely admit that whatever the apostles have enjoined on Christians in relation to supporting, or protecting their households, or on any other subject whatever, is to be sacredly regarded and obeyed by all Christians; for the apostles are divinely set upon twelve thrones to judge the spiritual tribes, and their expositions of the laws of Christ are final. But in what part of the apostles' instructions are the saints required to protect either themselves or families by force of arms? or to avenge themselves? God

is the Avenger of all their wrongs, and Christ has assured us that he will avenge his own elect who cry unto him day and night.

You add, “*PROVIDING* for them certainly includes their protection.” Be careful, and not so construe the apostles’ words as to make them conflict with Christ’s own words on the mount. If the apostles’ words forbid any construction we may have put on the words of Christ, we should at once discard such construction, and yield to the decisions of the holy apostles; but equally cautious should we be to allow no such rendering of the apostles’ words as would conflict with the words of Christ.

You have misapprehended our views, if you understand us to believe or teach that either the earthly nature, or the earthly relations, or obligations involved in such relations are changed by the new birth. We have constantly contended that Christians are by the law of Christ, as his law is expounded to us by his apostles, required to strictly observe all these relations and relative obligations. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord.” “Honor thy father and thy mother,” etc. “Servants, obey your masters.” And, “Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers.” But higher than all these powers, Christians are to recognize the power of Christ, and obey him in all things, even if in doing so they disobey all minor powers; for neither parent, master, magistrate or king has any right to require disobedience to Christ.

Fourth. Whether the citizens of the world owe military service to their respective governments or not, is a question, the discussion of which we think would be out of place in our columns. That there shall be wars, and strife, iniquity, murders and all manner of violence in the earth until the final overthrow of the powers of anti-christ, we fully believe, and that wicked men and deceivers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, the scriptures declare, and we believe. Whether it be the duty of any man to participate in such strife and bitterness, we will not now express an opinion; but certain we are that those who are called by grace are forbidden to butcher one another. “Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances.” (Col. 2:20)

Fifth. John’s reply to the soldiers would be regarded as treasonable if given to soldiers in modern warfare. Had you, or any other minister of the Prince of Peace, given such a charge to the soldiers in either the Northern or Southern armies, you or they would have done it at the peril of your lives. “Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.” We do not see that John committed himself in favor of the principle of war. If they were voluntarily engaged in taking the sword, their wages was to perish by the sword. Certainly we cannot understand John as endorsing what Christ afterwards forbid in his sermon on the mount.

It is not clear to our mind that if the people of this world were not obligated to render military service to the governments of the world, that the apostles would have given express direction to that effect, as their apostleship was not to the world, but to the church of God exclusively.

Sixth. We come now to the command in the Decalogue, “Thou shalt not kill.” This precept is classified with those which forbid that we shall commit adultery, steal, bear false witness against a neighbor, or covet our neighbor’s house, wife, manservants, maid-servants, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is our neighbor’s. In his sermon on the mount, Jesus said to his disciples, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Having made this important declaration to his disciples, he proceeded to explain to them the exceeding

broadness of his law. It had been prophesied of him, that he should magnify and honor the law. His exposition of the law gave to his disciples a view greatly magnified beyond what that they had before understood. “Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time,” (the children of Israel, as they read and expounded the law), “Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you,” – unto you, my disciples. What? Does he say this precept is no more to be observed: it only applied to the Jews? Not so. “But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca,” (that is vain fellow) “shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.” He also in like manner enlarges upon the interpretations which had been entertained in former times on other precepts, and then in regard to what the Israelites had understood to be awarded them by the law, as exactions of strict justice, he says, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil.” Should an enemy assail you and gouge out an eye, or smite out a tooth, this would seem a very great provocation, and justice might exact the infliction of an equal amount of suffering on the offender. But, see thou do it not. “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn thou not away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?” “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

This much we have copied from our Savior’s own instructions in regard to the law of God, bearing upon the subject under consideration. Now if it can be made to appear that Christians can conform with the letter and spirit of these instructions, – can restrain all anger, can refrain from killing, from hating, and from even resisting evil – can love their enemies, and pray for their persecutors, do good to them that despitefully use them, and yet, even at the bidding of earthly governments, take up arms, and shoot down their fellow men, then we will confess that we have lived in gross ignorance of the meaning of the scriptures even to this hour.

Seventh. But the inquiry is made, If the precept which forbids us to kill is still in force, is not also the law enjoining the observance of the seventh day Sabbath still in force? We do not understand that either the law forbidding murder, theft, adultery, or covetousness, false witness, swearing or idolatry are in force upon the church of God, as the law of a carnal commandment, but all has been met and canceled by our great and glorious Redeemer, who has not destroyed the law or the prophets, nor any jot or tittle of either, but has perfectly fulfilled both. And we further believe that he has done all this, not that we should live unrestrained, and without law, but rather that the righteousness of the law should be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. He has redeemed us from under the law, and we are dead to the law by the body of Christ, and being married to him who is risen from the dead, that we should walk in newness of life, we are now under law to Christ. Hence the distinction between the law as ministered by Moses to those of old time, as preached and enforced in its letter on them, and the spirituality of its righteousness as fulfilled in us, is most clearly set forth by our Savior himself in what we have copied from his sermon on the mount. The seventh day Sabbath, as interpreted by the inspired apostles, most clearly and unmistakably is fulfilled, in its spiritual and typical design, in that

Sabbatic Rest into which all believers do enter when they believe on Christ. While the righteousness of the law of the Sabbath is fulfilled in the saints, in their ceasing from all legal works, the Spirit and righteousness of the law of love to God, and to our neighbor, on which two precepts hang all the law and the prophets, is also fulfilled in us, when we receive the spirit of Christ in our new and spiritual birth. That Spirit in us breathes, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will to men, as it did in the person of our Savior when here in the flesh, and when led like a lamb to the slaughter, and when in his dying agony on the cross he prayed for those who despitely used and persecuted him. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." And all who have the spirit of Christ will evince it by its legitimate fruits, which are these, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. Now which of these fruits can be seen in the man who enters the field of carnage, sword or musket in hand, with the design to deprive his fellow being of life? We are told that the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, *hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like.* In view of this, will it be hard to answer the interrogative of James, "From whence came wars and fighting among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" Not in tones of terrific thunder from Sinai, not on tables of unfeeling stone, are the laws of Christ written; but on the fleshly tables of the heart, written by God himself in the mind, and in the inward parts of his children. This is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But the apostle John informs us that no murderer hath it abiding in him, and if any man hateth his brother, he is a murderer.

Our son, we trust, will see that the spirituality of these laws do not abate their force, or give license to Christians to use carnal weapons in any case.

Eighth. Again. You inquire, If the Sinai law be absolute, what can be understood from the record in I Sam. 15? In that case God commanded Saul to exterminate Amalek, as a righteous retribution for their transgression; and Saul was no more excusable in sparing where God had commanded him to slay, than we are in slaying when God has commanded us to spare. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Amalek and Agag were typical of anti-christ, and the man of sin, and the saints are now fighting the battle to which this figure pointed; not with carnal weapons, but with the sword of the Spirit which is the word of the Lord. With that sword are the soldiers of the cross now hewing Agag to pieces before the Lord. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him that hath called him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." II Tim. 2:4,5.

Ninth. You feel sure that if a vindictive war of extermination in retribution for the unfriendly conduct of their ancestors, four hundred years before, was right, a *defensive* warfare cannot be wrong by the same rule. But by what rule was that war against Amalek right? What was the rule which the holy prophet applied to the conduct of Saul? Hear him! "The Lord anointed thee king over Israel; and the Lord sent me on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore did'st thou not obey' the voice of the Lord?" etc. The voice of the Lord was the rule, which would have justified Saul if he had obeyed it; and so if the word of the Lord commanded us to avenge ourselves with carnal weapons, we might plead the same rule for defensive warfare. But inasmuch as he has forbidden us to resist evil, or to avenge ourselves, we cannot be justified in carnal warfare by that rule; the voice of the Lord. This, you say was hundreds of years subsequent to the injunction from Sinai, "Thou shalt not kill." The law forbidding man to kill, on his own responsibility, could not apply to any case where God himself has commanded to kill, as in the

case alluded to. To kill without the express command of God, would be a transgression of his law, and is therefore murder; but to refrain from killing where God has commanded, is equally sinful.

Admitting, as you do, the spirituality of the command to be fulfilled in the gospel kingdom, according to Isa. 11:9, and 65:25, can we suppose that the subjects of that kingdom, are peaceable and harmless within the precincts of the kingdom, and yet, if called on by the kingdoms of this world, they are to go out of the kingdom of Christ, and fight like tigers, destroy the lives, liberty and property of men? To be in the kingdom of Christ, is to abide under his government, observing his laws, and be led by his Spirit. He has redeemed and called his subjects out of the world, and they are to be in obedience to him in all things. "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, a Zion."

Tenth. That there is a *law of our nature*, which Paul, and which all the saints find in their members, warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin, is painfully felt and frankly acknowledged. But our allegiance to Christ requires that we deny ourselves of all that he has forbidden. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death." So far from being justified in yielding obedience to the law which is in our members, we are admonished that if we walk according to it, we shall die. The works of the flesh are, as we have shown, hostile to the fruits of the spirit. Therefore, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds or works of the flesh, ye shall live." If led by the law of our depraved nature, we shall attempt to defend ourselves, and avenge ourselves; but when led by the Spirit we trust the keeping of our souls to God, and have no confidence in the flesh. If the Christian did not possess an earthly nature, he would not be required by the law of Christ to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts. Our bodies as well as our spirits belong to Christ. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's."

Eleventh. In solemnizing marriage we require a promise from the husband to *protect his wife*, to the extent of his ability; that is, as far as he can do it lawfully. He is not pledged to violate the law of God; for such protection could not contribute to her safety. For our own protection and that of our families we are taught by the word and Spirit to trust in God, not in ourselves. And our Savior has warned us, "If any man will save his life, he shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life, for my sake, shall find it." That man shall labor with his hands to provide for the support of his family, and that he shall submit to earthly governments, and to every ordinance of man, which does not require of him a violation of the law of Christ, is very clearly enjoined on Christians by the law of Christ. But when the laws of men or the law of our nature require us to transgress the law of God, and we to avoid the wrath of man, seek to save our life by succumbing, in violation of the law of Christ, we shall lose instead of saving it.

This matter has been tested during the late dreadful war. The Federal government called for troops to fight the South, and the Confederate government called for troops to fight in defense. By drafting, some of the children of God at the North were required to go into the field and shoot down indiscriminately the citizens of the South, including their own brethren; to rob them of their property, burn down their dwellings, sack and lay waste their land. Many of the brethren in the South believing and acting on the principle that defensive war was justifiable, volunteered, or were drafted, and entered the field. If obedience to earthly powers were a sufficient justification for Christians to enter the armies, then Christians may righteously shoot down their brethren, and rob and plunder them. Can this be so?

We know that there were brethren in the North, who would sooner be shot down at home, than go and level their guns, to shoot down their fellow men, especially their brethren at the South, and it was a matter of regret to us that the brethren at the South were misled to take up arms for their own protection, rather than trust in God for protection. The result has proved the fallacy of their reliance.

While those, both North and South who have trusted alone in God, and have kept out of the conflict, cheerfully suffering the loss of property and all other consequences, have been preserved. What have they gained who went into the war? If either the North or the South have benefited by the war, we are unable to see wherein; while the South in their appeal to arms have failed to attain their object; and the North is also filled with widows, orphans, maimed and crippled thousands, and the wailing of Rachel's lamentations, goes up to heaven from North and South, because of the hundreds of thousands of the slain.

In view of all this, can Christians count up the cost, and arrive at the conclusion that it is safer, wiser and better to appeal to arms, than to appeal to God, for protection!

Twelfth. You ask, "If a villain attempt to outrage my wife or child, am I not bound before God to protect them?" To the extent of your power we think you are, if the intervention of your own life would save theirs, you are bound by the law of Christ to lay it down, not only for wife or child, but for any of the saints. But still, you, as a disciple of Christ, have not the right to violate a single example or precept of Christ to save yourself or others. We are taught by the gospel to trust, and wholly confide the keeping of our souls to God. How can we do this while our reliance is in our appeal to arms.

Do we doubt the ability of God to keep us from the power of our enemies? Read the 91st Psalm, and the words of our Lord to Peter. "Put up again thy sword to his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

The innate principle of our nature, inclining us to self preservation, is only righteously adhered to so far as its dictates are in subordination to the laws of Christ. By its dictates, we may avoid presumptuous exposure to danger; but if we rely on it for protection, we cease to trust in the living God. By the instinctive principle inclining us to self-preservation, we may avoid suicide; but it does not follow that by allowing our worldly substance to be taken from us by injustice and robbery without fighting to prevent the loss, is alike suicidal or unjustifiable. Read once more in the sermon on the mount. Matt. 5:39-41.

Thirteenth. You are right in your conclusion, that we do not wish you to accept any opinion of ours, as right without investigation. As a Christian, and as a minister of Christ, our standing is on a perfect level. The laws of consanguinity are not to rule in the kingdom of Christ, where we are to know no man after the flesh; where there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond or free, but all are one in Christ Jesus.

In conclusion, we wish to say, it has not been our design to censure any of our brethren, North or South, in the views we have expressed on the subject. We are fully aware that our brethren have generally entertained substantially the views expressed by our son and acted upon those views in the Revolutionary war, and perhaps in other wars; but it is our solemn conviction that God, in his holy providence, by startling events which are now transpiring, designs to hold his children under such discipline as shall compel them to seek for the ancient paths, which he has marked out in his law, for them to walk in. Light is breaking in upon us, probably, preparatory to great and marvelous events, which in fulfillment of prophecy are about to transpire.

Let all our readers carefully ponder the words, Rev. 13:9,10. "If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

Middletown, N. Y.
December 1, 1866

END OF VOLUME 34

Our swiftly gliding years, in rapid succession, are hurrying us through the allotted number of days which God, in his infinite wisdom, has fixed as the bounds of our pilgrimage. Our companions are being called away from our right hand and left, and but very few of those with whom in early life we were associated are now left to greet us in our weary way, as we descend from the meridian of our manhood to the house appointed for all the living tribes of mankind. Gloomy indeed would be our prospects, if only our earthly surroundings were contemplated. "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?" The places which knew them once shall henceforth know them no more forever. But however evil and few may be the days of the years of our pilgrimage on the earth, we have no occasion to desire that they should be prolonged. He who doeth all things well has irrevocably fixed the period of our mortal existence as the days of an hireling, so that we cannot pass our bounds.

Those who were our companions and patrons in the commencement of this publication have nearly all been gathered with their fathers, and although we very sensibly miss them, and mourn their absence, we cannot wish to recall them to the toils and vexations of time, for now they rest where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the unveiled presence of their God and Savior fills them with fullness of unspeakable joy.

Now as we hurriedly close this volume, and with it the thirty-fourth year of our editorial labor, we desire to render unfeigned thanksgiving to God, who, through all our labors, trials and persecutions, for his name sake, has graciously spread over our defenseless head the shield of his protecting power and grace. For, having received help of God, we continue to the present time. His goodness and mercy have followed us all our days.

We will not attempt now to recount the various incidents of the past; but look hopefully to the future. It is gratifying to know from the testimony of many thousands of our readers, weak and feeble though our labors have been, they have not proved vain in the Lord. To be made useful in feeding the flock of God, and in publishing with voice and pen, to the extent of our limited ability, the unsearchable riches of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a blessed privilege, out-weighting infinitely all the trials, toils and discouragements we have encountered, and so far, that they are not worthy to be mentioned in comparison.

We feel a conscienceness that we have given to the cause in which we have labored the most vigorous years of our life, and to the best of our ability, we have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, yet we know that our God, and our brethren have had much to bear, with our imperfections and short comings.

The thirty-four years which we have devoted to the publication of this paper has made our readers somewhat familiar with our views and our aims, and we presume that our uniform course for so long a period will sufficiently indicate what will be the future character of our publication.

At considerable expense we shall begin our new volume with entirely new, and beautiful type, and otherwise essentially improve our forthcoming volume.

Our terms, as already indicated, will continue as last year. Two dollars per year in advance, in U.S. paper currency. For gold, or Canada paper, we can only allow whatever may be the premium which is paid for gold in New York at the time it is received. Our brethren and friends will oblige us by forwarding their orders immediately, as we propose to print but a limited number beyond our actual subscription. Those who are in arrears will oblige us much by forwarding what is due. The amount they

will learn by the pasted label on the envelope or margin of their respective papers, with their names, which will show each to what date their subscription is credited on our books.

Middletown, N. Y.
December 15, 1866.

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME THIRTY-FIVE

It has been our custom at the commencement of every new volume to present our annual greetings to our readers, congratulating those who with us are spared to commence the new year, re-assuring them of our unabating desire for their present and everlasting welfare. It certainly becomes us who have been preserved through the fearful strife and devastation of the last few years to acknowledge with humble gratitude to God, his goodness and mercy to usward. Because our God changes not, we are not consumed; and because our Savior lives, his children live also. Should we recall to mind all the way in which the Lord has led us, all the trials, straits, and conflicts through which he has brought us, we would feel constrained to say as the poet sings:

“His love in time past
Forbids us to think,
He’ll leave us at last,
In sorrow to sink.”

Like David, having been delivered from the bear and from the lion, we may still trust in God for victory over huge giants who dare defy the armies of the Living God. The saints have passed through a severe ordeal, and very many who once professed our faith and stood in our ranks have turned their backs upon us, being unable to stand in the day of trial, temptation and persecution. Prophecy is being fulfilled; and signs, which the scriptures inform us are to mark the last days and precede the coming of the Son of God in his power and great glory, are being rapidly fulfilled. Many have departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and by reason of them the way of truth is evil spoken of. The ears of many are turned away from the truth, and are turned unto fables. “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is consoling indeed to know that God has, even in these trying times, reserved to himself a remnant, according to the election of grace; and we have the assurance that he will never leave himself without witnesses. He is as able to supply them now as at any former period; and he knows as well where to find them, how to qualify them, and when and where to send them as when he at first sent forth his heralds to proclaim his everlasting gospel. There is a needs be for the seeming scarcity of faithful

ministers of the word. The faith and patience of the saints must be tried, and the cup of anti-christ must be filled up, hypocrites and nominal professors must be purged out of the church; and the *called and chosen, and faithful* disciples of Christ must see, and feel, and acknowledge, that their steadfastness in the truth is not of themselves, but of God.

The year which is just closing upon us has been, if we are not mistaken, specially pointed out by prophecy, for the fulfillment of important predictions; and although, at the writing of this article but a few days of 1866 remain, we feel solemnly impressed that before these last lingering days shall pass more will be developed of the fulfillment of prophecy than what we have already witnessed in the dismantling of the Pope of Rome of his temporal power. But whether it be before the first day of January or not, we feel certain that sooner or later all that is written of plagues prepared and vials of wrath to be poured out upon the Protestant, as well as the papal anti-christ, will be fully realized. The day and the hour we do not pretend to know, nor even the manner in which God will bring these things to pass; but with great fear and trembling we await the dread event. "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry (Hebrews 10:37)."

In regard to the prospective character of our journal, little more need to be said by us than that to the best ability our gracious God may bestow on us we shall exert to make it profitable and edifying to our readers. Thirty-four years of constant labor on our part, in which we have published about one thousand issues, averaging about five thousand copies to each issue, and making an aggregate of nearly five millions of copies, which have been sent out into every state and territory of our wide spread country, cannot have failed to give our readers a sufficient opportunity to judge of our sentiments, and of the character and usefulness of our publication. Our record is before our brethren, and if we would we cannot recall it. The sentiments and design to which this periodical was pledged in our Prospectus of September, 1831, have ever since been strictly adhered to by us; and to this hour, we see no cause to change, modify or recede from anything therein enunciated.

We feel profoundly grateful to God for his supporting power, and to our dear brethren, sisters and friends, who have so constantly and faithfully sustained us, through sunshine and storm, through evil as well as through good report. Often when we have been assailed by insidious as well as by openly avowed enemies, dear brethren have rallied to the rescue; and when pecuniary embarrassments have threatened, their purses, as well as their generous hearts, have been open to give us seasonable aid. No editor or publisher has ever been blessed with more reliable and kind-hearted patrons; and while we are able to use our pen or press, or tongue, we desire to devote all our energies, feeble though they may be, for their edification and comfort.

We enter upon the duties of the new volume with a confident reliance upon the continued aid of our brethren; not only do we need their cooperation in supplying suitable matter for our columns, but also in extending our circulation. As we have incurred a heavy expense in procuring new type, rules, and everything necessary to improve and beautify our pages, we confidently look for and expect a corresponding effort on the part of the friends of the paper to double, if possible, our subscription.

Middletown, N. Y.
January 1, 1867.



JOB 19:25-27

At the request of Mrs. Elizabeth King, only daughter of the late Mrs. Ruth Hoyt, whose obituary was published in the preceding number of this paper, we publish our views on the following portion of the scriptures. We had failed to learn that the deceased had expressed a desire that it should be preached from until after her funeral. The deceased had been very much exercised in her mind some years ago, and it was believed by those who conversed with her that she had passed from death unto life. The interest manifested by her in this text strengthens the hope that she felt in her declining hours the blissful assurance of hope in the living Redeemer.

“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me (Job 19:25-27).”

The book of Job is supposed to have been written by Moses, and is regarded as a most sublime and sacred poem, parabolically presenting the church of God in the person of Job, in all her various phases in which her patience and integrity are subjected to the severest tests, and the *end of the Lord*, or design and purpose of God, in suffering Satan to afflict his chosen ones, is made to appear. “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy (James 5:11).” Like all other parts of the holy scriptures, this book of Job was written by inspiration of God; for as the inspired truth of God, it is referred to and recognized by prophets and apostles. That there was a man that dwelt in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, is beyond all contradiction, true; for God himself declares it; and that all that is written of him in this book is strictly true we have no doubt. But while such are our firm convictions, we still believe that like David and others, what was written of Job was designed to allegorically apply to the church and the people of God. As his name signifies *patience*, it is applicable not only to him as an individual, but is applicable to the patience of all the people of God. As Job’s patience was sorely tried by afflictions, bereavements, temptations, physical and mental sufferings; by disappointment in those whom he had once regarded as his friends and confidential advisers, and by cruel persecutions, so also have all the people of God been tried in all ages. “A poor and afflicted people, who trust in the name of the Lord.” “For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.”

Satan thought, and many of his ministers have fallen into the same error, that Job was what in modern times is called an *Arminian*; that he served God for pay, and from selfish motives, and not from the power and vitality of the love of God implanted in his heart; and hence his challenge, “Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face (Job 1:9-11).”

How many such dialogues as are described in this connection have transpired in the experience of the children of God, by the Spirit of the Lord in the saints, and the spirit of Satan in the flesh. How keenly do the saints of God from time to time writhe with pain from the envenomed suggestions of the Devil, suggesting to them that their religion is only natural and selfish, and that their devotion and obedience to God springs not from the power of an endless life, but from the law of a carnal commandment. Now *the end of the Lord*, that is, the purpose of God in all the trials and afflictions of his people is to prove the power of his sustaining grace, by the trial of their faith, and patience, and to show beyond all

controversy that their righteousness is of the Lord; and that their faith, patience, submission, and hope are fruits, not of their carnal nature reformed, but of his own Spirit implanted in them.

Now carefully review the whole experience of Job, and see if we do not find in it portrayed the general experience of all the children of God. Plunged in deep distress, stripped of his worldly subsistence, bereaved of his children, tortured with distressing loathsome biles; surrounded with miserable comforters who instead of condoling sympathy and words of comfort, reproach and taunt him; while he vainly appeals to them for pity; and to make his misery complete, the presence of his God is withdrawn, and in bitterness of spirit, he cries out, “O that I knew where I might find him.” Under all this weight of sorrow and distress, his faith in God shines out from his darkness like the bow of divine assurance painted in living colors on the lowering cloud; or as the rising sun in his radiant strength dissipating the lowering shades of unbelief. Faith, triumphant over fear, shouts the victory; “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” Although a sinner needing redemption; and without the least power of my own to make myself just with God, (see Job 9:1) God has graciously provided for me a “Days Man,” one who can lay his hand on both, who can secure all the honor of the throne of God; magnify and honor the divine law which I have transgressed; meet and cancel every demand of God’s eternal justice, and yet deliver me from death; save me from hell; clothe me with the righteousness of God; and freely, effectually and forever justify me through the redemption that is in him. Such a Redeemer was seen clearly by the faith of the Son of God as exemplified in Job, fifteen hundred and twenty years before the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ to our guilty world. This is the cheering language of faith; living faith, tried faith, and faith that overcometh the world. Dark gloomy clouds may gather thickly around; tempests may spread their mightiest storms, and bellowing thunders shake the arched skies; but the undaunted faith of God’s elect will surely reassert its conquering power, and bear its humble possessor safely through the final “wreck of matter and the crash of worlds.” Esteemed friends, as in the case of Job, may withhold their tender sympathy in the time of our severest trials, and even load us with their cruel reproach; but as the lightning’s brilliant flash upon surrounding darkness, our faith will disclose to us the cheering knowledge that “Our Redeemer liveth.” Through the dim vista of more than fifteen centuries intervening between the day of Job and the incarnation of the Son of God, like Abraham at a still more distant standpoint, he saw the day, rejoiced in it and was glad. “He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.” This testimony of Christ was, and is, the Spirit of prophecy. It was the Spirit of Christ in Job, and in the prophets that in them did testify of his coming, of his sufferings, and of the glory that should follow. So far as the first advent of the Redeemer is expressed in our text, it was fulfilled when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; from the assurance expressed by Job, that he should see him, and his eyes should behold him in the latter day; we understand him to be speaking of the second coming of the Son of God, as it is testified by Paul, “And unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” When he shall come to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day.

This application of the prediction seems in harmony with the assurance of the faith of Job, that he should personally see him, and his eyes behold him, and in his flesh; even after his flesh should be destroyed by worms, and his reins consumed within him. This seems to be in substance what Paul expressed in Philippians 3:10, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,” etc.

As the faith of all the saints looks for a blessed resurrection, and happy immortality, so Job, after conceding the weakness and mortality of his flesh, and all his fleshly powers, admitting that, my property may perish, my children die, my earthly joys may all be blasted, and my skin and my body become food for greedy worms, and my reins, or all my vital fleshly powers, possessions, affections

and interests must fail, and decompose in the grave; this, even this, shall not disturb the purpose of God, or hinder the fulfillment of his promises. "I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another." This faith was the same in the psalmist, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness (Psalm 17:15)." The deep afflictions through which Job was passing were breaking down his mortal powers and consuming his life, and wearisome nights were appointed to him; still, like the psalmist, he could say, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Although to the grave I bow down my head, and yield my flesh and say unto corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister; yet with the perfect assurance that I have a living Redeemer who shall deliver me from death and bring me forth at last in triumph from the grave.

Middletown, N. Y.
January 15, 1867.

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE SWORD

Dear Father: In your kind favor of the 15th instruction, you tell me if what you have written on the use or abuse of the sword is not satisfactory, to feel no backwardness in saying so. As I before remarked, I fear the discussion of the subject through the "Signs of the Times" will be productive of alienation of feeling rather than good results. Truth may be revealed to some brethren, which is not as yet taught to others of us: it has been said:

"The men of mind are mountains; and their heads
Are sunned long ere the rest of earth."

This may be true to some extent in the church of Christ; one thing I have observed, when any great principle of gospel truth is presented in a manner or form which is different from what has been generally understood in the age and vicinity where it is introduced, the saints are apt to be slow to receive it, until taught by the Spirit, individually, to know its truth. Such was the case recorded in Acts 10:11; but when the light was fully revealed to all the saints, they all could see alike: (a) so, if the doctrine of non-resistance, in the broad sense in which you present it, be the true and scriptural doctrine of Christ, it will in due time be revealed to all the saints by the teaching of the Comforter, whose peculiar office it is to take of the things of Jesus, and show them unto his disciples. Until this is done, I very seriously apprehend that all efforts to hurry their understanding on this point will only tend to bewilderment, confusion and distress. It would be vain for me to attempt to argue against you merely to maintain a controversy, and I had designed pursuing the subject no further; but at your encouraging suggestion, I will present a few additional objections to the construction you place upon the peaceful laws of our Lord: (b) and first, permit me to entreat you in consideration of my weakness and lack of ability, to lay aside for the truth's sake the severe, if not sarcastic pen with which you replied to my incidental reference to the different standpoints from which brethren North and South view this question. My knowledge of your kindness of heart enables me to receive this in the spirit of a child who knows his teacher inflicts the rod for his own good; but there are many who look upon it rather as written

in harshness; so that with them it may have the effect to provoke them to wrath. See Ephesians 6:4.

(c) Our blessed Lord says, “My kingdom is not of this world, if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, *that I should not be delivered to the Jews*; but now is my kingdom not from hence (John 18:36).” Now mark the object for which the Savior states that his servants would fight if his kingdom were of this world – for the preservation of their king. This is in substance to maintain religion by force of arms, which no Old School Baptist of my acquaintance contends for. But surely you will pardon my inability to see the force of this passage as applied to forcible resistance to oppression or ruffianism. While the defense of our religion is not to be left to the sword, not a word of reproof or admonition is recorded against the military officers whose cases are mentioned in Matthew 8 and Acts 10. (d) Indeed, the very assertion of our Savior that his kingdom is not of this world implies that his laws do not abrogate the civil relations of his subjects; as in the case of the bond servant referred to by Paul in I Corinthians 7:20-24; so in the case of the soldier; the duty demanded by earthly relations is not annulled by the change from nature’s night to the light of the kingdom of Christ.

(e) The general principles of morality are indeed included in the organic or fundamental law of the gospel kingdom. But in addition to these, there are other principles in the same glorious system which apply exclusively to the internal relations of the saints within that kingdom. Hence, our Lord teaches the exclusive duty of forgiving one another, while Paul prays that the Lord may reward Alexander, an enemy, according to his evil works. Now if the principle of nonresistance and forgiveness were to be universal in its application, would not the inspired Apostle have prayed rather that the Lord would give that enemy *repentance*? You may say that Paul used no carnal weapon to repel that enemy; but this does not cover the case, since the point to be sustained is the propriety of a different feeling toward outside enemies from what should govern us in dissensions among ourselves, and even natural discretion forbade an appeal to carnal weapons for defense against the united world at that time. The spirit of this imprecation is not expressive of love to that enemy.

(f) Again, if we must love our enemies universally, we certainly ought to love Satan, the arch-enemy, supremely, which is absurd. But if we understand that our personal animosities are to be no barrier to the free course of fraternal affection among those in whom the Holy Spirit has wrought the image of Christ, no such absurdity arises.

(g) The powers that be, mentioned in Romans 13:1-7, would cease to be a terror to evil doers if their mandates were not enforced by the sword, or military power. (h) Is a Christian forbidden to hold a civil or judicial position, lest in the performance of the duties it involves, he should be obliged to do violence to an evil doer or criminal? If the executor of the law is guilty of transgressing the law of Christ in obeying the government, are not all who sustain that government guilty as being accessory to the crime? If I pay the assassin for murdering my neighbor, am I not guilty of the murder? Then, if it is unlawful to use carnal weapons defensively, it is unlawful to employ another to use them, and we should pay no taxes to hire sheriffs to take the lives of criminals: but where then is the terror of the law? (i) The murderer, with his knife at the throat of my wife whom I have solemnly sworn to protect, is not a fit subject for conciliatory argument; and if I can prevent his murderous intent by shooting him, and fail to do it, I am in a measure guilty of her blood. Is this not so?

(j) Your reference to the disastrous result of our appeal to arms proves nothing, since the success of our ancestors in a similar appeal is a refutation of the implication that we failed because the saints appealed to carnal weapons.

The defensive use of the means which God has placed within our power can never involve a conflict between the saints, since they are never justified in attacking the equal rights of others.

(k) This theory of non-resistance, based on the very identical grounds which you adduce, was advocated by the “Rev. Henry Holcombe, D.D.” in a work published in 1823, entitled, “The Primitive Theology,” and the Peace Society of New England has been urging most of the same arguments for about half a century. Does God enlighten the enemies of his people before he instructs his own church? I need not remind you that these lamb-like advocates of universal fraternity were foremost in the work of murdering and robbing Southerners during the late war, and even now while worldly politicians turn heart-sick from the horrors they have inflicted on us, the leaders of this politico-religious peace movement are still crying lustily for more vengeance and more blood. I know you do not approve their course; but may it not be advisable to examine through the process of reasoning by which you have arrived at the same conclusions with them, lest, peradventure the same error may mislead you which has deceived them.

I will now state explicitly the position on which we stand.

(l) We hold that the Christian stands in a two-fold relation; first, and paramount, as a child of God he is subject, in the gospel kingdom, to the laws of Christ alone. Second, and subordinately, he is bound to the earth by the ties of nature, and is subject, in common with the unregenerate world, to the natural laws and necessities which the creator has ordained and established. Hence, while no thought for the morrow, or consideration of consequences, should deter them from implicitly obeying every injunction of their Lord, yet their natural relations in life, as of husband and wife, parents and children, subjects and rulers, etc., are not abrogated, and consequently it is eminently proper that they should be diligent in business; sow, plant, and cultivate their crops, and in youth and in middle age, prepare for the winter of old age. The spiritual food and support of the saints is secure from thieves and corruption in heaven, and is given them day by day. In regard to natural food, the law is, if any man will not work, neither shall he eat.

The spiritual laws of the kingdom of our Lord are no more applicable to natural governments than the natural man is fit to be received into the kingdom of heaven. (m) Is not confounding spiritual with natural things the source whence this non-resistance doctrine originated? I write with deference to the superior understanding of brethren who have adopted this idea; and express my grounds of dissent from it, in the hope that if I am in error I may be enabled to see and receive the right view on this subject.

I should be basely ungrateful could I for a moment forget the Christian charity of the Northern brethren and friends, which so far palliated the horrors of my imprisonment in Camp Chase; and I have been under the impression hitherto that our sufferings were regarded by them as the infliction of tyrannical injustice. Surely if they regarded our efforts at self-defense as in violation of the laws of Christ, their efforts to forgive was a glorious example of true Christian mercy, which is superhuman in its disinterested benevolence. So that even granting that we have erred, we are only the more strongly bound to appreciate the fraternal kindness of our Northern brethren, as manifested toward us who were thrown on your Christian charity by the storm of war. God forbid that this discussion or any other matter should ever prove a root of bitterness springing up to mar that sweet fellowship which was so severely tested by the late sectional

animosities. Let the lusts and strife of carnal men war ever so fiercely, yet may the children of that kingdom which cannot be moved ever remember that they are united by the more enduring than those of the perishable nations of this world.

You see that I find no fault with your reasoning, but differ with you in the application of the spiritual laws of Christ's kingdom to the natural relations to this world; just as you would consider it a perversion of the command of our Lord as recorded in Matthew 23:9, if I would refuse to reverence you paternally.

I would be thankful if this subject is continued in the "Signs" to see something from our venerable brother, Elder T. P. Dudley, of Kentucky, relative to it, as I think on this subject, days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. As ever deferentially and affectionately your son.

William L. Beebe
Covington, Ga.
December 24, 1866.

Reply to our son, Elder William L. Beebe: A thorough investigation of every important subject connected with the faith and practice of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, if conducted in a candid and truth-seeking spirit can hardly fail to result beneficially to the saints; for however well we may be established in the truth, by careful investigation the mind takes a wider range of thought, and meeting opposing arguments, the truth is made more fully to appear; and error, if we have imbibed any, is more likely to be detected; and Christians, we have a right to believe, have only to be convinced that any point, however cherished, is erroneous, and they will at once discard it. We are not willing to think that the discussion of so important a subject as that which we now have under consideration can produce alienation of feeling among those who strive not for mastery, but for the truth as it is in Jesus. In the further prosecution of our discussion of the subject, we would wish our son to divest himself of every restraint or embarrassment arising from our fleshly relationship to each other. Whatever of reverence or honor may be due to a father from a son, relates only to our fleshly relationship; but in the discussion of the things of the kingdom of our Lord we should know no man after the flesh. In the spiritual organization of the church, as the body of Christ we are all one in Christ Jesus.

The saying that "*men of mind*, are like mountains, whose heads are sunned long ere the rest of the earth," may be true in natural things, but not in spiritual; for God has hidden the things of his Spirit from the wise and prudent, or men of superior intellect, and revealed to babes. The pride of human minds is humbled, and he that glorieth, must glory only in the Lord. Still we will not dispute that the Lord does enlighten the minds of some of his children, and even the very feeblest of them, in regard to some things, before the same things are made equally clear to others.

It is perfectly right that the saints should carefully examine every proposition presented, and try it by the infallible standard, the scriptures, before they subscribe to, or endorse it; and beware of novelties and vain speculations in divinity. And further, we believe that we should be very slow to discard the faith or the practice of long standing in the church of God, unless compelled by the testimony of the scriptures; but when the scriptures are clear and emphatic on any point, its opposite, however long standing and popular, should at once be laid aside. The case which you refer to, of Peter going to the house of Cornelius, and preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, is to the point.

In reviewing the well written article of our son on the subject of a Christian's obligations in regard to carnal or human war, to prevent confusion we will mark the passages on which we wish to remark, in

their order by letters of the *alphabet*, that the reader may know to what part of the article our remarks are intended to apply.

(a) It was not our intention to take any broader ground, on the subject of non-resistance, than that laid down in the scriptures; if we have inadvertently stretched our line beyond that standard we have gone too far, and will willingly recede to scriptural limits. The entire breadth of our non-resistance doctrine, as we desire to be understood, is measured by the words of our Lord. “Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also (Matthew 5:29).” In repelling a personal insult or injury, the disciple is forbidden to avenge himself, but is commanded to bear it patiently and leave the result to him to whom vengeance belongeth. An inspired expositor of the laws of Christ has said to the saints, “Recompense to no man evil for evil (Romans 12).” We think it would be straining this divine rule were we to say, if the assassin’s knife were at the throat of a wife or child, or of any other of our fellow beings, and we possessed physical power to prevent the assassination, we should not do it; for that would not in our judgment be resisting evil with evil. It is our duty to do what we can to preserve life. For this we have the example of our Lord, who came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. (See Luke 9:56.)

But we hope, whether our view on this subject be correct or not, you will reconsider your reasoning, that an effort to teach, or make that truth manifest to the saints, before the same point of truth is made plain to them by the Holy Comforter, will only tend to confusion. If this be so, we should be very cautious in our preaching, lest we confuse the saints by presenting any points of truth which they do not already understand. I think that you will perceive that your apprehensions are unfounded, for the ministers of Jesus must be apt to teach. If you only mean that we cannot teach spiritual things to carnal minds, or so as to be understood by those who have not been born and taught of the Spirit, then we are perfectly agreed.

(b) We have carefully reviewed what we said in our former article in regard to the *standpoints*, and feel somewhat surprised that our remarks were regarded as sarcastic or severe. We certainly did not design to indulge either in sarcasm or severity on so grave a subject. To us the cause is a common one; we know no geographic lines dividing the interests of the saints. If one member of Christ’s body suffers, all the other members sympathize with it, and we think it will not be disputed that we, at the North, did sympathize with our suffering brethren at the South; but we designed to show that an appeal to arms, so far as the brethren both North and South were concerned, was totally unproductive of any good, but of indescribable evil to the saints in both sections of the country. Our remarks were designed exclusively to be applied to the brethren; for we have neither the authority nor disposition to endorse or censure the policy of children of this world, or to dictate in the political affairs of the world. We designed only to say, in candor, soberness, and kindness, that after making all allowance for the sufferings of the brethren at the South that they may claim, still we honestly believe that so far as the saints are concerned, it would have been better for them to have borne the wrongs inflicted on them until deliverance should come from above, than to attempt to avenge themselves.

(c) The declaration of our Lord that his kingdom is not of this world else would his servants fight that he should not be delivered to the Jews, to our mind presents this palpable truth, that the kingdoms and governments of the world are governed on worldly principles, by human policy and physical force; but his kingdom is not of this world in any of these respects and therefore his subjects are not allowed to fight in carnal warfare, not even to repel the persecution, proscription or assassination of their King. Can we fairly infer that while forbidden to fight in defense of their King, they are at liberty to fight for their own personal rights, or for the defense of human governments? What is his kingdom? Who are his

servants? And why may they not fight? His kingdom is his church over which he presides as her blessed and only Potentate. His servants are the members of his mystical body to which he is given to be *Head over all things*. They, as his body and members, cannot therefore engage righteously in any strife in which their Head cannot participate, without being severed from their Head, so far as such strife is concerned. Nor can they do what he, as their only Potentate, has not commanded, especially what he has forbidden. In this respect they cannot serve two masters. All subordination of his servants to human authorities, or parents, husbands, masters, magistrates, kings, governors, and rulers, is restricted to his supreme command; we are to obey them, not because they, but because he, commands us. So that the Christian, in rendering tribute to whom tribute is due, honor to whom honor is due, and obedience to whom obedience is due; are to do so in obedience to Christ, and in a way in which we call no man on earth our master or our lord. We cannot be subordinate at the same time to two distinct and conflicting laws, or governments. Under no circumstances, not even to save our lives or property, or to escape the wrath of human rulers, are the subjects of Christ's kingdom permitted to depart from his laws. Can it be right for the saints to shed blood in defense of their life, liberty, or human rights, and at the same time wrong when in defense of the higher and more sacred cause of their divine Lord and Master? Or is it less safe for us to commit the preservation of our natural lives and interests to the keeping of God, than the keeping of our spiritual interests?

It is true, there is no word of reproof recorded, as having been given to the centurions, mentioned in Matthew 8 and Acts 10; and this fact seems to favor the idea that a military position is compatible with a Christian profession. But, let us examine: neither of these centurions were disciples of Jesus at the times referred to. It was the faith of the one mentioned by Matthew, and not the former practice that Jesus commended; and of his subsequent life, whether he ever took on him the yoke of Jesus, and identified himself with the church, we are not informed: if he did, it is quite probable that he resigned his commission in the army, and became a soldier of the cross. Cornelius was a centurion, but we have no account of his serving in the army after he became a Baptist. Could we find that either of these centurions, after uniting with the church, still held their places in the army, without reproof, it would be to us clear and satisfactory proof that our views of the incompatibility of human warfare with the Christian calling, are untenable.

On this point we will submit for consideration whether the qualifications for military service do not disqualify one for discipleship to Christ; and *vice versa*? To be a soldier under military discipline, martial law forbids him to sympathize with, or render aid or comfort to an enemy; and requires him to put them to death without mercy when so commanded by his commanders. The law of Christ by which his disciples are governed, commands that we shall love our enemies, and render to them all the aid and comfort in our power. Is there a single case or record of any one of the primitive saints holding military positions, either as officers or privates? If there is, that will settle the matter, and end the discussion. But in the absence of any such example on record in the New Testament, and in the seeming opposition to all the examples and precepts of Christ, is it safe for us to teach that Christians may without violation of the laws of Christ, or of the peaceful principles of our holy religion, use the sword in carnal warfare?

(d) Although we fail to deduce the same inference from the declaration of our Lord that his kingdom is not of this world, yet we are perfectly satisfied that the laws of Christ's Kingdom, instead of abrogating such relations and civil obligations as God has instituted and ordained, especially provide and command that they shall be respected, observed and obeyed. But all such are specified, defined and restricted to such limitations as infinite wisdom has ordained. But we do infer from the declaration of our Lord that his kingdom ruleth over all. (See Psalm 103:19.) And while it conforms to none, it is

distinct and independent of them all; and destined to break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms, and stand forever.

(e) We can make no distinction between *general and organic* or fundamental, in the laws of the kingdom of Christ. All the laws of Christ are organic and fundamental; so they cannot be dispensed with in his kingdom. There, and there exclusively, they belong; they were not given to the world, nor intended for the regulation of worldly governments. Nor can we consent to the restriction of the law of Christ, wherein he commands his disciples to love their enemies, to those only which are brethren or fellow members of the kingdom. We have an example in the prayer uttered by the Savior on the cross. “Father, forgive them,” and in the same spirit in Stephen praying God to lay not the sin of his murderers to their charge. The prayer of Paul that the Lord should reward Alexander according to his works, we cannot regard as a malediction, or imprecation, but rather that his devices and opposition to the truth might prove ineffectual; that his iniquity might be exposed, and the saints preserved from his wicked influences. But whatever may have been the design, the appeal was to the Lord, to meet out the reward, as to him alone belongeth vengeance. To him also may all the oppressed saints freely appeal for protection from the violence of their enemies and to dispose of them as he sees proper. He certainly reproved his disciples for proposing to call for fire to destroy their enemies. We do not understand that Alexander was an outsider, but having at least a nominal standing in the church was capable of doing more harm than a regiment of outside enemies. Therefore, Paul delivered him and Hymeneus unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme (I Timothy 1:20).

(f) The Savior does command the disciples to love their enemies, and to bless such as curse them, and to pray for those who persecute and despitefully use them; but no where do we find his command to love Satan. It is not their enmity, nor their spirit that we are commanded to love. But knowing that such were some of us, and that God had made us to differ, we are to cherish a compassionate feeling towards them, like that expressed in the words before written, “Father, forgive.”

Indeed we fail to see how the supposed “absurdity” would be avoided by restricting the application of our Savior’s command to enemies, persecutors, spiteful and malicious members in the church, since the same spirit of Satan instigates their hostility and malicious conduct that betrays itself in those who are without. But we trust that the examples we have referred to, of Christ on the cross, and Stephen in his martyrdom will suffice to show that the inference suggested is not justified by the scriptures.

(g) The necessity or propriety of enforcing the laws of men by the sword, in order that their laws should be a terror to the wicked, does not belong to this discussion; for we have not disputed that God has authorized the potentates of the earth to enforce their wholesome laws by the sword. But while the potsherds of the earth may strive, the saints are called out from the strife and turmoil of carnage, and are subjects of a kingdom whose subjects are commanded to put up the sword.

(h) We know of no direct precept forbidding a disciple of Christ to holding a civil office, where such office does not interfere with his religious standing. But for Christians, especially those who profess to be ministers of Christ, to seek such offices, never fails to lessen them in the esteem of their brethren. We do believe however that such offices as require them to execute the death penalties of the law, or to be engaged in carnal warfare are altogether incompatible with their holy profession; that they cannot fill them without disobedience to Christ. Caesar does not lack for men to execute his laws. Christians who are redeemed from among men, and brought under law to Christ, should come out and be separate from the world. They have better and sufficient employment in the kingdom to which they belong. The laws of Christ’s kingdom do not apply to any but the subjects of his spiritual government; therefore we have no judgment to pass against the men of this world in regard to these things. All that Christians

have to do to sustain human governments is enjoined on them by the laws of Christ; they must pay tribute, and submit to every ordinance of men, for Christ's sake because he commands it. But the less they have to do with politics, the better. If we pay assassins for murdering our neighbors, or otherwise encourage them to do so, we truly are accessory to the murder. But if we simply pay tribute to Caesar, as we are commanded to do, and Caesar employs the revenue so collected for the destruction of our fellow men, he, and not us, is responsible.

(i) Perhaps no stronger case could be supposed than that which you have stated. The murderer, with his knife at the throat of your wife, or we will say, at the throat of any other person, we believe if in our power we should prevent the commission of the deed, as best we can. But that is a case which we believe could never occur with a Christian whose trust is wholly in the Lord. The Christian who can trust the salvation of his soul to God, we would suppose could also trust his personal safety, and that of his family to the same guardian care. "Behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves." Can we conceive of greater exposure than this? In what then are they to confide for safety? Not in purse, or scrip, or staves, or warlike armor; for they were forbidden to take any. But God has assured us that he has created the smith that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and also the waster to destroy, and he says, "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord."

Can a Christian be more safe in trusting in a sword, and in his own power and skill to use it, than in committing the preservation of his life and all his interests for time and for eternity to God? "He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity." "He that taketh the sword, shall perish by the sword." "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." "They that trust in the Lord shall be like mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abideth forever."

(j) Our reference to the failure of an appeal to arms to secure any beneficial effect to either section of the country, was not designed to prove that such appeals have never been successful; but rather to show that had the peaceful doctrine of the gospel prevailed in the North and South more than a million of lives would not have been sacrificed, and untold millions of treasure would have been saved. And now what has been gained? The South has not gained their independence, nor has the North secured what our Congress declared to be the sole object of the war on their part, the restoration of all the states to the Union, with all their rights unimpaired. But with the policy of the states, either North or South, this discussion has nothing to do, either to commend or to denounce. The simple question involved is whether the subjects of the kingdom of the Prince of Peace may under any circumstances stain their hands with the blood of their fellow men.

(k) We remember the time when Dr. Holcomb of Philadelphia published the work alluded to; but what were his arguments on the subject of peace, we do not so clearly remember. But admitting that he advocated the doctrine on the same ground that we do would not prove that God reveals his truth to the enemies of the cross before he does to his people; for if our position be correct, the primitive saints were enlightened, did understand and practice these very principles. The Peace Societies of New England could not have occupied the same ground with us, as we confine the laws of Christ to his Kingdom and disciples, while they would apply them indiscriminately to the world. We are not aware that we have arrived at any conclusions on this subject by any process of reasoning. We design only to take the word as it reads upon this subject, and abide by its instruction.

(l) Your explicit statement of your position is substantially the same which we also hold; so far at least as is stated from (l) to (m) as marked in your letter.

(m) Ours is not properly called a non-resistance doctrine; for we are commanded to resist the Devil, and to resist evil, but not with evil. And we hold that the Christian's whole allegiance is due to Christ; as he is given to be the head over all things to his church. The laws of nature which God has enacted will enforce themselves, and we are forbidden by the law of Christ to transgress them. The laws also of civil governments are made binding and obligatory on Christians so far as they do not conflict with the paramount laws of Christ. So in all things the Christian is governed by Christ; and in his law, thoroughly furnished by precept and example to every good work. We do not design to apply the spiritual laws of Christ to any but to his spiritual subjects.

We have before said that in what we have written, we have not the slightest intention to censure our brethren, either North or South. We wish only to call the attention of the household of faith to some of the precepts of our divine Lord and Master; that whatever may have been our errors in times past, we can henceforth understand the way of the Lord more perfectly.

In conclusion we wish to say that we hold none responsible for our views; not even the Warwick Association, whose circular of last June gave rise to this discussion; for we have not consulted with them, and we know not that they will fully endorse our views. Neither do we wish our views on this or any other subject to prevail any further than they are sustained by our only authorized standard, the scriptures. Our judgment is weak and imperfect; but the scriptures are infallible and perfectly safe. We may fail in many points to understand them correctly. We think our views are about as clearly and candidly stated as we are capable to present them; and we only wish them to pass for what they are worth. So far as they are sustained by the scriptures may they be blessed to the instruction and edification of the heirs of immortality; and wherein they are not so sustained, may God enable the readers to detect the wrong and avoid it. "Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good."

We sincerely join with our son in the desire by him expressed that nothing growing out of our discussion may tend to mar the sweet fellowship of any of our kindred in Christ. We are truly glad to find that not even filial affection and regard for an aged parent, of which he has never been deficient, would tempt him to endorse ought from us, until he can find it sustained by the divine rule. Unless our son, or some other of our brethren, shall see cause to call us out again upon this subject, we shall submit what we have written, at least for the present.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1867.

II CORINTHIANS 12:2-4

Reply to brother Ford's communication on page 29: The passage referred to reads thus: "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

We understand the apostle to be speaking of his own experience: that he himself was the man in Christ, who in vision was caught up to the third heaven, and saw and heard what mortal tongues cannot

express nor human language describe. He had come to speak, in demonstration of the signs of his apostleship, of visions and revelations, having in the preceding chapters told them what he had been enabled to endure; and that out of all his conflicts and trials, God had delivered him. Now of visions he could speak understandingly, and from actual experience. The transporting vision of the heavenly world, and of the supreme glory of God, so far as Paul was able to describe it, was the same in kind, though superior in degree, to that enjoyed by all the children of God. We in our limited measure have the earnest of the Spirit given us, whereby we cry Aba Father, and there are times when our faith enters within the veil, and we are permitted to see and hear more than we have ability to express of the revelation of the glory of God to us. By the third heaven we understand Paul to mean that state in which all the saints shall ultimately be perfected, and dwell with Christ in the glory which he has with the Father. The first heaven refers to the state of the Old Testament saints, patriarchs, and prophets. The second, the gospel church in her militant conflicts, and the final consummation of the glory of the kingdom of Christ in heaven is the third and perfected state.

To taste of the joys of the world to come has been the happy privilege of the saints at times, but we presume that in confirmation of his calling to the apostleship, and to qualify him more fully for that position, Paul was favored with a more full vision of the glory of that heavenly state than what is enjoyed by others.

He says, and repeats, that he could not tell whether he was in the body, or out of the body at that transporting moment; and it is a remarkable truth, that in proportion to the degree of all our spiritual enjoyments is the forgetfulness, or unconsciousness of the body. When we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord (II Corinthians 5:6-8).” The more we think about ourselves, our personal interest, and our individual marks of personal safety, the more prone are we to the fleshly reasonings of our poor blind and selfish minds, and the more we reason, the darker all appears. For God has ordained that his saints shall walk by faith, and not by sight. But when our faith mounts up to heaven, pierces through, and looks beyond the veil, and beholds the uncreated glories of the God of our salvation, then, whether we sink or swim, live or die, are saved or lost, is not in our mind; all that care is left with him who careth for us. Enraptured, transported with joy unspeakable and full of glory, we become perfectly unconscious of where the body is. That is a matter of so very little consequence, compared with what our faith sees and hears of unspeakable things, it cannot then intrude. The things which Paul heard he says it was *unlawful* for a man to utter. The law of language makes no provision for such utterances; for these things are unutterable. The margin reads “not *possible*.” There is no law or governing principle, in the law of language that will permit them to utter things which are so unspeakable and full of glory. But could we be always thus transported, we should be exalted above measure; beyond that measure of ecstasy which God in infinite wisdom has appointed for us while here in the flesh. It would unfit us for the duties of life, and for usefulness in our day and generation. But our God takes care that we rise not above that measure to which we are restricted, and provides for us a counterpoise; a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet us. Our fleshly nature is formed of the dust of the ground, which is groaning under the curse; and it is doomed to bring forth thorns, and briars, to pierce and entangle us. If we never felt them piercing us, we should be very apt, like Paul, when in his vision, to forget that we were still in the body. But when they prick and tear our flesh, we groan within ourselves, and ask, “Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?” In an experience of more than half a century, the most spiritual frame of mind and most transporting joys we have ever experienced, have been when we were thinking little or nothing about ourself. All our doubts, fears, unbelief, fretfulness, and impatience is about darling self. May we then look away from self, and look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of

our faith, and learn to press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling; and leave all our cares with him who has promised to raise us up in his image at the last day. Be this our care, that we glorify him in our body and in our spirit, which are his.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1867.

MELCHISEDEC

The history of Melchisedec is purposely withheld. Only so much is recorded of him as would suffice to make him an eminent type of our Lord Jesus Christ; both in regard to his priesthood and kingly office. The priesthood of Aaron was hereditary, passing down from sire to son until by its limitation it ran out. But of Melchisedec, no record is given of his parentage or posterity. Without (so far as his priesthood was concerned) father or mother; that is, as we understand, he did not, like the sons of Aaron, inherit the priesthood from father or mother. As a mere man he undoubtedly had both father and mother, but as priest and king, we are told that his descent was not reckoned; for in these respects he had neither. Neither have we any account of his beginning of life or end of days; for such a presentation would have greatly lessened, if not destroyed, the force and beauty of the figure. He is just presented in the figure as a priest and king – nothing is told us of how or when he became a priest, or whence he received his crown and regal honors as a king, when he began to reign, or when he ceased to reign. His name and titles imply that God himself made him both priest and king: for he says king of Salem, which name signifies righteousness and peace. And he was priest unto the Most High God as he was evidently recognized as such by the oath and testimony of God in Psalm 110:4. The inspired apostle calls this whole account of Melchisedec a *similitude*. And it was principally designed to show the surpassing glory of the royal priesthood of Christ over the typical priesthood of Aaron and his sons.

1. In that he has power and dominion which did not belong to the Levitical priesthood. He is king as well as priest. And in his regal glory Zechariah saw and testified of him thus; “Behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both (Zechariah 6:12,13).”
2. Aaron was made a priest by the law of a carnal commandment; for the Levitical law made men priests who had infirmity, and were liable like other men to die. But Christ is made a priest after the power of an endless life.
3. Men, by that law were made priests without an oath; but of Christ it is said, “The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a Priest forever; after the order of Melchisedec (Psalm 110:4).”
4. The priesthood of Christ is not transferable; He abideth a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.
5. The priesthood of Melchisedec was anterior to that of Aaron, and so far superior to it, that Levi, the patriarch of the Aaronic priesthood, paid tithes to Melchisedec when yet in the loins of Abraham; thus

signifying that Christ's priesthood is without beginning of days, nor end of life. And finally it shows Christ is the substance of all the types, shadows, and figures, used in the Old Testament, as pointing to him. That is, he is not in a figurative sense, but really the King of Righteousness, and Priest to the Most High God. And although all the redeemed people of God are made kings and priests unto God, and shall reign with him in immortal glory as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people, yet his priesthood is not hereditary, for it is *in him*, not as succeeding, or superseding him; as members of his body, his flesh, they are identified with him in his royal priesthood.

Our sister inquires! Who is Melchisedec? We have tried to answer, he was a man who in the days of Abraham was literally king of Salem, and priest to God, and made to prefigure the royal priesthood of the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

Abraham gave him a tenth part of the spoils he had taken from the kings over whom he triumphed in the restoration of Lot, and the treasures of Sodom and Gomorrah, and this in paying tithes of temporal things to Melchisedec, recognized his superiority; and signified that all honor shall be paid to Christ as our spiritual and ever abiding High Priest.

Is there more than one King of Salem, or King of Peace? There were many kings of Salem, or *Jerusalem*, all of whom, so far as their position is concerned, were typical of Christ. But in the anti-typical Salem, the New Jerusalem, there is but one King, and this is Christ, who is the "Blessed and only potentate," the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only wise God, our Savior, to whom be honor, praise, power, majesty and glory forever. Amen.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1867.

I PETER 3:18,19

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

Sister Patterson of South Dansville, N.Y., has expressed a desire to know how we understand this scripture, especially the eighteenth verse. We will give such views as we have, hoping they may be edifying to her, and others who desire to know the truth.

The context, and almost the whole of the epistle, is devoted to the encouragement of the persecuted and scattered saints, with instruction and solemn admonition and exhortation. As the saints were then suffering severely for the truth's sake, the apostle gives them, and us, to understand that it is the will of God that his people shall suffer for well-doing. He says, "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing." It is undoubtedly good for us to suffer chastisement for our faults, and in such a manner as the Lord in wisdom may direct, whether by his ministration of the

rod, or by allowing the enemies of truth to persecute us. But good as his fatherly chastisements may be for our faults, it is far better when by his will we are enabled to bear the frowns, reproaches and cruel persecutions of our adversaries, for a strict and conscientious adherence to the truth and order of the gospel. If all manner of evil be said of us falsely for Christ's sake, or because we honor and obey him in all things, then may we rejoice and be exceeding glad. The apostle says, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory, and of God, resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of; but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." As an encouragement to the saints thus suffering for righteousness' sake, the text proposed for our consideration, was written. "For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh; but quickened by the spirit."

While in this text the great doctrine of redemption, reconciliation to God, and salvation through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ is clearly stated, a bright and glorious example is presented for the encouragement of the saints, unto whom it is given, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Are we to be falsely accused, our names cast out as evil, our rights trampled upon, our liberties taken from us, and our very existence disputed by wicked and malicious men, and must we, when guilty of no crime, tamely submit to all this? Look at this example. Behold the beloved of the Father, the adored of all holy beings in earth and heaven, the just, the holy, the immaculate Lamb of God, suffering for sins. Ah yes, for sins! For himself bear our sins in his own body on the cross. He suffered for sins; the just for the unjust. As the holy and the just One, his Father from heaven bears record of him, the Holy Ghost as such descends from heaven upon him, the law and the prophets testify of him. The saints inspired of God bear witness saying, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." And the very court which delivered him to be crucified was constrained to acquit him of all the false and malicious charges made against him. "I find no fault at all in this just man," said Pilate. No guile was in his mouth; yet as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth; not even to assert or plead his innocence. Yet to bring his people to God, he must suffer and die. He manifested his character as the just by his exact obedience to the just and righteous law of God, and in all the complete satisfaction rendered to all its jots and tittles; and his perfect right to that character is vindicated by his resurrection from the dead. He was put to death in the flesh; but quickened, and justified by the Spirit.

If then it was the will of God that his only begotten Son, in whom he is well pleased; so holy, so just, separate from sinners, and above all, one so much higher than the heavens, should suffer, shall we be surprised, discouraged or disheartened that it is the will of God that his people, his members, shall participate in his sufferings? Shall we desire to know him and the power of his resurrection, and object to the fellowship of his sufferings, and conformity to his death? Though holy, just and pure, it was just that he should suffer, bleed and die, to bring us to God; for all the iniquities of all his people were laid upon him, and he by relationship to them, possessed the right to redeem them, to bear their griefs, carry their sorrows, and assure the chastisement of their peace, and heal them with his stripes. As their surety, God in justice laid on him the iniquities of them all, and he in equal justice, bore them in his own body on the tree, and put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. Those for whom he died were enemies to God by wicked works, unrighteous, ungodly and unjust, and by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us with Christ. "He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification," and we are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Here the great object of his suffering is made known: it was to bring us to God. This end could not be attained in any other way. It was not possible that the blood of bulls, goats or other victims, which had been offered continually under the law should cleanse us from guilt and purge our conscience from dead works, or bring us to God. But he by his own blood has entered into the holiest of all, even unto heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Thus has he by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. In the accomplishment of this, our text reminds us that he was put to death in the flesh; but quickened by the Spirit. His Spirit being the life and immortality of the Eternal God, he could not in that Spirit die, nor be recognized as under the law which we had transgressed. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death." "For as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death." "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "He was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law." "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham" "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." "But he was quickened by the Spirit." That is, by the spirit of life and immortality, which now dwells in the hearts of his saints, of which they are born, when born by the Spirit, and by which they are sealed to the day of redemption. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11)."

This Spirit which raised up the crucified body of Jesus from the dead is the same that we now have an earnest of, and shall quicken and animate our resurrected bodies in the world to come. It is the Spirit of life, of immortality, and is expressly called the Spirit of Christ. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." But as many as have this Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; for it is only by being born of this Spirit that our relation to God as sons is, or can be, made manifest. The apostle informs us moreover that this resurrection Spirit is the same by which he went and preached to the spirits in prison. To Abel, Enoch, Noah, and to all the Old Testament saints, patriarchs and prophets who were born of this resurrection Spirit, and through it were savingly acquainted with him, held communion with him, and by him found access to the throne of grace. This is the Spirit of which he testified by Isaiah, saying, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Those prisoners to whom he preached deliverance, he did not go to them in his fleshly body; for he had not in their day become incarnate; but he went to them in this Spirit, and by this Spirit dwelt in them. We are told that they searched diligently what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it (the spirit of Christ in them) testified beforehand of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. Christ, by his Spirit, was in the prophets, and in the Old Testament saints, and in them preached; as instanced by Peter in the connection of our subject, in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing. Noah by this Spirit was a preacher of righteousness to the anti-diluvians. And certainly it was by this Spirit of Christ that God at sundry times and in divers manner spake to the fathers by the prophets, the same by which he has in these last times spoken to us by his Son. It is the same Spirit which raised up Christ from the dead, the same that was shed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and the same which (in measure) dwells in all who are born of the Spirit, in all ages. It is called, as we have seen, "The Spirit of the Lord God," by which the head of the church is anointed, and identified as the Christ, which name and title signifies the Anointed. Christ publicly declared this scripture fulfilled in him, manifestly, or in the eyes of those whom he was addressing, when he read to them in the book of Isaiah the prophet, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good

tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound (Isaiah 61:1,2).”

The spirits in prison to whom Peter says he, by the Spirit of his resurrection, went and preached, are by Isaiah called captives, to whom he went and proclaimed liberty. Prisoners, to whom he by that Spirit went and preached the opening of the prison doors. To them Zechariah 9:9-13 says “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the fold of an ass.” “And he shall speak peace, (or preach good tidings) unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.” These must be the prisoners to whom Christ by his resurrection Spirit went and preached deliverance. They were prisoners in a perishing condition, in a pit where there is no water, yet prisoners of hope; for God had promised them deliverance.

Every saint may find an illustration of this subject in his or her personal experience. Only look back to the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Once were ye under arrest, proved guilty, condemned, sentenced and thrown in prison; the walls were strong, the bars were massive, and your escape by human power or agency, impossible. The apostle Paul most clearly attributes the quickening, enlightening and salvation of the saints to the Spirit and power of the resurrection of our Lord, as also the faith by which the saints believe on him. “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:18-23).”

Carnal professors may believe according to their powers of human agencies, schools, tracts and moral suasion, etc. but God’s people believe according to the working of that mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and exalted him far above all heavens. Thus we see that the Spirit and power of the resurrection of Christ is the Spirit and power by which the risen and glorified Savior went and preached to Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, who rejoiced to see his day, saw it, and were glad. And the same resurrection life, power and Spirit, is that by which Gentile sinners, embracing the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus everywhere, are quickened and delivered from bondage, and from prison houses, and brought into the liberty of the gospel. They are raised up together with him, and made to sit together with him in those heavenly places, which are far above all principality, power, dominion or government in this world, or that which is to come. This resurrection Spirit and power is implanted in all the saints; by it they all were quickened and born; by it they are sealed to the day of the resurrection of their mortal bodies; for *if* it dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit, which dwelleth in you. (See Romans 8:11.) Well might Peter say, and every saint respond, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy bath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that

fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through *faith* unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:3-5).”

Middletown, N. Y.
March 1, 1867.

REVELATION 22:19

Elder Beebe: Please give your views on Revelation 22:19, and oblige an

Inquirer after truth.

December 17, 1866.

Reply: The words on which we are requested to write our views are as follows, “And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

We have, if we mistake not, on former occasions given our views on this text, and on the verse preceding it, but as some of our present readers have not read what we have published, we will give such light as we now have on the subject.

In closing the sacred volume of the inspired testimony, the Son of God, as Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, sets to the entire volume the broad seal of his power and immutability, in the solemn words of the sixteenth verse, “I Jesus have sent my angel to testify unto you these things in the church.” From which we cannot easily mistake the source from which the solemn admonition has emanated, nor the subjects to whom they are addressed. The whole testimony and revelation comes from God, to the churches of the saints, as golden candlesticks, among which he is seen, as holding their stars in his right hand, and from the Eternal God through the Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom alone all divine revelation is made; as he is the only Mediator between God and men. In the introduction of this book, these remarkable words are given, “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servant things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.” Then the words immediately follow, “John, to the seven churches of Asia, etc.” John was the messenger to whom Jesus Christ sent his angel, (or his Spirit) and signified (by figures and dark sayings) in a manner to be understood and witnessed by him, and recorded, and sent to the churches for whom they were designed. Hence in the last chapter Jesus says, “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.” Of the awful importance of the things thus signified to John, and testified by the angel, or Spirit of the living God, we may infer, not only from the manner of the communication and revelation, but from the startling admonition contained in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses of the last chapter. The plain and unmistakable import of which is that nothing is to be added to, or diminished from the precious words of the prophecy, in which this testimony is given by revelation from God, through Christ, signified and attested by the angel of the presence of the Lord God of Hosts.

In signifying to the churches to whom this testimony is directed, as branches of the kingdom of Christ, the entire church is brought to view, as the “holy city, New Jerusalem,” which in the words of the prophecy of this book, is very clearly described, as descending from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. The perfect organization of the gospel church, is beautifully *signified* under the similitude of the perfectly organized and regulated city. Her exact boundaries are measured; her length, breadth and height, are equal, her walls, her gates, her streets and internal regulations are given with the most exact precision, and her supplies of all that can contribute to the comfort, safety and glory of this city minutely declared. No natural or artificial light is either needed or allowed; for the Lord God, and the Lamb are the light of it. The waters of life are clear as crystal, and flow from the throne of God and the Lamb. The fruit of the tree of life, of which Jesus is both the Root and the Offspring, is yielded every month, and those who are admitted within her gates have right to eat of its delicious fruits.

As we understand the church of our Lord Jesus Christ to be signified by this city, and in her gospel organization and discipline, we shall see that by the laws of her King, there are rules for admission, and also for expulsion, through her gates.

The law by which members are to be admitted through her gates to the fellowship and fellow-citizenship of the city, are thus stated in the fourteenth verse of this chapter, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Revelation 22:14).” This regulation agrees with the prophecy of Isaiah also, “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in (Isaiah 26:2).”

By special instruction given to the apostles by our Lord Jesus Christ, in their commission, they are authorized to recognize such, and only such, as “believe and are baptized,” as subjects of church fellowship. So the apostles were governed at the day of Pentecost. They that gladly received the word preached were baptized, and added to the church. Professing to believe the doctrine as held and taught by the apostles, and bowing their necks to take on them the yoke of Jesus, they were baptized on the profession of their faith in Christ.

Those who are admitted through the gates into the city, on profession of their faith and obedience to the laws of the kingdom, are required to continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship. Their feet are to abide within the gates; that is, to walk orderly in all the laws and institutions of the house of God. The same law of Christ by which they were admitted to fellowship requires that the fellowship of the church shall be withdrawn from them, and their part from the book of life, (or record of the living in Jerusalem), God will take away from them, by the discipline of his church. The margin reads, *from the tree of life*, or from holding a name and place, and from enjoying the privileges of orderly members of the church, who have a right to the tree of life.

This text does not certainly mean that those who are born of God can be unborn, that the children of God can ever cease to stand in that relation to God; but it does, as we understand the subject, mean precisely what it says; their part shall be taken from the family record, that is from the registry of the names of those who are entitled to recognition as orderly members in fellowship. Thus for the heresy of adding to the doctrine, laws or ordinances authorized by the laws of Christ, and for rejecting any part of the words of the book of divine inspiration, the apostles delivered such over to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme.

It will not be disputed that there are subjects of grace who have not entered in through the ordinance of baptism to the church relation which is signified, and who while living in disobedience to Christ cannot

be admitted to the communion of the church, or to participate in any of the privileges whereby orderly disciples are recognized as having right to the tree of life.

It is also a well established order in all gospel churches that when any who have been received deny the faith, or defy the authority with which Christ has invested his church, by repudiating any of his laws, or rejecting any part of the word and laws of Christ, they are excluded from the fellowship of the church, and no longer allowed any of the privileges of the church, until they shall be convinced of their disorder, confess their faults, and be restored to the fellowship and privileges of the church. They are to the church when, and while put away, as the publicans and sinners were to the Jews. Thus debarred from church fellowship and church privileges, they are cast into outer darkness, and into outer company; for the division wall which separates between the orderly disciples, and those who do not the commandments, as marked in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of this chapter, shows that the walls encircle only the orderly members, while those who are cast out by the laws of Christ, have to associate with dogs, and sorcerers, whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. It is a fearful and lamentable state indeed for a disobedient child of God to be expelled from the fellowship of the saints, and find their portion with hypocrites. May we take heed to the solemn admonitions of our Lord, and see that we take no liberties which are not granted, by adding to the word; or transgress the law of Christ by repudiating any part or portion of his sacred word.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1867.

LUKE 7:35

“But wisdom is justified of all her children (Luke 7:35).”

At the request of an esteemed brother, we propose to give some general views on the subject of wisdom; and the apostle James informs us that there are two kinds which are essentially different from each other, emanated from opposite sources, and productive of very different fruits, each known by its peculiar qualities and general characteristics. That which is most popular in the world, and which is called the wisdom of this world, we are told, “descendeth not from above; but is earthly, sensual, devilish;” its tendency is to confusion and every evil work (see James 3:13-16). It was found in the serpent that beguiled Eve in the morning of the creation and has its fountain in the depths of hell. By this kind of wisdom, the world knew not God. None of the princes, or ruling powers of this world, knew Christ; for if they had known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. This wisdom is so cheap that all may have it; it is so easily acquired that no divine or spiritual power is required for the attainment of it. Our mother Eve received it, unasked from the serpent in the garden, and it is now being insidiously instilled into the natural minds of children and adults from all the humanly devised religious institutions of the world, from the Infant School to the more imposing Theological Seminaries in the land, and almost every school is more or less infested with it. It being of the world, the world approves and loves it. It qualifies the carnal mind of men to contest and resist the truth of God with more subtlety, and craft, and to control the natural mind with the greater plausibility.

It is set forth allegorically in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, as used by the *strange woman*, (anti-christ) in her seductive and adulterous wiles, and missionary arts by which she makes proselytes of those who are void of true wisdom. Allured by her deceptive flattery and crafty words, her converts “go after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool goeth to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.”

“But the wisdom that is 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).” This wisdom which is from above, is the wisdom of God, and it is therefore pure: free from all impurity or deception, and possessed of eternal excellency in itself. It is peaceable in its fruits; inspiring good will to men, and glory to God in the highest; all who are richly endowed with it will beat their swords into plough shears, and their spears into pruning hooks; and the nation ruled by it will learn war no more. It is gentle in its nature and in all its effects; easy to be entreated. “If any of you (of the scattered people of God to whom this epistle was addressed) lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him (James 1:5).” How gentle, and how easily entreated by all who have faith in God! It is full of good fruits, leaving no room for partiality or hypocrisy. This wisdom, let it be remembered, can only come from above; God alone can make us wise unto salvation.

This heavenly wisdom is personified in Proverbs 8; and indeed the whole book of Proverbs is addressed by Wisdom to her children. This should be carefully observed that we may better understand their proper import. Some of the proverbs have been read and so constructed as to make the false impression that they are addressed by God himself to men; or that our Lord Jesus Christ is personified by Wisdom, and in that character he speaks in the proverbs to the sons of men generally; saying, for instance, “I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me.” Now God has no where in the scriptures made any such propositions to men. God does not love men in return for their love to him; nor does he propose to do so, for his people and all who ever have or ever shall love God, love him because he has first loved them. Our love is subsequent to his, and his first love is invariably the cause of our love to him. When he has shed abroad his love in us, but not before, then we love him as a consequence. But when Wisdom doth cry, and understanding puts forth her voice, she crieth at the gates, at the entrance, at the coming in, at the doors. That is, at the portals of the house which she has builded. None can enter her gates and be admitted to participate with her children in the banquet of Wisdom until they are called by grace, quickened by the Holy Spirit and made partakers of that fear of the Lord which God has graciously promised to put in the hearts of his people. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” This beginning of wisdom is the gate of her house, the entry of her city, and the coming in of her doors. Here at her portals Wisdom is found; and here her voice is put forth to all who possessing the fear of the Lord approach her dwelling. Unto all such she calls, and her voice is to the sons of men; and thus she speaks to them. “O ye simple, understand wisdom: and ye fools, be of an understanding heart.” All who approach her gates are of this character.

The fear of the Lord has made them conscious of their simplicity, and aware of their folly. “If any man would be wise let him first become a fool, that he may be wise.” In the early experience of every saints, he is made to see, feel and confess that all his wisdom is foolishness, and all his righteousness but filthy rags. All his schemes and plans which he thought were so wisely laid for attaining life have failed, all his former calculations are laid low; and in the fear of the Lord he will acknowledge that he is the very character addressed by Wisdom. Blessed now of the Lord with a knowledge of his folly, and of his need of understanding, he watcheth daily at Wisdom’s gates, and waits at the posts of her doors, for that

wisdom which descendeth from above, which wisdom dwells with prudence, and finds out knowledge of witty inventions.

Unwilling now to depart from the avenues of true wisdom, though he feels that he is very slow to learn, yet having no where else to look, he waits at the posts of her doors. “For whoso findeth wisdom findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord.” As he listens to her voice, she speaks to him of excellent things; and the opening of her lips, in the disclosure of her treasures, points out to him the way of understanding; she discriminates understandingly between right and wrong, truth and error, good and evil; she directs only to right things. The mouth of true wisdom always speaks truth; as error is unwise; wisdom rejects it, and wickedness being unwise, is an admonition to the lips of Wisdom. As she cries and lifts up her voice to the pupil who is entering her gates, he finds that all the words of her mouth are in righteousness, and that there is nothing froward or perverse in them. True wisdom which comes from above never misleads, deceives or fails to give unerring counsel. All her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. And they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

All the children of Zion are taught of God, and therefore they have understanding, and knowledge of the truth, and can understand the instructions of that wisdom which is an attribute of God himself. But none can understand the words of wisdom until they are quickened and taught of God. The preaching of the gospel of Christ crucified is to the work-mongrel Jew or legalist a stumblingblock, and to the learned Greek, foolishness; but to them that are called it is the wisdom and the power of God.

To the disciple in the school of Christ, Wisdom says, Receive my instruction and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with it. Silver and gold are among the most precious treasures of this world; the carnal mind makes them an idol, and they constitute the mammon of this world. The love of this specious idol is the root of all evil. The rich fool whose golden treasures were increased, could take no part of them with him on the night in which his soul was required of him. But the revenue of Wisdom are durable riches of righteousness. The children of Wisdom should never diverge from the counsels of wisdom for all the glittering baits this world can present. Wisdom from on high proclaims her dwelling, association, and her business, saying, “I, Wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.” Some have supposed these words were spoken by Christ, personified by Wisdom; but it will be seen in all this connection Wisdom assumes the feminine gender, which is nowhere in the scriptures applied to Christ.

It is to us a most glorious truth, Wisdom as an attribute of the eternal God, with every other perfection of the deity is embodied in Christ, and that Christ is of God made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; and that in him are hidden all the treasures of Wisdom and knowledge. But no one perfection severed from its connection with all the other perfections of the Godhead is sufficient to express all the fullness of the Godhead that dwells in him bodily. Besides, we think the misapplication of this perfection as a personal identification of Christ has a tendency to mystify some of the words of wisdom, and make them seem to conflict with the general doctrine of the Bible. Some have supposed that the strong language used of Wisdom in this eighth chapter of Proverbs are required to prove the divinity, or eternity of Christ. To such a supposition we cannot consent; for John 1:1 is much more conclusive and to the point. The Word was with God, and the Word was God; this is irrefutable testimony of his Eternal Godhead. And there are many other passages, equally strong and conclusive.

When we attempt to prove a position by passages which are inapplicable to the subject we weaken rather than strengthen our argument. We feel certain that if the inspired writer had designed to personify Christ, in this chapter, he would not have used pronouns of the feminine gender; as where he says, “Doth not Wisdom cry and Understanding put forth *her* voice? *She* hath hewn out *her* seven pillars. *She* hath killed *her* beasts, *she* hath mingled *her* wine, *she* hath furnished *her* table, *she* hath sent forth *her* maidens, *she* crieth upon the high places of the city,” etc. Can any scripture be found wherein the feminine gender is applied personally to Christ, or to God?

Again some have thought that what is written in this chapter must apply to Christ; as proving what is called his pre-existence; that he was with the Father, from everlasting, etc. We do not need thus to construe the chapter for any such purpose, as we have abundant direct testimony to prove not only that he was with God before the worlds began, but also, that he was absolutely God.

Let us read the testimony as applicable to Wisdom, as a perfection or attribute of God, and it must also stand confessed that the wisdom as well as every other attribute of his Godhead was with him, or ever the earth was, and from everlasting. Can we conceive a period either in time or eternity when God was without Wisdom, or when Wisdom was not with him? In these inspired scriptures, the exalted character of divine Wisdom is very clearly and most beautifully demonstrated. Remember that it is Wisdom that makes the proclamations. “I Wisdom dwell with prudence.” “Counsel is mine and sound wisdom, I am understanding, I have strength.” “By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.” This last passage is relied upon by some to prove a divine right by which many of the most despotic kings and wicked and profligate governments are sustained. Compare this text with Psalm 2:10-12. “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish by the way.” How many foolish kings have been deposed in ancient and modern times for their folly in their mad rejection of the counsels of wisdom. How many human governments have perished for their folly. Wisdom directs that human rulers shall kiss, or be at peace with the Son of God who is invested with power above them as King of kings, and Lord of lords. “He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” It is extreme folly and madness for kings and rulers of the earth to ignore his government, and dare to oppress his saints; to command them to do what Christ has forbidden, or fail to do what he has commanded. “Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm; for he that toucheth them touches the apple of his eye.” It is not by Christ’s Mediatorial power or command that the kings of this world reign; for he says, “My kingdom is not of this world.” But it is by wisdom they reign. A fool may be a king nominally for a time, but he does not really reign; his ministers do that for him; and soon his dominion ceases.

Wisdom further proclaims, “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.” Is this a proclamation from Christ to the children of men? How very differently it sounds from what he said in John 7:34, “Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.” But how harmonious with the whole of the divine testimony when understood as a proclamation of Wisdom to her children. Those who, as soon as they are born of the Spirit (for that is as early as any seek this wisdom which cometh from above) seek the counsel of wisdom; and stand waiting at the posts of her door for a supply, shall assuredly find it: and such are the peculiar favorites of Wisdom. Can any dispute that riches and honor are with Wisdom, even durable riches and righteousness? Well may she declare, “My fruit (the fruit of wisdom) is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.” Those who are void of understanding are led by folly, like fools to the correction of the stocks. But Wisdom says, I lead in the way of righteousness; in the midst of the paths of judgment; that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.”

The highest possible commendation of the wisdom set forth in this chapter is found in the testimony that God possessed it in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. It is the wisdom which God displayed when his hand garnished the skies, and laid the foundation of the earth. This wisdom shines in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In the contemplation of this profound wisdom the inspired apostle exclaimed, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again (Romans 4:33-35).” Wisdom claims association and companionship with God from everlasting. “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” However justly and truly this language may be applicable to the Son of God, as set up in his Mediatorial relation to his church, we cannot, for reasons already given, understand it as in this connection spoken of him personally. The truth that God possessed this Wisdom before his works of old is abundantly apparent in the perfections of all his works; for in the absence of it, how could his wonderful works have been so perfectly wrought? He had not to experiment, and try a variety of experiments in order to gain a knowledge, or to perfect his wisdom; for if he were less wise before his works of old than now, how could we rely upon his immutability, or any of his eternal attributes? “He is of one mind and none can turn him.” He is the Lord, he changes not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Wisdom may well claim her priority to all the works of God, and in the sublime language of this chapter declare, “When there were no depths, I was brought forth; [or as pre-existing in God himself called into requisition.] When there were no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depths: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men (Proverbs 8:24-31).”

Now all this is declared in commendation of the wisdom of God, and in all the particulars named, these declarations are sustained and demonstrated. And in conclusion, the children of Wisdom, by whom she is justified, are appealed to from these considerations; to listen to her voice, to discard folly, and cordially embrace her.

Now therefore (or in consideration of all this) hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. The plain import of this strong appeal of Wisdom to her children is that they should attend at her gates, wait at the posts of her doors; hear her instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not; for she saith, “Blessed is the man that heareth me; watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that smneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.”

How peculiarly appropriate are all the illustrations of the wisdom which God has displayed in all his works and ways, and how important that all who would live godly in Christ Jesus should hearken to all her admonitions, receive all her instructions, conform to all her rules, obey all her precepts, and walk in all her paths. How blessed are the children of wisdom, trained under her tuition, and endowed with her revenue. All who possess this wisdom are wise unto salvation, and find life; but all who hate her and love folly, reject her counsels and heed not her admonitions love death. Allured, ensnared and betrayed by that wisdom which is from beneath, and which is the opposite of that which is from above, those

who despise her maxims shall be involved in the direful consequences of their folly, and then Wisdom shall laugh at their calamities and mock when their fear cometh. Alas! how true are the words:

“Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
But Wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler.”

Middletown, N. Y.
April 1, 1867.

DANIEL 2:44

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2:44).”

This subject has been so frequently discussed, both through the columns of our paper and otherwise, that we have no new light to give, nor do we intend now to attempt a general explanation of the text. We propose only to attend to the special inquiries of our friend, and if we can help his mind on the points embraced in his inquiry, we shall be most happy to do so.

The great image which Nebuchadnezzar had seen in his vision Daniel, by inspiration, interpreted to represent four successive forms of government, or the four great empires which should succeed each other, filling up the space of time from the date of that vision, as we believe, until the present time. The Chaldeans, then existing, were the head of gold, but soon to be reduced by the Medes and Persians, which were the breast and arms of silver. Its belly and thighs of brass represented the Grecian government, which followed. His legs of iron denoted the Roman empire, in its original strength; and the mixture of iron and clay extending the Roman government to its extremities of feet and toes, partly strong and partly weak, by divisions and revolutions divided into ten kingdoms, embracing the rise and fall of the Papal anti-christ, whose last vestige of temporal power became extinct, in exact fulfillment of prophecy, in 1866, or last year.

The kings, in the days of whom the God of heaven would set up his kingdom, may include all from Nebuchadnezzar to the present time, for the prophecy does not limit the time of the setting up of that kingdom, only that it should be in the days of these kings. But the fulfillment of the prophecy shows that it was in the time of the Roman power, and in the days of the Caesars, that God set up his kingdom. The kingdom to be set up by the God of heaven, in distinction from all earthly kingdoms, and which, unlike these four great empires, should not pass from one dynasty to another, but remain forever under the government of him whose “throne is for ever and ever (Psalm 45:6; Hebrews 1:8)” is beyond a doubt the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The days of *these kings* have terminated, and no other kingdom of the kind has been set up. This kingdom was at hand when John came preaching and baptizing; it was delivered from the wrath and dominion of the law when Christ arose from the dead; and it was set up and organized when Christ came in all the glory of his Father and ascended his Mediatorial throne, with his apostles setting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This

occurred on the day of Pentecost. But this kingdom is not a *visible* kingdom to any but those who are born again.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1867.

CAUTION TO THE CHURCHES

Sharpsville, Tipton Co., La.
March 13, 1867.

Brother Beebe: There is a man by the name of Joseph Smart, an Englishman, who came from Philadelphia, to Jeffersonville, Ia., and from thence to Columbus, Ia., where he has been living nearly four years, in which he has represented himself as a minister of the Old School Baptist order, and in that character has been preaching among some of our churches. There seems to be some mystery about his standing. He brought no letter of commendation, but gave as a reason that the Baptists where he came from did not give letters of dismission. (I suppose he meant his new style of Baptists.)

Since the last session of our Conn's Creek Association, I received a letter from a very worthy and highly esteemed brother in the ministry endorsed by others of the same standing, informing me that this man, Smart, had once obtained a standing among the Old School, evincing considerable speaking ability, and seeming to be sound in doctrine. He was soon ordained to the work of the ministry, and called to the pastoral care of two churches. His career, however, in this position was short. Although his preaching was called sound, yet the spirit of the gospel seemed lacking. Instead of meekness, humility and love, his ministry was characterized by a harsh and proscriptive spirit, having a tendency to scatter and divide the flock more than to unite and harmonize them. I am informed by the brethren that he did not appear to have any idea of gospel order as held by Old School Baptists. On one occasion, he called on the church to exclude a minister who had previously supplied her, for some misconduct, whose membership had never been in that church, and when informed that the case was out of their reach, he took his hat and left the house, and on the next day set up an opposition meeting. After a few such moves, and the brethren had become greatly tried with him, he set up a distinct order for himself, refusing to recognize any church or people on earth who did not follow him. They refused to give or receive letters of dismission, and thus denied fellowship with the Old School Baptists whose order he had departed from.

On another occasion, the Welsh Tract Church with Elder Thomas Barton, their pastor (a church of the first standing), was denounced by him as the Spanish Inquisition. For his general disorderly course, sarcasm and bitterness against the Old Baptists, he was duly excluded from the church. He continued, however, to maintain his hostile position for about twenty years; neither asking or receiving any fellowship from the Old School Baptists.

These exposures are painful for me to make, nevertheless having this knowledge myself, I feel it to be my duty to warn the churches of approaching danger.

If he is a manifest child of God, let him go back to the church from which he was excluded, make gospel satisfaction, be restored to fellowship, and bring from thence a regular letter, and then be received here in regular order.

Jesse G. Jackson.

Remarks: We were personally acquainted with Joseph Smart when he had a standing with the Old School Baptists, and were cognizant of his departure from our faith and order some twenty years ago, and of his exclusion; and of his virulent and persistent opposition to the Old School Baptists in Philadelphia for many years. A disorganizer of the stamp of those described by the apostle in Romans 16:17,18 and II Thessalonians 3:6, who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned (from the apostles), and such as the saints are commanded to avoid. If anything further concerning his disorderly course should be desired by churches or brethren in the West, we refer them to any of the churches, ministers and brethren in the Delaware Association.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1867.



END OF VOLUME VI.