

STUDY XV

THE FOES AND BESETMENTS OF THE NEW CREATION

"The Old Man"--The World as an Enemy of the New Creation--The Great Adversary--He Was a Liar and a Murderer from the Beginning--Satan's Associates in Evil--Legions of Demons--How Satan's First Lie is Perpetuated--Christian Science and Theosophy--"We Wrestle not [merely] with Flesh and Blood"--The Ministry of Evil--Besetments of the Adversary--"The Prayer of Faith Shall Save the Sick"--"If Satan Cast Out Satan" His Kingdom Wanes--Love Righteousness--Hate Iniquity--*Mark 16:9-20*--The Nominal Church as an Adversary to the New Creation--The Armor of God.

CHIEF amongst the foes of the New Creation is "the old man"--the old will. Let us avoid the mistake so commonly made respecting this subject. Let us not think of the New Creature as having two minds, two wills. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways," unsatisfactory to himself and unacceptable to the Lord. The New Creature is not double-minded. He has but the one mind, one spirit, one intention, one will; and that is the new will, the Spirit of Christ, the holy Spirit. Instead of partially accepting the mind of Christ and partially maintaining his own will, he made a full consecration of his old will to the Lord, and that old will was thereafter dead, and set aside from having control in his affairs. It was thus that he was accepted as a member of the body of Christ--to have no will of his own, but to permit the will of the Head to control him. It was thus that he became a New Creature in Christ Jesus, and found "old things passed away, all things become new." Those who have not made such a surrender have not become members of the *Ecclesia*, the body of Christ, though

F600

they may be members of "the household of faith," from which come all the members of the "body," the "elect."

But although the old will was thus renounced thoroughly and forever, and declared dead (by the Lord and by all who

view matters from his standpoint), and while the flesh was reckoned dead, too, as respects sin, but alive toward God, quickened by the promises, and brought under the control of the new will (**Rom. 6:11; 8:11**), nevertheless this death of the flesh and its will, and this resurrection of the flesh as the servant of the new will, to serve the Lord, the Truth, under the Golden Rule, are only *reckoned matters*. The "dead" and "alive" conditions need continually to be maintained by opposition of the *new will* to any life or activity of the *old will* and its influence over the flesh. If the new will becomes indifferent and fails to use the mortal flesh continuously as its servant in higher and spiritual things, the flesh will very shortly reassert itself and have motions and desires of its own, antagonistic to the new mind, opposed to the interests of the New Creature. The latter must, therefore, be constantly on the alert for insurrections, and, as the Apostle expresses it, must keep down, keep dead, the old will, with its affections and its desires--must continually mortify, or put to death, the ambitions and desires of the flesh. The Apostle explains this, saying of himself, "I keep my body under [dead, as respects all control from the old, selfish will of the flesh], lest after having preached to others I myself should become a castaway"--might fail to make my calling and election sure. **1 Cor. 9:27**

The inspired Word declares that "the [natural] heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (**Jer. 17:9**) --not the organ called the heart, but that which the heart represents in Scripture, viz., the natural affections. The New Creature gets a new heart, a new will, a new standard of affection, in which God and his righteousness and truth and plan and will are first; and in which all other things occupy a place of honor and love in proportion to their harmony with the Lord and his righteousness. To

F601

those possessing this new heart all the members of the New Creation are necessarily first and closest: hence, as the Apostle says, love of the brethren is one of the best tests of relationship to the Lord as New Creatures. But this, as already shown, must not interfere with a just recognition of obligations to others.

The New Creature, the new heart, with its new affections, is continually assailed by its enemies, the old heart, the old affections, the selfish disposition; and the latter, finding that the New Creature is bound by divine command to be considerate and generous toward others, frequently

practices deceptions upon the new heart, and says in effect: Now you have reckoned me dead; you have put me out, and I am dead, as respects what I was. I am not the same old heart I was formerly; but you must give me some consideration. You must not treat me too rudely; you must concede that I have made considerable progress, and must not put too heavy a burden upon me; it would not be just. You ought to be selfish to a certain extent. You ought to look out for number one, and for your family; not--merely for their necessities, but much more--and should endeavor to give them wealth and social advantages. You should sacrifice yourself for them.

How deceitful is this old heart! How specious are its false reasonings! How many have proven this to their sorrow! How many have been inveigled and had the new mind captivated by the old! How many have found themselves brought into bondage by the deceitfulness of the old heart! One of the favorite arguments is that the New Creation is commanded, "So far as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." This general advice of the Apostle it seeks to exalt far above his design, and to make it superior to the divine command (1) that we shall love and serve, honor and obey, the Lord with all our heart and all our mind, soul and strength; and (2) that we shall love our neighbors as ourselves. This does not permit of peace at any price. If the old heart, the old mind, the old will, can get the new one to make a *compromise*

F602

of truth or duty for the sake of peace, there will be no end to the demands it will make; and the result will be that the New Creature would soon, in the interest of peace, be violating the very essence of his covenant with the Lord, and be fully submitting himself to the old will, although it desires not to do so--indeed striving against the old will, but led captive by it through its deceitfulness, and its skillful misinterpretations of the divine Word.

When thus assailed, the new will should freely declare that while peace is desirable in the home and everywhere, yet peace is not the primary condition, according to the Lord's promise. Indeed, the Lord has warned those of the New Creation that so surely as they will live godly they must suffer persecution--and persecution does not signify peace with all, but the reverse. He has assured them that so surely as they let the light shine out, the darkness will hate the light and combat it, and, if possible, induce the owner of the light to put it under a bushel, to hide it; and that in

order to induce this hiding of the light the darkness will wage a warfare which will mean anything else than peace. But the Lord assures us that these are tests for the New Creature--that he must determine that the peace which is of greatest importance to him is, not the peace of the flesh, but the peace of heart, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

The New Creature must learn that he may have this peace of God, which passeth all understanding, to rule in his heart, even while outward conditions are the reverse of peaceful; but that the condition of full harmony with the Lord is a reward for faithfulness to him, whatever the cost, whatever the sacrifice. Hence, when appealed to by the cravings of the flesh, and the arguments of those who are near and dear through earthly ties, the New Creature must first of all consider his primary obligation, viz., that he shall love and serve the Lord with all his heart, mind, being, strength, and that all dealings with family or flesh or neighbors must be subject to this primary law of obedience to God.

F603

On the other hand, the New Creature is to avoid fanaticism --to avoid doing things merely because they are unpleasant to himself or to others; to avoid judging the mind of the Lord to be always the reverse of his own inclinations. It requires earnest and patient study of the divine Word, and the spirit and principles underlying the divine requirements, to enable the New Creature properly to apply the directions of the Word to all the daily affairs of life. But few in comparison are tempted along these lines. The majority are tempted more to gratification of the flesh, and have, therefore, need of special care along that line--lest they walk after the flesh, gratifying it, serving it, submitting to it, and thus walk in the opposite direction to that in which they consecrated to go. Or if they do not walk after the flesh, in the sense of following it and its service, they have need to be specially on guard lest the flesh shall keep them from walking after the Spirit, from making progress in spiritual things--shall endeavor to bring their spiritual progress to a standstill, and thus hinder their fruitfulness, growth and development in usefulness, and ultimately prevent their overcoming and gaining the great prize of joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom as members of the little flock.

The thought that should always be borne in mind is that

the New Creatures have consecrated all of their earthly, fleshly interests to sacrifice; and that nothing short of sacrifice of these will permit them, as New Creatures, to have full development and to be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light"--for a share in the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, as members of the body of Christ. The only restriction we are to recognize in this direction of full sacrifice, is where the interests of other lives are interwoven with ours, and where the Golden Rule would place its limitations upon the sacrificing, and insist that reasonable allowance must be made for our dear ones according to the flesh who have not joined with us in its consecration to sacrifice.

F604

The World as an Enemy of the New Creation

Everything pertaining to this present evil world is more or less out of alignment with righteousness, and hence, more or less contrary to the New Creation and its righteous standard. The law of the world might in a general way be summed up as Selfishness; notwithstanding the world makes claims, and with considerable propriety, to a grand recognition of justice. We are not of those who believe that all the laws and all the regulations of the civilized world are evil; on the contrary, we have frequently been amazed to note how grand are the laws of Christendom--how wise, how just, how noble--many of them evidently enacted with a view to protecting the interests of the weak against the strong, and of doing justice to all. Nevertheless, with selfishness interwoven with every thought and word and act of the whole world, it is not surprising that its very highest conceptions of justice are sometimes bent and twisted--wrested.

Our surprise, on the contrary, may well be that poor fallen humanity should ever have attained to so grand a system of laws as are to be found on the statute books of Great Britain, the United States and other countries. We cannot doubt that the law given through Moses and exemplified, multiplied and made honorable and expounded by our Lord Jesus and his apostles has had much to do with--has been the basis, indeed--of these human laws. Nevertheless, as all will concede, the selfishness of man is continuously battling with man's own definitions of justice, and seeking to set them aside either in part or in whole; and this, which is ceaselessly progressing on a large scale in the

world, is one of the chief difficulties and battles of the New Creation.

The world and its spirit of pride, selfishness, etc., must be recognized as one of the chief foes of the New Creation. The whole world of mankind, operating under this general "spirit of the world," is moving in one general direction, as a great river, in some parts of which there is greater swiftness, and in other parts greater sluggishness, but all, nevertheless,

F605

following in the same general selfish direction. The New Creature, by his consecration, by the spirit of his new mind, is obligated to an adverse course, and is, therefore, opposed by all the current of popular sentiment, theory, tradition, etc., and marked as peculiar. He has friction to contend with. He necessarily is in antagonism to those who are going in the opposite direction, and who come in touch with him. This collision cannot be avoided. It means not outward peace but outward conflict; this outward conflict, however, may signify inward peace and joy because divine approval is realized.

The world's aims and objects and methods are not always ignoble and unjust; but even its noblest aims and objects are generally contrary to those of the New Creation, because the world is acting under the impulse of human wisdom, while the New Creation is actuated by the wisdom from above. Worldly wisdom has its own conceptions of religion as a means for holding wicked people in check. It has its own idea of morality, benevolence, faith, hope, love--cannot comprehend the different standpoint of the New Creation, and is apt to consider its views extreme, unreasonable, etc., not comprehending the divine plan, not appreciating from the divine standpoint the insignificance of the present life, as compared to the future one. Nor does worldly wisdom appreciate the impotence of all human effort as respects real human uplift, when contrasted with the great and grand arrangements which God has in reservation, and which will be fully brought to light and put into successful operation in the Kingdom, as soon as his work of the present age has been completed--as soon as the elect Church shall have been selected, polished, approved, glorified.

The New Creation must not, therefore, be surprised if the world hate it--even the morally and religiously well-disposed of the world. And this hatred and opposition of the world, at times so vexatious and trying to faithfulness

and patience, is to be received meekly; with the remembrance that the world is still blinded by the "god of this

F606

world" and sees not the "exceeding great and precious things," "the deep things of the Spirit," in the light of which we, by the grace of God, are enabled to count all things--losses, trials, etc.--as but "loss and dross," that we may win the wonderful things promised us in the Word. To yield to the spirit of the world, to allow its sentiments to dominate us for the sake of its peace, would be giving evidence of an inferior appreciation of the Lord, his Truth, and the privileges of his service. The result would be that if we did not lose everything by going completely over to worldliness we might, at least, lose the prize, and have a portion with the "great company," and come up through great tribulation to an inferior place in connection with the glories to follow.

The Apostle's strict injunction is, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." (*1 John 2:15*) We should be on guard, therefore, against every indication of sympathy or affiliation with the spirit of the world. This does not mean that we should be out of sympathy with our friends, whom we term the worldly--that we should be careless of their interests, etc.; but it does mean that while careful to discharge our obligations toward the worldly, and to render honor to whom honor is due, tribute to whom tribute is due, support to whom support is due, kindness to whom kindness is proper, sympathy to whom sympathy is proper, we are, nevertheless, to distinguish between our friends and neighbors, who are still under the influence of the Adversary, and the spirit, or disposition, which has actuated them and which is deluding them.

We are not to be in sympathy with any of the present institutions, which are based upon selfishness, and, in greater or less degree, are in opposition to the divine law, the Golden Rule. It may be necessary for us to conduct our affairs considerably along the lines of selfishness prevalent in the world; but without stopping to dispute the question continually, our hearts should be kept in that attitude in which we would be out of sympathy with selfish principles

F607

and longing for the reign of the Golden Rule absolutely in all the affairs of life, and, so far as possible, in our own intercourse

with the world.

It is not for us to attempt to transform the world and revolutionize society and its methods. That herculean task the Lord has left for himself, and it will be fully accomplished in the "great day" fast approaching. Meantime the Lord's people, under guidance of his Word--although in the world, and necessarily having to do with its affairs and customs--are not to be in love, in sympathy, with them. They are to realize, on the contrary, that to keep in close touch with the Lord, and in close sympathy with the principles of his righteousness, will necessarily mean the same kind of opposition that God has to every form and degree of injustice, inequity, lawlessness--in church, in state, in finance, in politics, and in social customs and usages.

Seeing this more or less clearly, some, we believe, have gone to an extreme in denouncing present institutions in a manner that the Lord and the apostles neither commanded nor sanctioned, nor illustrated in their words and conduct. We should remember that the world as a whole is living up to as high a standard as it appreciates, and that simply to find fault with matters which others are as powerless to correct as ourselves is worse than useless, because it merely produces unhappiness, vexation, etc., without accomplishing desired results. John the Baptist gave wise advice along this line when asked of some of the Roman soldiers respecting their proper course, he answered, "Do violence to no man [do not violate the laws and regulations under which you are placed by your government] and be content with your wages." Simply making people discontented with their present conditions and surroundings is most unwise. On the contrary, the influence, the spirit, the disposition, of the New Creation should always be toward peace; and if we cannot commend present institutions highly, neither need we specially condemn them.

In such matters we may well follow the example of Michael

F608

the archangel, who did not even bring a railing accusation against Satan, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee!"--in his own time and manner. (*Jude 9*) So with us. Realizing that the Lord will rebuke present institutions in his own time and manner, we can say to ourselves, with the Apostle, "Be patient, brethren; the coming of the Lord draweth nigh"--the establishment of his Kingdom, near at hand, will rectify all these difficulties. The agitation of these matters

in advance will be not only unavailing, but worse--disadvantageous, injurious--both to the agitator and the agitated, breeding discontent. Amongst the children of this world there will be found plenty of agitators when the Lord's time shall come for these questions to be agitated. Meantime all the members of the New Creation will display wisdom in avoiding such questions as tend to strife and discontent, and in chiefly speaking amongst the Lord's people and such as "have an ear to hear," concerning the deeper things of the divine plan, of course including on proper occasions the time of trouble by which the Kingdom will be established.

The New Creation, the Royal Priesthood, has a special work quite apart from the world and all agitation of its elements. Their work at the present time, as already shown, is to blow the silver trumpets--to sound forth the truth of the divine plan for such as have an ear to hear, for such as are not blinded and deafened by the deceptions of the Adversary. Their mission is specially amongst the Lord's people, finishing up the work of this Gospel age, garnering the wheat. *Matt. 13:37-43*

Under another picture, the present work of the Church is shown to be the Bride making herself ready for the marriage. (*2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7*) With such pressing calls upon them for every moment of their time, for every particle of their influence, means, etc., the New Creatures have neither love for the world, to seek to perpetuate its arrangements, institutions, etc., nor have they the disposition to anticipate the Lord's wise, beneficent arrangement for the transformation of this present evil world into "the world

F609

to come," "wherein dwelleth righteousness." *Heb. 2:5; 2 Pet. 3:13*

The Great Adversary, Satan

The Apostle writes--"Your adversary, the devil," as though he would have us understand that we have much more to contend with than the weaknesses of our own flesh and the imperfections of fellow men. He would have us realize that we have a cunning "wily" foe in Satan, and that we must keep close to our Shepherd if we would be delivered out of temptation and from the power of the Evil One. Let us note some of the many scriptures which refer to this Adversary whose very existence is now being denied by

many:

"Your adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. 5:8

"Then was Jesus led up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."

Matt. 4:1

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire [Gehenna, destruction], prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25:41

"Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts." Luke 8:12

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44

"Supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him." John 13:2

"Neither give place to the devil." Eph. 4:27

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand the wiles of the devil." Eph. 6:11

"Lest...he fall into the condemnation of the devil." 1 Tim. 3:6,7

"They may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil."

2 Tim. 2:26

"That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. 2:14

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil...In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." 1 John 3:8,10

F610

"Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." Jude 9

"The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried."

Rev. 2:10

"The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan; which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels with him." Rev. 12:9,12

"He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,...that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Rev. 20:2,3

"The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. ...This is the second death." Rev. 20:10,14

*"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." **John 12:31***

*"Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." **John 14:30***

*"When he is come he will reprove the world...of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." **John 16:8,11***

*"Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." **Eph. 2:2***

*"If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." **2 Cor. 4:3,4***

*"When the Pharisees heard it they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus said,...If Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself; how shall then his Kingdom stand?" **Matt. 12:24-26***

*"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" **Isa. 14:12-14***

*"Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." **2 Cor. 11:14***

*"Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." **2 Thess. 2:9,10***

*"Lest Satan get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices." **2 Cor. 2:11***

*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the spiritual things of the Evil One in the heavenlies." (**Eph. 6:12**) See Diaglott.*

*"He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the Wicked One." (**1 John 5:18,19**) See Diaglott.*

F611

*"There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came amongst them." **Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7***

*"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee." **Zech. 3:1,2***

*"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." **Luke 10:18***

*"I have appeared unto thee for this purpose,...I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." **Acts 26:16,18***

*"The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." **Rom. 16:20***

*"To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh."
1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20*

"Give none occasion to the Adversary to speak reproachfully; for some are already turned aside after Satan." 1 Tim. 5:14,15

When our Lord said, "Get thee hence, Satan" [adversary, opposing spirit--Young], and again when he said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan [adversary, etc.]; thou art an offense unto me, for thou savorest not the things that be of God" (*Matt. 4:10; 16:23*), it was saying in effect that being in opposition to God, the same position was also held toward all in harmony with God. And Peter's declaration that he goes about like a "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" seems to teach that he is not "your [the Church's] adversary" alone, but that of all mankind. Our Lord makes a direct assertion to that effect. *John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11*

Our Lord's declaration, that Satan is the great Adversary, not only of God, but of humanity, is by no means a fancy sketch, but the plain truth. He is our Adversary in a sense that the world and our own flesh are not our adversaries. Our own flesh opposes the New Creature, not from any bitterness or hatred, nor with any scheming for its temporal or eternal disadvantage; but merely in the sense that the cravings of the fallen flesh are in a direction which is at variance to the best interests of the New Creature and the hopes with which he has been begotten. The opposition of the world is likewise not a malicious one, but merely a selfish one, because of seeing things in different lights and because

F612

of selfish differences of interest. Satan alone is the wilful, intelligent plotter and schemer who uses a superhuman intelligence and, so far as permitted, superhuman powers, to inveigle our fallen flesh, through depraved appetites, etc., and who frequently uses the worldly as his tools and unconscious instruments in opposing righteousness and truth and those who are of the Truth.

He Was a Liar and a Murderer from the Beginning --John 8:44--

The inspired record asserts, persistently and consistently, that Satan began the rebellion against the divine law, and seduced our first parents into disobedience, through his own ambition for power; and that since man's fall this same

Adversary has been the implacable opponent of God, of righteousness and of truth; and not only the ensnarer of mankind, but the opposer of the great plan of Atonement which God devised and is prosecuting through Christ. From the Scriptural account it does not appear that Satan had any sympathizers or associate conspirators amongst the angels at the time of his secession and attempt to establish a lordship or dominion of his own in the earth, taking as his subjects God's latest creation--mankind. As surely as Satan himself was a part of the general creation of God, so surely we may know that he was created perfect and upright, in the image of God; because all of God's work is perfect. (*Eph. 3:9; Deut. 32:4*) He has but the one standard of righteousness, justice, perfection, and he himself is that standard.

But to be created perfect, and to remain perfect, are two entirely different propositions. God has not been pleased to create any of his intelligent creatures mere machines, incapable of change of motive and conduct. On the contrary, he has been pleased to create all the morally intelligent of his creatures after his own likeness or image, with perfect liberty to follow the right, the true, the pure, the good, according to his own example and precept; but with power

F613

also to alter or reverse their course in these respects, and to become rebels against his law of righteousness. God, however, has guarded this matter, by keeping in his own hands the power of everlasting life; so that he has full control of the situation, and can destroy any of his creatures, if they refuse to acknowledge and obey his righteous requirements. He proposes to blot them out of existence, as though they had never been, and to permit only such as are in heart harmony with his requirements to continue to live everlastingly.

Amongst the angels of high rank (of whom Satan was originally one), there were, apparently from the beginning, and still are, different orders or grades, yet all under the rule of love, and who, in obedience to the will of the Creator, operated in unison and harmony probably for ages. Goodness, love, kindness, obedience to the heavenly Father's requirements, and happiness resulting from these, were for a long while their only experiences. But in due time another feature of the divine plan was developed. Man was created, of a different nature from angels, a little lower nature--

human, not angelic--earthly, not heavenly--flesh, not spirit. Additionally, mankind had a separate home--earth--with a family organization, and were paired, male and female, and had powers of procreation--ability to propagate their own species. In all these particulars they differed from the angels, who are not sexually different, and who have not the family arrangement, and who do not propagate their own kind. God's latest creation was, no doubt, a marvel in the eyes of all the angelic hosts--in connection with which their reasoning faculties found abundant opportunity for exercise.

Then it was that one of those of high rank, reasoning out the possibilities of the matter and harboring selfish and ambitious thoughts, concluded that if he could in some manner but capture the newly created human pair, and alienate them from God, then he could through them set up a special kingdom or dominion of his own, of which he would be the god or lord, usurping the place and honor of Jehovah

F614

respecting mankind and the earth. It was his prosecution of this criminal ambition that gave to him his present name, Satan--adversary of God. He did not meditate nor attempt to usurp God's dominion over the angels. Such an attempt would have been absurd, since all of the angels were intimately acquainted with God, and knew Satan as one of themselves. Hence, they would not have thought of consenting to become his servants and followers, very much preferring, and being thoroughly satisfied with, and in no sense rebellious toward, the just, loving and wise administration of Jehovah Almighty.

No sooner did such selfish and ambitious designs find a lodgment in Satan's heart, than he began to measure the Lord by his own false standard, and to suppose that the Lord Jehovah was in all of his work merely carrying out ambitious and selfish designs. Thus it is that the wicked heart is always ready to impute evil to others, be they ever so pure, honorable and benevolent. No doubt Satan justified his own course in the beginning, at least, by false reasoning, to the effect that in creating mankind on a lower plane than the spirit beings, the angels, God was influenced by sinister and selfish motives; and that the limitation to earth as their habitat was with a view to having them the more fully enslaved. Having once permitted this envious, rebellious, unsanctified thought to enter his heart, it was only a question of time when the evil would develop further,

in the suggestion and manifestation of open sin and opposition to the divine arrangements.

Perhaps, indeed, it was with the false idea that he was doing justice to the oppressed that Satan approached mother Eve in Eden, and suggested to her that the strict regulations by which Adam and herself had been hedged about by the divine decree respecting one of the trees of the garden, was the exercise on God's part of unwarranted, autocratic powers--to restrain them from liberties which should properly be theirs and the exercise of which would be clearly to their advantage. He even suggested to mother Eve, and possibly he expressed truly the opinion of his, by

F615

this time perverted, judgment that God falsified to them when he stated that the eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree would result in their destruction--their death. Satan had never seen death amongst any of God's creatures made in his own likeness, endowed with reason; and hence, in his perverse attitude of mind, he not only attributed to God sinister motives in connection with the creation, but now assumed that he had deliberately lied to his creatures, in order to further his own plans of keeping them in a measure of ignorance, and under what Satan, by this time no doubt, concluded was despotic authority.

The evil suggestion took effect. The mind of mother Eve--which up to this moment had been thankful to God and appreciative of all his mercies and blessings, and which had recognized him as the fountain of grace and truth, benevolence and love--was poisoned with the thought that she was being made a dupe; was being deprived of proper liberties to the intent that she might be hindered from acquiring larger measures of knowledge, which were properly her right, and which God, in his determination to keep them in the slavery of ignorance, was misrepresenting to them--threatening them that it would result in their death--whereas this newly found friend, Satan, who loved them better, and who was jealous for their welfare and their liberty, assured them that the eating of the forbidden fruit would not only not bring disaster and death, but would bring increase of knowledge, liberty, and exercise for all their powers. The poison acted quickly; selfishness and acquisitiveness were aroused in the heart of mother Eve, which had never before had such sentiments, because nothing in her previous experience had ever suggested such thoughts or sentiments.

Satan's position on this matter, of course, separated him from Jehovah. He staked his all upon his ability to capture the new human race as his servants, his kingdom; or, as perhaps he would have expressed it, he had staked all in his effort to liberate the new human family from divine despotism. When he saw the effect of the transgression--that the

F616

human pair were cast out of Eden, and shut off from its life-sustaining trees, that they gradually began to wither and to perish, no doubt he was disappointed, as well as was mother Eve. Adam, we are informed, was not deceived: he knew what to expect as the result of disobedience. His share in the transaction was a voluntary one, a suicide we might term it. Inspired by the thought that his wife must die, because she had partaken of the forbidden fruit, and feeling that all of his own joy would thus perish, he resolved to die with her. Had he understood better the divine character, as it has since been manifested through God's dealings in connection with the Atonement, he would doubtless have trusted God for help out of the difficulty, and would have been obedient to the divine decree at any cost.

But to return to Satan: Having chosen an evil course, each step of his journey since seems to be taking him only further and further away from every principle of righteousness; so that while his first lie, "Ye shall not surely die," may have been uttered with considerable candor, yet ever since, and today, he endeavors by every conceivable means to perpetuate his false statement, and to deceive mankind into believing that there is no such thing as *death*--that when they die they are more alive than ever before. It is the old lie, "Ye shall not surely die," readjusted to present conditions. None now know better than Satan the reality of death, as it passed upon the whole human family; and none know better than he that if the human family clearly and distinctly understood the matter of sin, its penalty, the ransom, and the resultant restitution, the influence of the Truth would be to draw mankind toward their just, yet merciful Creator.

But this is what Satan desires to prevent. He therefore attempts to blind the minds of mankind respecting the true character and plan of God, and to fill them, on the contrary, with false and blasphemous thoughts respecting the divine character and plan. Instead of having men see that death, and all the sufferings incident to death, viz., mental,

F617

moral and physical decay and disease, are the results of disobedience to God, the results of following his falsehood, he, on the contrary, would have them think, and has succeeded in convincing many, that the great Jehovah, who declares himself to be the very embodiment of justice and of love, in creating the human family most unjustly and unlovingly did so with malevolent intentions towards the vast majority --that he purposed and predestinated in his heart, before beginning man's creation, that thousands of millions of them should be eternally tormented, and that a "little flock" should be carried to glory, as a sample of what he had power to do for all if he had been kindly disposed. Thus, and with many other somewhat similar delusions and snares, has the Adversary for six thousand years perverted human judgment, and turned the hearts of men away from God and from the message of his Truth. The Apostle confirms this, and explains it, saying: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them"--should enlighten them, and drive out the darkness of ignorance and misconception, and let them see the real character and gracious plan of the heavenly Father. **2 Cor. 4:4**

Wherever the light of divine revelation (not merely the Bible, but also "the spirit of Truth") goes, it more or less means danger to the darkness of Satan's misrepresentations. The Truth is a thousand-fold more reasonable than Satan's error, and would rapidly prevail against him, were it not for his cunning, "wily" tactics, by which he is continually shifting the scenes, and bringing forward new deceptions to uphold his old lie, and "to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." One of the first and one of the most gigantic and most successful of his efforts to controvert the Truth, and to make the error appear feasible and plausible, was the development of the great Antichrist system, the Papacy. By it he exercised a most wonderful influence throughout the world, so that, in the light of today, and with a measure of freedom

F618

from that monstrous institution, mankind looks back to the period of its dominion and describes it as "the Dark Ages"--dark with injustice, dark with error and superstition, dark with persecution, relentless and terrible, against those who

sought to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience --ferocious against them in proportion as they obtained the true light and were faithful in holding it up before the people. So diabolical was this great institution, in its methods and influence, and so thoroughly did it represent Satan's cunning and ambition and craftiness, that it is symbolically described by the Lord as though it were Satan himself. It was, in the largest sense of the word, his representative, while claiming to be God's representative.*

Throughout the prophecies we find this blending of description and denunciation between Satan and his chiefest representative amongst the enlightened. For instance, after describing the breaking of the power of Babylon--a description which is applicable in part to literal Babylon, and the bondage of natural Israel, and more particularly applicable to the bondage of mystic Babylon over spiritual Israel--the Prophet proceeds with a description which primarily fits to Satan's own course, and in a secondary sense is applicable to the rise and fall of natural Babylon, and in a yet further sense to the rise and fall of mystic Babylon, saying:

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation [the Kingdom of God's people] to the northward [Pleiades, in the north, has long been esteemed the center of the universe, the throne of Jehovah]: I will ascend up to the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell--*sheol*, oblivion--to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the one that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?" *Isa. 14:12-17*

*See Vol. II, Chap. ix.

F619

As it was true that Babylon highly exalted itself over the other kingdoms of the world, it was also true that Papacy, the Antichrist, exalted itself as a kingdom over the nations of earth, and attempted to rule them with a rod of iron, claiming authority so to do in the name of the true Christ. And as the one was brought down to destruction, much more so there waiteth yet the final fall of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, as a great millstone cast into

the sea, to rise no more. But if the ambition of these to have dominion above others was great, still greater was the ambition of Satan to be higher than the others of God's creation, to have a kingdom of his own, and subjects of his own--a rival kingdom to that of Jehovah--over earth, as Jehovah's dominion is in heaven. However, this also shall fail, and Satan himself shall first be bound during the thousand years of the reign of the Redeemer and the lifting of the curse, and the blessing of the world, but subsequently, as the Scriptures clearly show, he is to be destroyed, together with all his angels--his messengers, all who follow his leading and his course. *Matt. 25:41; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20:10*

Satan's Associates in Evil--Legions of Demons

As already seen, according to the Scriptural account, Satan had no angelic associates in his conspiracy and rebellion at its beginning. On the contrary, we may understand that all the holy angels were in fullest sympathy with the divine government, and that some of them were commissioned to rule over fallen man, and to help mankind, if possible, back to harmony with God, and to restrain them from further depravity. This was prior to the flood of Noah's day. It was the first experience of angels with sin, disloyalty to God, moral obliquity. It became to them a test, because it suggested possibilities of an evil course, contrary to the divine will. It suggested pleasures and advantages as the result of such a course, and thus became a test of their loyalty and obedience to Jehovah. The Scriptures clearly inform us that under this test some of the angels, who previously had been holy and obedient, became transgressors, fell into and

F620

were contaminated by sin. Both Jude and Peter speak of "those angels which kept not their first estate," and whom, in consequence, God restrained of their liberties, reserving them in chains, under darkness, until a great judgment day, still future, when their cases will be heard. *2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6*

Isolated from the holy angels, these fallen angels are since known as demons, or devils, and Satan is recognized as the "prince of devils"--their leader, with whom they cooperate as mischief workers amongst men. Having no employment in good works, and left to themselves in evil, it need not surprise us that in them evil attains large proportions, and that they are faithful allies of Satan in the inculcation of his original lie--"Thou shalt not surely die." Apparently, very

soon after the flood these fallen angels, demons, began to debauch humanity, under the guise of religion. While chained, or imprisoned, in the sense of being unable longer to appear amongst men in fleshly bodies, they soon found in the depraved race those who were willing to submit themselves as their agents, or mediums, and they operated through the bodies of these, instead of bodies of their own. Such "*mediums*," or human channels of communication between the demons and mankind were, in olden times, known as "fetishes," "wizards," "witches," "necromancers," "medicine men," and "priests" of false religions. Their various efforts to gain control of the people of Israel, whom God had selected to be his representatives in the world for a time, are distinctly noted in the Scriptures, and the people are strictly warned against them. Laws were enacted and, to a considerable extent enforced, against those who became the agents of communication between the demons and Israel--the penalty being death.

Man, constitutionally, is an image of God, and as such is a free, independent being. This freedom extends to his moral agency; hence the expression that man is a "free moral agent." However much he may lose his personal liberty, or become enslaved either to persons or to his own appetites, nevertheless his moral agency is free--he is free to

F621

will, to use his mind in what way he may please. If he wills to submit his mind to the Lord's will, he may do so; if he wills to submit to an evil influence, he may do so; and if he wills to stand independent of both God and evil influences he may do so, to the extent that his physical powers and mental judgment will permit--but impaired by the fall, and its inherited weaknesses, his judgment as well as his knowledge and ability to reason, are greatly diminished, and, hence, his moral independence is proportionately in danger, when assaulted by "seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," as the Scriptures declare the evil influence at work throughout the world to be. (*1 Tim. 4:1*) It is not surprising, therefore, that these fallen angels, demons, have in every country and in every time, found it possible to obtain possession of numerous mediums. And they are choice as to who their mediums shall be, seeking, so far as possible, those possessed of mental capacity, that through these natural qualities and abilities they may the more thoroughly operate in the control of the masses in general. Consequently we find that in heathen lands and amongst the

Indians these mediums, priests, wizards, witches, necromancers, astrologers, and soothsayers, were amongst the wisest and ablest. In modern times, in Christendom, these mediums of demons are often known by this particular name, medium, as amongst the Spiritualists. It is one of the most correct names ever applied, for, simply and strictly, those who submit themselves to these evil influences, to be the channels of communication to men, are merely mediums through which the evil spirits communicate, either by words or raps, or writings, or otherwise.

The general methods and general teaching of these demons, through such mediums, in all times and in all countries, have been practically the same. They misrepresent themselves, and personate the dead, except very occasionally, when they have made themselves so bold as to admit that they are demons--as, for instance, amongst the Chinese. See also *1 Cor. 10:20*. By palming themselves off as

F622

dead human beings they accomplish a manifold work most successfully:

(1) They support the original lie promulgated by Satan in Eden, "Thou shalt not surely die."

(2) Through this falsehood they prejudice the minds of mankind against the Gospel and all its provisions.

(3) The divine provisions for man's redemption and recovery out of sin, and its penalty, death, they thus make to appear inconsistent, unreasonable, nonsensical. Denying that the wages of sin is death, and claiming that the wages of sin is eternal torment, their theory not only blasphemes the divine character, by representing it as the personification of injustice and cruelty, but it makes ridiculous the Scriptural doctrine of a ransom; for even fallen reason is able to discern that our Lord's death at Calvary could not redeem the race from eternal torture; and that there would be no correspondence whatever between the penalty and the ransom price.

(4) It makes the doctrine of the resurrection seem useless and unreasonable, because if there are none dead, how could there be a resurrection of the dead? If all, in dying, become more alive than they ever were before, and are in much better condition than previously, what good purpose could be served by a resurrection? or why should it be held out as the hope, and the only hope, set before us in the Gospel?

(5) It prepares the way for enslaving errors. Amongst the

heathen, this, to a considerable extent, takes the form of the worship of parents, and the belief in transmigration of souls--that those who die as men, after remaining for a while in a disembodied condition, will be born into the world again as dogs or cats, horses or cows, rats or mice, and pass through the various experiences of these dumb animals; or, if worthy, pass to nobler conditions.

(6) In Christendom this evil took on its most Satanic form, and the false doctrine became the foundation of all the gross errors and superstitions with which Christianity has contended. There could have been no theory of eternal

F623

torture except as built upon this doctrine of demons, that the dead are *alive*--capable of suffering. There could have been no theory and doctrine of purgatory, except for the same teaching; consequently, there could have been no praying for the dead, no paying for masses for the dead. Consequently, also, the great priestly institutions which have fattened on these falsehoods could not have developed, to enslave mankind with their fallacies and misrepresentations of the divine character and plan.

(7) Although the power of Papacy was broken in the great Reformation movement of the sixteenth century, this foundation fallacy, taught by the demons, and supported by them amongst all nations with various proofs, demonstrations, and manifestations, was carefully guarded; and the Reformers stepped forth, still bound by this original lie, taught by the father of lies, and supported by his legions of evil spirits. Thus it became also in Protestantism the basis of all the difficulties and errors with which the various denominations have since struggled. It has blinded them to a large extent to the light of the divine Word, hindering them from "comprehending with all saints the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God."

Eph. 3:18

(8) Adapting itself to the new condition, it has, within the last fifty years, assumed the role of light-bearer to the Church, and affected to lead all desiring the truth. In this it is true to the character marked out for it in the inspired Word, for the Apostle declares, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." ***2 Cor. 11:14***

(9) Spiritism has been unsuccessful in capturing the majority of Christian people. Although handicapped by the false theory that their dead friends are alive, Christians in

general have somehow instinctively realized that the mediums (the best which Satan could obtain) were not such mediums as God would appoint to communicate information, and to be channels of fellowship between himself and their friends, whom they erroneously believe to be alive, and frequently near them, though unseen; consequently,

F624

the great Adversary, while permitting Spiritualism to gather and to hold and to seduce to evil as many as possible, has found it necessary to introduce still more subtle temptations, still more close imitations of true Christianity, under the names of

Christian Science and Theosophy

These systems, pretending a reverence for the divine Word, and taking the name of Christ in vain, without having faith in him as the Redeemer, are used as decoys for Christians who are getting awake in the present time--to satisfy their cravings for something new and better than the husks of human tradition, upon which they have fed so long. These profess to feed their followers upon scientific truth, while ignoring truth, science, in every sense of the word.

(10) Seeing that restitution is the divine plan in the near future, the Adversary is attempting to distract human attention from the divine plan by mind cures, through Christian Scientists, Theosophists, and clairvoyants. These deceptive counterfeits of the truth, while denying the very foundation of the Scripture truth (the Ransom), are evidences to us that Satan's power to delude Christendom is waning, that his house is tottering to its fall, so far as intelligent people are concerned. The light of the Millennial dawn is breaking upon the world of mankind, and the great defender of error is at his extremity. God be praised that he will soon be bound, and hindered from deceiving the world for the thousand years of Christ's Millennial reign, in which the light of knowledge shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep!

As we look into heathendom, we see clearly the terrible and degrading work of these demons, how they have riveted their fetters upon the people by the exercise of miraculous powers, through their human agents--as, for instance, the fakirs of India today, and the "Black Art" generally practiced throughout the world in the darker days of

the past. The Scriptures show us the effect of the Gospel

F625

upon these works of the devil, and indicate that the light of divine truth is "the light of the world," which alone will be capable of dispelling the darkness of the Adversary. Notice the conflict between the light and darkness, as recorded in the Apostle Paul's experiences, when he traveled through Asia and into Europe, holding up the true light, when "Many that believed came and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver: so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." *Acts 19:18-20*

The apostles were continually in conflict with these evil spirits, which sometimes sought to oppose the Gospel, but in general realized that they were wholly unable to cope with the higher spiritual powers operating through the apostles. On one occasion, we read that the evil spirit sought affiliation with the Gospel, and prompted the medium to follow the Apostle and those with him, calling out, "These be the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of eternal life." But whether this was an attempt to associate the Gospel with demonism and mediumship, or whether it was a shrewd trick by which the demons expected to accomplish the very result which followed, viz., a disturbance amongst the people, and an opposition to the apostles, we cannot judge. But at all events, one point clearly brought forward is, that the Apostle recognized these mediums, not as the mediums of the dead, but as the mediums of the demons, the fallen angels. And in conference with the apostles these demons never denied their own identity. See *Acts 16:16-19; 19:15; Jas. 2:19*.

Likewise in our Lord's ministry, these evil spirits had found many amongst the Jews willing to receive them-- known as "possessed of devils." When possessed of many of these demons, as was frequently the case, the victim had almost no control of himself. His thoughts, words and acts were controlled by numerous of these evil spirits, and his

F626

conduct was that of insanity. Many possessed of devils were healed in our Lord's time, both by himself and by those

whom he sent forth, armed with his spirit, power, influence. An interesting account of one of these instances of the casting out of evil spirits is found in *Luke 4:34-37, Matt. 8:28-33*, where the demons not only did not attempt to deny their own identity, when holding converse with the Lord, but admitted his lordship and power over them, and their expectation of some future termination of their present restraint or imprisonment--a culmination or judgment in their case.*

"We Wrestle not [Merely] with Flesh and Blood"

From the foregoing we see that Satan himself, and the demons, his associates in evil, are really the great power working in and upon and through mankind, in opposition to God, and in opposition to the plan of atonement which he has designed and which began to be put into operation at the first advent and death of our Lord, as the ransom price for sinners. From this standpoint only can we comprehend clearly the significance of the words of the Apostle, "We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high [exalted] positions." (*Eph. 6:12*) And seeing that fallen man is so incompetent to defend himself against this wily Adversary, and that the people of the Lord can escape from his machinations only in proportion as their hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord and attentive to his Word--and then because to such he will grant special assistance and deliverance from evil, which, if it were not for this assistance, would deceive the very elect--we are led to inquire, Why does God permit this great Adversary thus to compass man about with delusive errors, false doctrines, and, to some extent, with miracles in support of these?

*For further discussion of Spiritism--Demonism, see "What Say the Scriptures about Spiritism?" Address the publishers.

F627

The answer to this question, and the only satisfactory answer that can be found, is that God, in the present time, is not seeking the reconciliation of the whole world, not attempting to bring all mankind into harmony with himself, but, on the contrary, is merely selecting out from amongst the redeemed race the predestinated little flock, the New Creation, who will make their calling and election sure, under

divine providence, by becoming, in heart, copies of God's dear Son, their Redeemer, their Lord, their Bridegroom. The world's experience, under these delusions of the Adversary will, during the Millennial age, be thoroughly exposed. All shall then see and fully appreciate the delusive and ensnaring and degrading influences of every other course than the course of righteousness, and of every other spirit and influence than the Spirit of God, the spirit of Truth. All will thus find how thoroughly they have been ensnared, and "led captive by Satan at his will" (*2 Tim. 2:26*); how thoroughly they have been blinded by the god of this world against the true light of God's character, shining through Christ (*2 Cor. 4:4*), and will have learned a lesson of several parts: (1) That God is the true friend of all his creatures, and that his laws are in their interest and for their well-being. (2) They will have learned of the insidious character of evil, as exemplified in Satan, in the fallen angels, and in their own personal experiences. (3) They will have learned that they cannot trust to their own judgment implicitly; and that with man's limited knowledge, under such conditions, it is possible for light to appear darkness, and for darkness to be made to appear as light--for good to appear as evil, and for evil to appear as good. This lesson will be of everlasting value, so that all mankind will learn to trust more implicitly in the divine wisdom, as well as in divine goodness and power.

The Ministry of Evil

Meantime these errors and superstitions amongst men are serving, nevertheless, to hold them in a bondage of slavery, at a time when they would be incapable of using liberty

F628

aright; because only perfect men, only those who have the full "image of God," and who are guided by him, are properly prepared for a self-control that would be to their own profit. Meantime, also, these oppositions of Satan and his associates in evil, and the opposition of the world, wrought upon through their errors and delusions, are directed against the Truth, against those who become its servants, in proportion as they are loyal to the Truth, and energetic in that service. It was our royal Master, the most faithful servant of the living God, who declared to those who would follow in his footsteps, "If the world hate you, ye know that

it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (*Jno. 15:18,19*) Consequently, by the operation of a natural law, we might say, it follows that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (*2 Tim. 3:12*) And these persecutions and oppositions from the world, the flesh and the devil are the hammer and chisel and polishing implements of the Lord, which he is using in the development of the New Creation.

God is making use of these implements of opposition which the Adversary is himself furnishing, and is causing the wrath and opposition (both of men and of devils), to praise him, in that these very experiences and tribulations of his elect Church are *working out for us* "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (*2 Cor. 4:17*) These are the implements by which the living stones of the great Temple of God are being shaped and fashioned, polished and prepared, in harmony with the great Architect's design--to the intent that shortly, in and through this living Temple, all the families of the earth may be blessed and so many as will be brought into at-one-ment, reconciliation, with the Lord. When they realize thus that the oppositions of men are largely the result of their fallen condition, and of the errors and blindness which come upon them through the machinations of the great opponent of God and of righteousness,

F629

the Lord's people may have large sympathies, not only for the world in general, but also for those, even, who are their opponents and persecutors. So far from desiring to take vengeance on them, they may very properly love their enemies, and do good to those who persecute them, realizing the meanwhile that, in the fullest and truest sense of the word, "they know not what they do."

Amongst men who are opponents of the Atonement we recognize many who, in various ways and from various motives, are all cooperating with the great Adversary in opposition to God and the work of the Atonement. If we were to mention, as first amongst these, the brothel keeper, the saloon keeper, the gambling-house keeper, and the fetishes and mediums and wizards and priests, we would be stating the matter as it would appeal, probably, to the majority. But from the divine standpoint, which we endeavor to take, it would appear the contrary of this--that those who are leaders of thought in civilized lands, and who are opposing

the light of Truth, while nominally its servants, occupy a place of greatest responsibility in the sight of God, and are most thoroughly Satan's earthly tools--often unwittingly.

Acts 3:17

Our hope for many of those who have come in contact with the light of Truth throughout the Gospel age, and now in the end of the age, is that their opposition to it has been at least partially one of blindness, as the Apostle declares with reference to those who crucified our Lord: "I wot that ye did it ignorantly, as did also your rulers." (*Acts 3:17*) From this standpoint we may entertain a measure of hope for some of the most violent opposers of the Truth--Evolutionists, Theosophists, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, Romanists and Protestants. Our hopes for the future are necessarily less in the case of those who have been enlightened on these subjects by the Present Truth, but who, for the sake of ambition or jealousy or pride in their desire to be somebodies, have become opponents of the Lord's work. Such fall generally into the errors of Universalism, having

F630

become blinded as respects the Lord's presence, and even as respects the ransom. It is not for us to pass judgment upon these yet it is for us to fear on their behalf, and to note, in their case, the application of the Scripture which declares, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good Word of God, and of the powers of the age to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (*Heb. 6:4-6*) It is for us to know the fulfilment of these scriptures, and to have no fellowship with such unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them and to withdraw ourselves from the company of those who walk not after the teachings of the Apostle, and who hold not the faith once delivered to the saints, nor its spirit; for all such are on Satan's side, opponents of the Lord and his plan, of which the *Atonement*, the *Ransom*, is the center or hub. ***2 Pet. 2:21; 2 Thess. 3:6; Jude 3***

In considering this subject of besetments it is well to remember that our Lord's temptations in the wilderness* illustrated most clearly all the temptations to which the New Creation are subject.

Besetments of the Adversary

One besetment of the Adversary which seems to chime in well with the yearnings of the flesh, is the argument that the New Creation should be so under divine protection that their temporal interests would all be prospered. This, however, is the reasoning of the *natural* man and finds no support in the Word of God, which must guide the judgment of the New Creature. The old mind insists that surely the close relationship of the "adoption" and its promise of future joint-heirship in the Kingdom, *must* carry with it blessings and protections and favors in respect to all temporal affairs. The chief argument is in respect to health: Why should our

*Vol. V, p. 110.

F631

consecrated mortal bodies be sick or pained? Surely God would not send the aches and pains; and hence, they must be of the devil. These are the arguments, and if they are of our Adversary, should we not consider it an evidence of divine disfavor to give heed to them and pray for deliverance from them?

The Adversary, through various channels, is suggesting these questions today with great persistency; and is suggesting an affirmative answer that many would not suspect to be of his instigation--that sickness in the bodies of God's people is a mark of God's disfavor; that to use remedies would evidence lack of faith in God; that, instead, the prayer of faith should be relied on; that even natural Israelites had such privileges and exercised them, and much more should Spiritual Israelites rely upon God as their healer. Mormons, Christian Scientists, Christian Alliancists, and Dowieites all use these arguments in a most telling manner, to mislead and captivate--"if it were possible the very elect," to turn their attention away from the truth.

The fact is that the real interests of the New Creation and their physical conditions and interests are often opposites. The Prophet David, speaking for these, declares, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." The New Creatures--not their mortal bodies--are the actual sons of God; indeed, as we have already seen, God made the *sacrifice of the flesh* (even after it was justified) a condition precedent to our begetting, or acceptance. This was not the case with fleshly Israel, whose physical favors and temporal blessings, etc., typified the terms and conditions which will prevail during the Millennial

age, when the antitypical King and Kingdom shall be in control. **Exod. 15:26; Lev. 26:3-15; Deut. 28:1-14**

On the contrary, it is to constitute an important part of the New Creatures' testing that as respects earthly things they must "walk by faith and not by sight." Yea, more than this--must suffer persecution, must practice self-denial, must be as deceivers, and yet true; as having nothing, though really (by faith) possessing all things; as unwise, though really wise toward God. So much so that the prophetic

F632

description of the Master must be in large measure applicable to all who follow closely in his steps, viz., "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." The Prophet declares, "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we [as sinners] were healed." Let us not forget that our healing, or justification, preceded our acceptance as members of the body of Christ--members of the New Creation; and that our acceptance to this higher plane of sonship and joint-heirship was upon the special condition that "*we suffer with him*"; or as again expressed, that "we fill up that which is behind of the *afflictions of Christ*." **Isa. 53:4,5; Rom. 8:17; Col. 1:24**

True, our Lord had no sicknesses of his own, because he was perfect; but it is written, nevertheless, that "he was touched with a feeling of our [man's] infirmities" and "himself took our infirmities"--the weaknesses going to him as "there went virtue out of him and healed" the multitude.

Heb. 4:15; Matt. 8:17; Luke 6:19

We, as the under-priests, must also be "touched" and brought into sympathy with the world to whom we shall shortly be kings, priests and judges. But it is not necessary or possible for us to give largely of our physical strength, or to take the weaknesses and sicknesses of others--we each have some experiences of this kind anyway, by reason of our participation in the fall; for according to the flesh we were "children of wrath even as others," and sharers with the groaning creation in its afflictions. Our Lord's expenditure of vitality was not on behalf of the Church; for it (the Church) could not be recognized until his sacrifice had been completed and been presented to the Father and accepted by him on our behalf--not until Pentecost. Until the Spirit had come upon his followers, it was useless to try to tell them of heavenly things. (**John 3:12, 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:10-12**) Hence our Lord's energy was largely expended in uttering parables and dark sayings to be understood later by the aid

of the Spirit; but chiefly in healing physical infirmities and showing forth thus, in a figure, the greater works and grander healings in which we may participate, now and in

F633

the Kingdom--the opening of the eyes of understanding, the causing of the morally dead to hear the voice of the Lord and even now to begin the new life. Thus, the Apostle declares, we are privileged to "lay down our lives for the brethren"--to fill up "the afflictions of Christ *for his body's sake*, which is the church." **1 John 3:16; Col. 1:24**

It will not do to deprive these words of their true meaning and claim that laying down our lives for the brethren will cost us no sacrifice of physical vigor; and that the "afflictions of Christ" cost no physical pain. Our Lord's weariness and loss of "virtue" (vitality) and being "touched with a *feeling* of our infirmities" contradict any such thought. It should not, therefore, be our expectation to fare better than the world in our earthly interests, but to experience *loss*, to "*suffer* with him." Such losses are freely admitted as respects honor amongst men, and financial prosperity--that our Master was made of "no reputation," and "became poor" in his willingness to make others rich--and that the apostles had similar experiences and set us an example. Why then cannot all see that Timothy's "often infirmities," and Paul's "thorn in the flesh," and Epaphroditus' "sickness," were physical ailments similar to those permitted now to the Lord's faithful? True, they were all of the devil, in the sense that sin was started by Satan and that these ailments are some of the results; but they were no more of the devil than were their imprisonments and stripes and shipwreck and death.

Satan probably was indirectly if not directly the instigator of all those physical disasters--all common to men. Yet the Apostle did not esteem himself disowned of God under such experiences, but gloried in them as parts of the *sacrifice* he was permitted to make, part of the sufferings he was permitted to endure for the Lord's sake, for the truth's sake--and the more these exceeded those of other men the more he rejoiced and counted that his future glory would thereby be enhanced.

However, we are to distinguish between suffering for *righteousness's sake* and suffering for wrong doing. The

F634

Apostle points out that much suffering comes to people on account of busybodying in other people's affairs and other evil doings; and we might specify gluttony (*Phil. 3:19*) and lack of self-control as among these evils which bring sufferings which cannot be reckoned as sufferings for righteousness' sake. Let none rejoice in such sufferings; but rather mourn and pray and fast--practice self-control. But when, in his best judgment, the New Creature sees the door of opportunity opened to him by Providence and enters it zealously and self-sacrificingly, and it results in physical ailments, which the worldly might consider marks of indiscretion, let him not be ashamed, but glorify God on behalf of such afflictions--rejoicing to be accounted "worthy to *suffer*" for Christ's sake.

Indeed if ailments come on from any cause not sinful or selfish, they can be received with patience and thanksgiving, and lessons learned of sympathy for the groaning creation and of hope and trust for the promised lifting of the curse in the Millennial morning. Grace in the heart does surely exercise a very favorable influence over every function of life; but it could not (without miraculous interposition) recreate or repair our mortal bodies; and God proposes no such miracles, which would be injurious in leading us to walk by sight and not by faith, and would attract into the Church a class God does not now seek. As we have seen, he justifies us by *faith*, *instead*--reckons us as *whole* while leaving us actually imperfect as ever. Grace in the heart does not render us insensible to the influences of heat and cold, or hunger and thirst, though it does give us patience to endure these when unavoidable, with trust in our heavenly Father's care, and in his promise that *all* things shall eventually work out good for us if rightly received with patience and faith.

Does this imply that, while the world may seek for roots and herbs and balms for its ills, the New Creation shall seek for and use none of these, that they must endure pain to show their faith? By no means. Let us remember, and impress it upon our minds deeply that God's dealings with his

F635

people during this Gospel age are not according to the flesh, but as New Creatures. "The flesh profiteth nothing"--we have consecrated it to death, to destruction, anyway, and our interests as New Creatures are our chief concern. We have a privilege, nevertheless, respecting our mortal bodies,

to do *what we reasonably can* to keep them in order, free from the distractions of dis-ease (lack of ease), but always as our servants, to enable us to perform our covenant of service unto sacrifice. Do they hunger and demand food and drink?--we may gratify their demands, within reasonable bounds, supplying such viands as we believe our Lord would approve, such as would best enable us to do his work faithfully. Do they feel cold and uncomfortable?--it is our privilege to supply clothing of the kind we believe our Lord would approve. Do they burn with fever? or are they racked with pain?--it is our privilege to reduce the fever and relieve the pain by the use of any remedies we may believe beneficial, but not to submit ourselves to clairvoyants, Christian Scientists, hypnotists, or others who use enchantments to charm away the trouble by the aid of our Adversary, who would thus ensnare our minds. The New Creation have every *privilege* that the natural man enjoys in respect to the care of their poor, frail, dying bodies. Nay, more, it is the *duty* of every creature to take reasonable care of his body; and this *duty* is intensified in the case of the New Creation, by reason of the fact that their bodies have been devoted to the Lord's service as sacrifices--even unto death--and they should make as great a service of sacrifice as possible out of them.

Some will be ready to say, "Yes, I would quickly apply cream or other simple ointment of my own make for a burn, or regulate my system by discriminating in my use of different foods; but I would think it totally different to purchase medicines and ointments, or to call in a physician." But such discriminations are senseless. We might as well say when cold, "I will put on clothing and get warm, if I can own the sheep and clip the wool and card and weave it, and cut and fit and make the garments necessary to protect me

F636

from the cold; but I will not use clothing prepared by others, no matter how superior or more convenient it might be." Or when hungry, do we delude ourselves that we must sow and reap and thresh and grind and bake our bread before it would be proper to use it? And may we avail ourselves of the labor and skill of farmers and butchers and bakers and tailors in caring for our bodily ease, and feel it a sin to make use of the skill of a brother or a neighbor or a stranger in relieving bodily pain? Surely not. We are not to be understood to advocate the use of drugs, but the use of common sense. Drugging can undoubtedly be carried to

the extent of folly or even crime. Regulation of the system by care in dieting is much to be preferred whenever possible. The instructions to the New Creation read, "Let your moderation be known unto all," and this applies to medicine as well as to food, etc., etc.

How did Jesus do? and what course did his apostles pursue following in his footsteps? We answer that there is no record that Jesus or the apostles ever healed any of the Church. Is it urged that the Lord's healing of the sick indicated the divine will on the subject? We answer that not the healed ones, but the healer is our pattern. Our Lord miraculously fed the multitude; should we therefore expect to be miraculously fed? No--on the contrary. As the Chief of the New Creation refused to use *divine power* for his personal comfort, so should we. (***Matt. 4:2-4; 26:53***) If when he hungered he sent his disciples to buy bread, and when weary he rested on the well or elsewhere--and if while the loss or sacrifice of his vitality "touched" him, yet he never prayed for deliverance from these natural troubles, but cheerfully endured them as a part of his sacrifice--so should we.

More than this: our Lord intimates that it would have been a sinful misuse of power for him to have used the aid of the holy Spirit in the relief of such temporal needs, because it was at his disposal for another purpose. To have called on divine power for his relief or protection from any part of the dying processes would have been sin; *because* he had made a covenant of sacrifice, and any appeal from its

F637

effects would have been "drawing back." "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." ***Heb. 10:38; Matt. 26:53***

Matters stand the same, exactly, with the Church, for we are following our Captain. For us to appeal for *divine aid* for our mortal bodies, which we have consecrated to death, would be in derogation of our covenant, by which we gave all our earthly advantages and rights as men (in the restitution privileges purchased by the precious blood) in exchange for the privilege of running as New Creatures the race for the great prize of "glory, honor and immortality." To ask back what we surrendered implies a desire to withdraw the sacrifice, to cancel the covenant and to give up our inheritance as New Creatures. This view of prayer for earthly things will be new to some, and to some it will doubtless bring a shock as they reflect that unwittingly they have done this very thing, and that God answered the

prayer. Can it mean that they were thus rejected from the race for the prize? We think not. We believe that as an earthly parent would be long-suffering with his ignorant little child, so the Lord is patient toward his people, excusing their unintentional errors, and taking the intention instead of merely the words. And like as a parent might grant the improper request of his little one, so we believe the Lord has frequently honored the faith of his people even when improperly exercised. But the case is different as we grow in grace and knowledge; then it would be sin and might mean a turning back of divine favor--a rejection of the covenant.

The Prayer of Faith Shall Save the Sick

--James 5:14-16--

This passage, and one found in *Mark 16:17,18*, are relied upon as proof texts to show that it is the divine intention that the New Creation should rely upon divine power for healing of sicknesses. The passage in Mark is easily disposed of: it is not to be found in the oldest Greek MSS, hence must be regarded as an interpolation, made somewhere about the fifth century.

F638

As for the statement of James: It is evident from the sixteenth verse, that the sickness referred to is recognized as being a chastisement for sins--not a slight sickness, but a serious one, making it worthwhile to call together the elders of the *Ecclesia*. The implication seems to be that sin lay so close to the door that the sick sinner felt practically cut off from fellowship with God. And under such circumstances we should expect that the *sins would be confessed and their forgiveness prayed for*; and just so the record reads: "The prayer of faith shall save the sick [from the condemnation in which he was] and the Lord shall raise him up [to health--the restoration being a sign of the forgiveness of the sin]--*though* he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him. See verse 15.

If Satan Cast Out Satan His Kingdom Wanes

--Matthew 12:26--

When at the first advent the Pharisees charged our Lord with casting out devils by Satanic power, his answer clearly implied that such action on Satan's part was possible, but

not to be considered probable; and that, should it occur, it would be a proof that his power was on the wane; that he was hard pressed, and that he had resorted to this as a last resort, rather than lose his hold upon his dupes. We advocate no general rejection of healings and miracles as being Satanic; but a careful scrutiny of every person or system seeking to establish itself by miracles. The New Creation should remember the inspired direction, "Try the spirits whether they be of God"--or of Satan. Test them and deal with them accordingly. **1 John 4:1**

It is pertinent to this inquiry that we call to remembrance that miracles were used at the beginning of this age to establish the Church, but that no such object can be urged now--after the Church has been established for nearly nineteen centuries and is about completed. It is well, too, that we bear in mind that the inspired Apostle pointed down to our end of the age when indicating that Satan would transform

F639

himself into an angel of light (a messenger of peace and health and science, falsely so-called) with every deceivableness of error. The Apostle even implies that God wills to permit this course to have measurable success, so as to deceive all that dwell upon the earth whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. He says: "For this cause he shall send them *strong delusion* [a working of error] that they should believe a lie: that they might all be condemned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in error." "Power and signs and lying [deceiving] wonders" are to be expected at this time, as tests in this "harvest" time of the age. (**2 Thess. 2:9-12**) Let us also not forget our Lord's words: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied [preached] *in thy name*? and *in thy name* cast out devils? and *in thy name* done many wonderful works [cures]? And then will I profess unto them, *I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*" **Matt. 7:22,23**

It is surely time that all--the eyes of whose understanding have been opened to a realization that we are now living in the end of the age, where all these predictions should be expected to reach fulfilment--should be on the lookout for them, and be able to identify them with the seductive teachings and miracle-workings prevalent on every hand throughout Christendom.

But how may we be sure that all of these are Satan's delusions? --that none of them are of God? We answer in the inspired language: "If they speak not according to this Word,

it is because there is no light in them." (*Isa. 8:20*) Their digressions from the Word are various--some in one direction, some in another. The great mass of them may speedily be seen to be spurious by noting that they are out of accord with the fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, viz., the *ransom*. They may not claim to deny the ransom; they may even claim to believe in the necessity and efficacy of the great sin-offering finished at Calvary, as the ransom for all and the basis of all forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to the Father. However, the effort to deceive will not long confuse

F640

those who remember that the Greek word rendered ransom is *anti-lutron*, and signifies "*a corresponding price*." This touchstone of divine truth will quickly show that evolution is the opposite of the truth, because evolution denies the fall and all need for redemption from it. It promptly condemns Christian Science as wholly unchristian, in that it denies sin and death and all evil, claiming that they are mental delusions. It condemns the theory that God was the instigator, the author, of sin and wickedness, by showing that he has always opposed sin, and has in process a plan for releasing man from its bondage through the *redemption*, whose fruitage will come by and by in the "times of restitution."

But what shall we say of those who blaspheme God's holy name by teaching doctrines of devils--to the effect that an eternity of torment awaits the great mass of the living of mankind, and already has control of the vast majority of the 50,000,000,000 whom the Scriptures, on the contrary, declare are "in their graves," awaiting the promised blessing of all the families of the earth? If such people shall do cures "*in my name*," shall we consider that the Lord is now indorsing their false doctrines? We must not so suppose, now that the Millennial dawn is appearing and with it all excuse for such gross darkness is disappearing. We cannot reckon such as amongst those to whom the Apostle wrote: "Ye brethren are *not in darkness* that that day should overtake you as a thief." It matters not that with their "wonderful works" they proclaim faith in Christ as their coming King, near at hand. With such doctrines of devils in their mouths and hearts we must conclude that their faith-cures and wonderful works are as much works of the devil as are similar cures by Spiritism, Christian Science, Mormonism, etc.

Suppose, however, says one, that they display great zeal in sending out missionaries to the heathen? We reply that this must not alter our general view of the *movement* as a

whole (we gladly admit, yea, earnestly hope, that some "caught," "ensnared," by this movement are true children

F641

of God, whom we trust he will deliver out of this district of mystic Babylon). Let us call to mind our Lord's estimate of the zealous missionary efforts of his day. He said to the Pharisees (the "holiness people" of that time and nation), "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of Gehenna [the Second Death] than yourselves." (*Matt. 23:15*) What advantage can accrue to the heathen from giving them the *false doctrines* of the Adversary? The few who may be reached will have the more to unlearn when the times of restitution begin. It is as true today as it was at the first advent that--"His servants ye are to whom ye render service." Surely, then, Satan is doing a great business in the nominal churches of Christendom, and especially in their pulpits. No wonder the chief priests, scribes and doctors of divinity today hate the Truth--hate the light and combat it in every possible manner. "Come out of her [Babylon], *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." *Rev. 18:4*

Satan is in just the extremity indicated by our Lord's words above quoted. (*Matt. 12:26*) The lifting of the veil of ignorance--the general increase of knowledge on every subject --makes it impossible to use the old superstitions as formerly. New delusions must be introduced, else the people would get the Truth and escape from him. He is very busy "as an angel of light"--as a preacher of Evolution to some; as a missionary of eternal torment, bad-tidings, to the heathen; as an Elijah heralding himself as the Restorer of mankind; as a Scientist (?) persuading people to deny their aches and pains, and rewarding their lying by curing them of a physical ailment while the perversion of the truth makes them thereafter unable to discern truth from falsehood. Satan may believe that he is succeeding, but our Lord's word for it, his house will soon fall--and this necessity for his playing reformer and good physician is an evidence that the fall is near. Thank God it will not be long

F642

until he shall be thoroughly "bound," restrained, that he may "*deceive* the nations no more"! *Rev. 20:3*

Love Righteousness--Hate Iniquity

If we would understand the philosophy of God's dealings with the New Creation in this present time, we must not forget that it is his intention that all who would be perfected on this divine plane of being shall be not only well-intentioned, in the sense that they will prefer right to wrong, but that additionally, through a large experience, they shall clearly comprehend and thoroughly appreciate the comforts and advantages of right--righteousness--and the confusion and disadvantage of wrongdoing. It is for this reason that this New Creation is being subjected to peculiar trials and testings, more pronounced every way than those which have come upon the angels, more pronounced also than will come upon the world of mankind during its judgment day, the Millennial age. So far as we know, no particular test ever came to the holy angels until after Satan's deflection in his ambitious attempt to grasp the rule of earth; but we have every reason to suppose that his fall into sin and the resulting fall of mankind became the occasion for testing, not only to those angels who kept not their first estate, and became demons, but that it was a test also to all the holy angels. It must have been a test of their faith in the power of Jehovah to witness the course of evil and God's apparent lack of power to restrain it and destroy it. Seeing this, each and all must have been tempted, or tried, with the thought that they also might commit sin with impunity; and the fact that they remained loyal to the Lord evidences the fact that their hearts were in a right condition of humility and obedience to the principles of righteousness. They already see the grand outworking of the divine plan through Christ, and shortly will find their confidence in the wisdom, love, justice and power of Jehovah more than justified in the grand consummation of his plan through Christ Jesus and the glorified Church.

F643

This testing of the holy angels, however, was not so crucial in some respects as the testing which comes to the New Creatures in Christ Jesus, in continual contact with human imperfection, trials of faith and patience and love and zeal--even unto death. Similarly the trial of the world during the Millennial age, while it will be crucial and complete, and will demonstrate absolutely who are and who are not thoroughly loyal at heart to the Lord and the principles

of righteousness, will, nevertheless, be different from the testings of the Church in this present age, because with them everything will be favorable to a full and proper appreciation of righteousness and obedience thereto. On the contrary, the New Creature in the present time finds, as the Apostle declared, that "All that will live godly" will suffer. This willingness to suffer for loyalty to the Lord and the principles of his government and the faith that it implies are acceptable to God as evidences of special character. His dealings with the New Creatures during this present age are with a view to perfecting these characters in holiness--up to the very highest mark, to the point of joyfully suffering disadvantage for the Lord's and for the Truth's sake; yea, of seeking to serve the Truth at the cost of earthly comforts, honors, emoluments and even life itself.

It is because this philosophy of the divine plan is not clearly seen that so many are confused in respect to God's providential dealings with the little flock. They see not that, as special fiery and chilling processes are necessary to the tempering of the fine steel implement, so special fiery trials and chilling experiences are necessary to the preparation of those whom the Lord designs shortly to use as his special representatives and instruments in the great work of human restitution, etc. Evil is never good, and God is never the author of moral evil, sin, in any sense or degree. Nevertheless, his wisdom and power are such that he is able to overrule its effects for good. For instance, as we have seen, God did not cause Satan to sin. He created him perfect, upright, pure, and it was one of the very blessings he bestowed

F644

upon him, the blessing of freedom of will, which--being exercised contrary to the divine order--constituted the once holy angel an adversary, Satan. It was in the power of the Almighty to have destroyed his adversary instantly; but he foresaw the larger lessons of experience which might come, not only to the angels, but to mankind, respecting good and evil, through the contamination of the latter and the bitterness of its fruit. Likewise with sin amongst mankind: God was thoroughly able to eradicate it at any time, as he will do eventually; but for the time being his wisdom foresaw how the wrath of man could be made to glorify him. God's children then need have no fear respecting the ultimate triumph of the Lord over sinners and sin in every sense of the word. They may have confidence that neither the arch conspirator nor any of his more or less wilful or more or less

deluded followers in the evil way will gain an ultimate mastery. The plan of God already is so far advanced as to disclose the end of the great mystery of permitting for a time the flourishing of sin and sinners, and their prosperity in opposition to the Lord and his faithful.

Let us not forget to note that while all sickness and death in the world may, with more or less directness, be traceable and chargeable to the great Adversary, through whom sin entered into the mind of man to his defilement and undoing, yet in the case of the world, as well as with the New Creation, God is overruling for man's instruction and education the various elements of the curse that came upon the race because of sin. As for the world, in a general sense at least, the entire groaning creation is learning something respecting the exceeding sinfulness and undesirability of sin; and as for the Church, the New Creation, her permission to share in the sufferings of Christ includes and implies a share in those sufferings which are common to the remainder of mankind. In the case of our Lord, we are particularly informed that it was expedient that he, to be the great High-Priest for humanity, should be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and this must be true as respects each member

F645

of the body of that Priest, as well as of the Head, the Lord. There will surely not be an unsympathetic member of the entire body of Christ. All will have been touched with experiences, and know fully how to sympathize with the poor world when the time shall come for their restitution by judgments, by obedience under the trials and testings and corrections of the future age. Our Lord, who was perfect in the flesh, and who, therefore, could not have thus been touched had he not expended his vitality in healing the sick, experienced instead of vitality a sense of the weakness and suffering of those whom he relieved, as it is declared, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." (*Matt. 8:17*) Those who are called to membership in the body of Christ have generally little vitality to give off in a miraculous manner; but in sharing the common experiences of the world, in connection with their own imperfect human organisms, these also are touched with a feeling of the infirmities of the race, which enables them to sympathize fully in the general distress.

It will be seen from this that we have no sympathy with the thought advanced by some that the body of Christ should expect to be exempted from the trials and difficulties

of the world, physical, social and financial. True, such was the case with the typical Israelites. Their rewards for faithfulness to the Lord and his Law were to be along these lines of immunity from suffering, trials, etc.; but with the New Creation the matter is entirely the reverse, because they are not Israelites according to the flesh, but according to the spirit--they are of the spiritual seed of Abraham. The antitypes of Israel's blessings in the New Creation are spiritual. All things work together for their good spiritually. God's blessings are guaranteed to them so long as they abide in faith and obedience to Christ, so that nothing evil can come nigh their dwelling-place, where they are kept secret, shielded from all that could do injury. Yet their appreciation of this spiritual relationship is continually tested, to prove whether or not they appreciate the spiritual above

F646

the natural, that they may enjoy more abundantly the spiritual and ultimately be perfected as New Creatures when the earthly sacrifices shall have been fully completed.

When, therefore, the New Creatures in Christ Jesus find that they have numerous fiery trials, no matter along what lines these may come to them, they are to recognize them as evidences of their faithfulness--as evidences that God regards them as sons, and that they are being tested according to their covenant relationship, that they may be fitted and prepared for perfecting in spirit and the glories to follow. If, therefore, the Lord permits calamities to come upon such, let them not be regarded in the same light as if they befell the world. The world, under the divine sentence of death, is subject to various accidents and mutations, with which the Lord has nothing whatever to do, as explained by our Lord when he referred to the eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and the others whose blood Pilate mingled with the sacrifices, and who our Lord declared were not, on account of these things, to be considered sinners above others and under divine reprobation. (*Luke 13:1-5*) God permits the wrath of men and of Satan, within certain limits, in connection with the world of mankind; but in respect to his elect Church it is different. Nothing that befalls them is of accident. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Not even a hair of their heads can fall without his notice. (*Psa. 116:15; Matt. 10:30*) As our Lord declared to Pilate, when he asked, "Knowest thou not that I have power?"--"Thou couldst have no power at all, except it were given thee of my Father." (*John 19:10,11*)

And this is equally true of every member of the body of Christ, from the moment of his begetting as a New Creature. Yea, we have every reason to believe that in some measure divine providence extends even beyond the New Creation to those whose lives and interests are closely linked to theirs. If, then, the New Creatures experience fiery trials they are not to think these peculiar, as though some strange thing happened unto them, but are to know that corresponding

F647

trials have happened to all the members of the body of Christ, from the Head downward, and will happen to all until the last members of the feet class have been tested, polished, accepted, glorified. If these, then, come in the nature of oppositions and persecutions in the home, or from former friends or neighbors, or from nominal church people, or if they come in the form of financial disaster and poverty, or if they come in the nature of sickness, pain, physical accident, etc., no matter how, the Lord's people are to be content, conscious of the Father's love and providential care in respect to their every interest. To have full confidence in this is a part of the test of faith. To be assured of the Lord that we are children, and heirs, and to be told of God's oversight, and at the same time to be permitted to suffer tribulations, is a severe test of faith in those who are required to walk by faith and not by sight if they would eventually be accepted as overcomers. Let us, then, receive with confidence, love and trust, whatever benefits or troubles the Lord's providence may send us and let us profit by them, learning their lessons.

This realization of the divine care in all of life's interests, earthly as well as heavenly, should not lead us to indifference in respect to our temporal affairs. On the contrary, we are to remember that we are stewards of privileges, opportunities and responsibilities, social, financial, and in respect to health. It, therefore, becomes our duty to do what we can to heal any social breaches which may occur. We are to be kind and considerate, to make explanations, and do all reasonably in our power to hinder misunderstanding of our motives and intentions. We are to seek wisely to avoid everything that might appear to be superstitious and fanatical, and are thus to commend our God, his character, his book and his Church to others. In this way we are to let our light shine. In financial matters we are to use prudence and economy and to be not slothful in business, just as though we had no God, just as though everything depended on our

own exertions, yet, nevertheless, in our hearts and in our

F648

discussions of matters in the household of faith we are to realize and to express our confidence in the Lord, that because we are his, all of our interests are under his protecting care. If, then, in spite of our best exercise of wisdom, prudence, etc., poverty or financial loss shall result, we are to esteem that our heavenly Father has seen that such experiences would be better for us as New Creatures than would greater prosperity. We are to recognize his blessed supervision of our affairs, whatever may be his leadings and our experiences. Similarly in the matter of health: if disease come upon us, our proper stewardship of these mortal bodies would demand that we should use proper energy in applying remedies to the extent of our knowledge and judgment. If the efforts are successful, our acknowledgment of heart should be to the Lord, and not merely in respect to the medicine. If they are unsuccessful, we are not to doubt his power, but instead to look for further blessing in connection with the trials being undergone. Indeed, for every distress or calamity the New Creatures, while using diligence in the correction of the difficulty, should lift their hearts to the Lord in confidence and trust, desiring to know what lesson they may learn from their experiences, and whether or not these lessons are in the nature of chastisement for wrongdoing or in the nature of the rod and staff designed to bring back the sheep from some course leading in the wrong direction, away from the Shepherd's footsteps. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The Lord's people are not dependent for their joy, peace and comfort merely upon having an average amount of health, financial and social prosperity, but may rejoice in the peace of God under all circumstances and conditions, and be enabled to rejoice heartily in both the rod and the staff of the Shepherd. With the Prophet of old many of the New Creation can say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." Many of them have learned that there are great blessings connected with afflictions.

It is written prophetically of the Church, and of the Lord's care over it, "Who healeth all thy diseases." (*Psa. 103:3*)

F649

Any attempt to apply this to the Gospel Church as

respects physical conditions must of necessity be lame and weak. Who does not know that from the Head of the Church down to the last members of the "feet" the Lord has not been pleased to heal all their physical diseases? Who does not know that many many of the saints have died of their physical disease? According to medical science our dear Redeemer, although physically perfect, was attacked with a disease not unknown to scientists, when he experienced the bloody sweat in Gethsemane. According to the same science, and in full accord with the facts, he who was perfect in the flesh died more speedily than the two malefactors crucified with him because of a disease--the bursting of his heart. Who does not know that the Apostle Paul carried with him to his dying day a "thorn in the flesh," and that the Lord refused to remove it, assuring him that his patient bearing of it would bring a more than compensating blessing of grace? Who does not know that many of the noblest of God's saints throughout the age have suffered from disease, and that so far from having all their diseases healed, and instead of being made perfect, they died? An application of this scripture to physical diseases, then, would be inconsistent with the Scriptures, but its application as a prophecy to the spiritual condition of the New Creature is very appropriate indeed. The New Creation does contend with spiritual maladies, sicknesses, and this scripture warrants them in expecting that every disease may be so healed with the Balm of Gilead, so bound up with the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord's Word, so offset by the peace and joy which man can neither give nor take away, that disease of heart, unrest, may intrude no longer, where the love and joy and peace of the holy Spirit abide and rule.

Mark 16:9-20 Is Spurious

These verses are admitted by all scholars to be an interpolation. They are not found in any of the early Greek MSS, and are certainly not genuine. It is not true that all

F650

believers in the Lord Jesus may drink poisonous things, and be in contact with poisonous serpents, contagious diseases, etc., with impunity; nor have all possessed the power of healing diseases and casting out devils. It will be noticed that the passage is omitted by the Revised Version, and by all modern versions of the Scriptures. Hence, to receive it or

to quote it as Scripture, would be adding to the Word of God, and adding to the general confusion on an important subject.

The thought that the Lord's people may be specially favored of him in respect to physical health and other creature comforts (more than the world) is a delusion and a snare, and contrary to all proper expectations of the New Creation, as shown foregoing. The Lord and the apostles were the exemplars of the Church, and instead of expecting to be freed from the general difficulties which assail the groaning creation, their consecration was to a share in these afflictions, that they might be touched with the feeling of human infirmities. Our Lord repudiated as a temptation of the Adversary the suggestion to use divine power for the relief of his hunger during the forty days' fasting in the wilderness. (*Matt. 4:3,4*) When weary he rested by the well of Samaria, while his disciples went to purchase food, whereas he might have called for and used divine power for the restoration of his strength. (*John 4:6*) In these instances food was the proper medicine for the pangs of hunger, and rest was the proper medicine for the weariness of the frame, and our Lord used these remedies. We are not informed that he had any chronic ailments, but we doubt not that he would have been free to use any roots or herbs or other remedies as freely as he used the food and the rest. The nervous ailment causing the bloody sweat, and his final malady of heart-rupture came at the close of his ministry. He knew that his hour was come. He who declined to ask the heavenly power for angelic protection (*Matt. 26:53*), and who declined to call upon the same power to satisfy his hunger, and to relieve his fatigue, was nevertheless perfectly at liberty to call

F651

upon these powers in the interests of his followers, as, for instance, in the feeding of the multitudes, and in the stilling of the tempest and in the providing of the taxes. *Matt. 14:15-21; Mark 4:36-41; Matt. 17:24-27*

Similarly, we find that the apostles used no special privileges and blessings which were theirs for the relief of temporal ailments and necessities. True, we have no account of the sickness of any of the twelve except Paul, whose weak eyes (*Acts 9:8-18; Gal. 4:15; 6:11--R.V.*) the Lord was not pleased to relieve, even upon solicitation, assuring the Apostle that this, which became a messenger of Satan in buffeting him, trying his patience, his humility, etc., would be more than offset by the Lord's "grace sufficient." (*2 Cor. 12:7-9*)

The Apostle's faith and trust in the Lord have been a source of comfort to all in the narrow way from that time to the present, and yet he did not, like some of these, go to the Lord with requests for temporal good things, money, houses, lands, food, raiment, etc. We have his own word for it that he sometimes lacked, and that in such cases he labored, working with his hands at the ordinary trade of sail and tent making. Some far less holy than he, and far less in touch with the Lord, would not only have disdained so humble an occupation, but, spurning employment would have sought to do what they term "living by faith," that is, living without work, a matter which this same Apostle reproves very decidedly, saying, "If a man will not work neither should he eat." "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (*Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:10*) Many who thus mistakenly think it the divine will that they should live by faith, while others live by work and support them, are often bold to pray for money, food, clothing, etc., which they will not work for. We do not wish to intimate that all such are wicked; it is our belief that some of the Lord's people are in this wrong attitude of mind because of false teachings and misunderstanding of the divine dealings and of the character

F652

of their calling. We are not disputing, either, that the Lord sometimes hears and answers prayers from such, even when those prayers are not in the fullest accord with the divine will. We believe that the proper course for the New Creatures--the one most pleasing to the Lord--is that which follows most directly and particularly the instructions and practices of our Lord and the apostles. Their being counted as New Creatures implies that they recognized the fact that earthly blessings belong properly to the natural man in harmony with his Creator, and therefore, imputedly belong to all vitally justified before God, through faith in Christ; and that these human rights they offered, consecrated, devoted, laid upon the altar, in exchange for the heavenly, spiritual, higher blessings and privileges of the New Creation, whereunto believers are called during this Gospel age. And if these earthly rights have been thus devoted to the Lord, exchanged for spiritual privileges, hopes, etc., by what process of reasoning could the New Creatures ask, not to say "demand," these earthly blessings, already consecrated, or laid down? It is another thing entirely to ask of the Lord such

temporal blessings as his wisdom sees best for us, and another matter, also, to ask blessings upon others, including our dear ones according to the flesh, and not according to the Spirit. Nevertheless, in all of our requests the love and wisdom of the Lord should be recognized as superior to ours, and a full submission of our wills to his in every matter should be not only realized, but expressed to him in such petitions. The New Creature, rightly instructed through the Word of God, and appreciating its spirit, must value its spiritual interests far beyond any temporal welfare, and should surely desire such, and only such, experiences in the flesh as would be most profitable to the new nature's development and preparation for the Kingdom. The New Testament deals more with the experiences of the Apostle chosen of the Lord to take the place of Judas than with all the others put together, and begins with the time of his acceptance of Christ on the way to Damascus. Looking through his

F653

varied experiences we perceive that in exercising the gift of miracles, then with the Church, he used it in many cases upon those coming into the Truth. But so far as the record shows, never once was this healing power used in his own relief, nor in the relief of any of those who are set before us as the saints, the fully consecrated. Nor was this because the saints of that time were free from disease: on the contrary, we know that Timothy had what we would now designate chronic dyspepsia, or indigestion, and Epaphroditus was not hindered from being sick, yea, "nigh unto death," not because of sin, but, as the Apostle explains, "because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death," hazarding his life. (*Phil. 2:25-30*) We know not what special foods or medicines the Lord was pleased to bless in the latter case; but in respect to the former one the Apostle neither prayed nor sent a handkerchief or napkin to cure the ailment, but wrote to Timothy, saying, "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." (*1 Tim. 5:23*) The wine was recommended, not as a beverage nor as an intoxicant, but purely as a medicine. The point specially to be noticed is, that divine power, so far as we are informed, was neither invoked nor exercised on behalf of either of these two consecrated brethren. They bore their infirmities and afflictions and got blessings out of them, using meanwhile the most suitable foods and remedies of which they had knowledge. And this we believe

to be a proper illustration of the course which should be pursued by all of the consecrated, all New Creatures; they should not ask for physical healing, luxuries of life, etc. At very most, our Lord's sample petition warrants such in asking for what the Lord himself may see best for them in the way of daily food; and even while praying for the daily food they are to put forth the labors of their hands, and to expect that the Lord's blessing will be upon the same according to his wisdom as to what would be to their highest profit in character development through experiences, etc. If he shall see fit to grant them only the barest

F654

necessities of food and raiment, it will be to them a test of love and patience and faith in him. If he shall supply them with an abundance, it will be to them a test of the same faith and love and devotion, in an opposite direction--as demonstrating what proportion of these good gifts they are willing to sacrifice in the interests of his cause, in the service of his brethren. Likewise if divine wisdom sees best to give robust health and vigor, the test of faithfulness will be as to whether or not love and devotion will sacrifice and thoroughly use this vigor on behalf of the Lord's cause, or whether or not it will be absorbed in selfish pursuits; or, on the other hand, if the Lord in his providence grants but a limited amount of vitality and vigor, the test of faith and devotion will be from the opposite standpoint, to prove the love and obedience, submission and patience, and the zeal with which small opportunities will be sought and persistently used.

The Nominal Church as an Adversary to the New Creation

Because their first knowledge of the Lord came to them while in the nominal church, or through some of its representatives or agencies, many are inclined to view sectarian systems as their spiritual mothers, and to feel a love and obligation to them accordingly. Such find it difficult to realize that these are earthly systems--Babylon--really opponents of the New Creation. Their difficulty arises because of too close and narrow a view of the subject. They need to lift their eyes higher, and to realize that from the divine standpoint there is a wide difference between the nominal church and the true, between the tares and the wheat. Tares cannot beget wheat, nor can nominal Christendom produce true

Christians. Its tendencies are in a reverse direction. The Scriptures declare that it is the power of God that works in us, to "will and to do of his good pleasure." It is the power of the new life which subsequently develops under providential care. It is not the begetting of the spirit of worldliness that will produce this result. The nominal church, as distinguished

F655

from the true, is that class of people who have seen and heard certain features of divine Truth, who have been more or less enlightened in respect to right and wrong, more or less, therefore, brought under a measure of conviction as to what is right or wrong, but who under this information are careless, negligent of the divine will, and disposed to use divine mercies so far as they please, especially so far as they will minister to their personal or social advantage in the present time, and no more. The true Church, on the contrary, as we have already seen, consists of those who have not only heard the Truth, but have consecrated their all to him who loved them and bought them--those who have followed on to know the Lord and to obey him to the extent of their ability, and who, in thus following, count not their lives dear unto them. The nominal church is not the light of the world, but merely a class of people who prefer light to darkness, and who like to have a little of the light shining from true Christians commingled with the lights of heathendom and of the various sciences. The members of the true Church are each a burning and shining light wherever they may be.

The wider the difference between these two classes the better it generally is for the true Church; indeed, the lamps of the faithful light-bearers have usually shone the brighter in proportion as the nominal system was immersed in gross darkness and superstition, and in proportion as the true Church was persecuted by the nominal system--from whom, indeed, all the persecutions have come.

When once we recognize the fact that God is at the helm, directing the affairs of the New Creation in every particular, not only in their call, but also in the difficulties, trials and persecutions necessary to their polishing and preparation for the Kingdom, it lessens our appreciation of the part played in this divine plan by human institutions, which the Lord never organized nor authorized to be organized, but which, in harmony with the Lord's suggestion, we know to be carnal, fleshly, contrary to the spirit. We are not in this claiming that the true Church has not been to some extent

in close association with the nominal systems; but we are claiming that even though *in* them they have been separate *from* them, in the sense that they have always been of a different spirit. The begetting of these spiritual children of God, through the Word of his grace, and their being to some extent cherished and nourished and brought forward by these human sectarian tare systems, is well illustrated by certain insects, the young of which are injected into the backs of their enemies, and there warmed, nourished and developed, up to the time of their complete birth and deliverance, which means, usually, the death of the insect which temporarily carried them about. So now, the New Creatures, begotten of the Lord, are more or less closely connected with the institutions of Babylon and have been more or less brought forward contrary to the will of Babylon, but under divine supervision and arrangement, until now the point of deliverance has been reached, and he who begat the New Creation calls to them, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues." **Rev. 18:4**

There is a continual temptation to the New Creation by the nominal church system--not only through false doctrines, but also in formalistic piety and hypocrisy, in which they draw nigh to the Lord with the lips, while the heart is far from him--while the thoughts, sentiments, words, and deeds are wholly out of accord with the spirit of truth and the consecration which it inculcates. The temptations to the New Creation from the world would be comparatively powerless were it not for the fact that the nominal church combines the worldly spirit, aims and ambitions with the name of Christ and an humble service to him. The ease, honor of men, emoluments, freedom from sacrifice, and sureness of attaining the best things that this world can give, are the baits and allurements, the snares and traps, which Babylon holds out to the New Creation, and that continually. No others of the Adversary's snares are so alluring, so deceptive, so powerful, as this one.

F657

The Armor of God
--Eph. 6:11-13--

"Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...in the evil day."

Here again the Apostle forewarns us that our day, in the close of the age, would be the specially "evil day" in which Satan's powers would be peculiarly exercised--"to deceive if it were possible the very elect." He tells us of an armor that will be proof against all of Satan's delusions. It is not an armor for the flesh, but for the mind--for the New Creature. God is its maker, through human instrumentality. It is his provision, his Word, his message, his Truth. No other armor will avail in this "evil day," and for this extremity the *whole* armor will be needed--however others, in previous times, got along with portions of it only.

The Girdle of the Loins represents consecration to service; and the Apostle enjoins that we see to it that we are not consecrated to the service of error, but to the service of the Truth. Let each examine his girdle, see that he has a proper one, gird himself with it, become a servant of the Truth or, at least, have the spirit of service.

The Breastplate of Righteousness (or justification) comes next in order, for the Lord can recognize none as soldiers of the cross who do not discern and acknowledge his standard of justice, or who reject his gracious arrangement of justification (through faith and consecration) by the precious blood of his son.

The Sandals of Peace must not be forgotten; the soldier of the cross who starts in the campaign without the peace of God to assist him over the rough places, will accomplish less, and with greater difficulty, than the one who seeks to follow peace with all men--to live peaceably with all so far as possible, without compromising the Truth. Those who go unshod, go hunting trouble and are sure to find little else.

The Shield of Faith is indispensable to protection from the fiery darts of the Adversary--skepticism, higher criticism,

F658

evolution, and demonology. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." **Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:4**

The Helmet of Salvation represents the intellectual, or philosophical, appreciation or understanding of the divine plan.

Apparently, it was less necessary in the past than now: but now, in the "harvest," when the Adversary is furiously attacking the Truth and turning everything scientific and educational into a weapon of destruction--now the helmet is indispensable. And now, and only now, is it provided in such size and shape that the humblest soldier of the cross can put it on. The Lord held back the Attacker within the bounds where the shield of faith would serve as protection; but now the whole armor is supplied, and not too soon for the needs of his faithful.

The Sword of the Spirit--the Word of God--is the only offensive armor of the Lord's little band. The Captain prevailed in his "good fight" against the Adversary, saying, "It is written"; and this is the battle cry of his followers. Others than the true soldiers have fought for the Lord with carnal weapons, and with human philosophies and worldly wisdom and organization, and decrees of councils and synods and presbyteries, but we must depend in the struggle of this "evil day" upon the Word of God--"It is written!" We must use no darts like Satan's--anger, malice, hatred, strife. And "the Sword of the Spirit" can only be possessed by careful study and leading of the Spirit after consecration--after enlistment in this army.