**“The Gathering of Israel. Ezekiel’s Great Vision. Ezekiel 37:1-14” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE RESURRECTION, AND THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL**

“The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.1}

“Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.2}

“So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.3}

“Then said He unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.4}

“Then He said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. [Revised Version, “We are clean cut off.”] Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put My spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.5}

The most cursory reading of this chapter is sufficient to show that it deals with the resurrection of the dead. It is a most literal description of that event. Some one will say that it is a representation of the restoration of the Jews to their own land. That is exactly the truth, for that is what the text itself says; but it also tells us that the restoration is to be effected by the resurrection. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.6}

In the eleventh verse the children of Israel are represented as saying that they are clean out off. Death cuts man off from the face of the earth, and is *apparently* the destruction of his hope; for the promise is that the children of Abraham shall inherit the earth, yet they die without having any share in it. Accordingly the scoffers say, “Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” 2 Peter 3:3, 4. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.7}

But “the righteous hath hope in his death.” The Apostle Paul writes: “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first,” etc. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16. The promise of the land to Abraham included, and was based upon, the resurrection, and Abraham so understood it, else he could not have died in faith, not having received the promise. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 481.8}

The children whom Herod slew in order to kill the infant Jesus represent all the dead children of Israel. Rachel, the wife of Jacob, is represented as weeping for her children; but all the children of Israel are her children just as much as were the innocent babes who were slaughtered by the tyrant. Now read what is said of the death of her children:- {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 482.1}

“Thus saith the Lord: A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border.” Jeremiah 31:15-17. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 482.2}

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” 1 Corinthians 15:26. Those who are dead are in the land of the enemy, but God has promised that they shall come from that land, and shall return “to their own border.” So we see that the return of the children of Israel to their own border, to their own land, is by the resurrection of the dead. That is the hope of Israel. The Apostle Paul was seized and bound by the unbelieving Jews because he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and he said, “For the hope of Israel am I bound with this chain” (Acts 28:20), and to another congregation of the Jews he said, “Of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question.” Acts 23:6. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 482.3}

There is therefore no hope for Israel except in the resurrection at the coming of the Lord; but that hope is a “lively hope,” to which we are begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Peter 1:3. Christ’s resurrection is the surety of the general resurrection. And from this we may learn that every righteous person is counted as Israel, and will be included in the restoration; for it is by the resurrection of the dead, through Christ, that Israel are restored, and what Christ does for one He does for all. There are no people who have some special interest in the death and resurrection of Christ, that others do not have. Since it is by the resurrection of Jesus that the children of Israel are restored to their own land, it follows that everybody who sleeps in Jesus, and is raised from the dead through Him, is an Israelite, waiting to be redeemed from exile in the enemy’s land. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 482.4}

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.... Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” Hebrews 11:9-13. Now we know that they did not inherit the promise; for God, in making to Abraham the promise of an innumerable seed and an everlasting inheritance in the land wherein he was a stranger, said to him: “Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” Genesis 15:13-16. David said, “I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.” Psalm 39:12. And he repeated this statement when at the height of his power he handed the kingdom over to Solomon. 1 Chronicles 29:15. All the faithful are alike waiting the return of the Lord, and the resurrection, as the consummation of their hopes. It was by faith in the resurrection of the dead that Abraham offered Isaac. Hebrews 11:17-19. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 482.5}

The prophet says that as he prophesied according to the command of the Lord, “there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.” Verse 7. In the Revised Version we find “earthquake” in the place of “shaking,” and the margin gives “thundering” in the place of “noise.” This agrees exactly with the description of the resurrection at the coming of Christ. “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16. When Christ died upon the cross, “the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” Matthew 27:51-53. Three days afterward “there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.” Matthew 28:2. So we see that the resurrection of the dead is accompanied by an earthquake. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 482.6}

It is by the breath of God that men live. “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7. “He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” Acts 17:25. In His hand is the soul of every living thing, “And the breath of all mankind.” Job 12:10. Job said: “All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils; my lips shall not speak wickedness.” Job 27:3, 4. If He thought only of Himself; if He gathered and kept to Himself His Spirit and His breath; all flesh would perish together, and man would turn again unto dust. See Job 24:14, 15. He takes away the breath of man and beast, and they die, and return to their dust; but He sends forth His Spirit, and they are created, and He renews the face of the earth. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 482.7}

Accordingly God told Ezekiel to prophesy to the wind, and say, “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” From this we see that the wind that plays upon our cheeks, and that refreshes us as we draw full inspirations into our lungs, is the breath of God. Surely it is so, because we breathe the air, and yet we have the breath of God in our nostrils. Our breath is the same as Adam’s. Adam’s breath the second minute that he lived, and the third, and the fourth, and so on, was exactly the same as the first moment. Moreover, neither Adam nor any of his descendants has ever had any power over the breath, either to start it or stop it. Ecclesiastes 8:8. It comes involuntarily. For a minute, by a great effort, we may hold our breath, and then it will come in spite of us. No man could commit suicide by voluntarily refusing to breathe. The breath comes arbitrarily while we are asleep and entirely unconscious. Therefore it is plain that not only did God breathe the breath of life into Adam’s nostrils in the beginning, but that He continued doing so, and has performed the same operation for every man that has ever lived, every moment of his life. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.1}

How near God is to us! So near that we can feel His breath in our faces; so near that He is face to face with us, breathing into our nostrils. How real it is that He is “not far from every one of us.” And He is just as near us when we fall asleep in death; for all the righteous ones “sleep in Jesus,” and the same breath that keeps us in life now will revive the dead from their sleep in the grave. “The hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.” John 5:28, 29. And this resurrection from the dead is but the same process by which those who are dead in trespasses and sins are now quickened, and made to pass from death to life. Therefore we may know that if we believe God the life of righteousness will be just as easy as for that is what will give it to us. “The just shall live by faith,” but every man, whether just or otherwise, lives by breathing; therefore that which makes a man righteous is the fact that he breathes by faith. Our hope in Christ and His resurrection rests in the fact that God has surrounded the earth with an atmosphere of grace. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.2}

**“The Gospel of Isaiah. Hezekiah’s Tribute of Thanksgiving. Isaiah 38:9-20” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISAIAH 38:9-20, LOWTH’S TRANSLATION.)

9. T HE WRITING OF HEZEKIAH KING OF JUDAH. WHEN HE HAD BEEN SICK, AND WAS RECOVERED FROM HIS SICKNESS: {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.3}

*10. I said, when my days were just going to be
cut off,
I shall pass through the gates of the grave;
I am deprived of the residue of my years! {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.4}*

*11. I said, I shall no more see Jehovah in the land
of the living!
I shall no longer behold man, with the in-
habitants of the world! {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.5}*

*12. My habitation is taken away, and is removed
from me, like a shepherd’s tent;
My life is cut off, as by the weaver; He will
sever me from the loom;
In the course of the day Thou wilt finish my
web. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.6}*

*13. I roared until the morning, like the lion;
So did He break to pieces all my bones. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.7}*

*14. Like the swallow, like the crane did I twitter;
I made a moaning like the dove.
Mine eyes fail with looking upward;
O Lord, contend Thou for me; be Thou my
surety. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.8}*

*15. What shall I say? He hath given me a
promise, and He hath performed it.
Through the rest of my years will I reflect on
this bitterness of my soul. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.9}*

*16. For this cause shall it be declared, O Jehovah,
concerning Thee,
That Thou hast revived my spirit;
That thou hast restored my health, and pro-
longed my life. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.10}*

*17. Behold my anguish is changed into ease!
Thou hast rescued my soul from perdition;
Yea, Thou hast cast behind Thy back all my
sins. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.11}*

*18. Verily the grave shall not give thanks unto
Thee; death shall not praise Thee!
They that go down into the pit shall not await
Thy truth; {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.12}*

*19. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as
I do this day;
The father to the children shall make known
Thy faithfulness. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.13}*

*20. Jehovah was present to save me; therefore
will we sing our songs to the harp,
All the days of our life, in the house of
Jehovah. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.14}*

In this writing we learn why it was that Hezekiah was so much troubled when he learned that he must die. It was because it did not mean an entrance into a larger life with greater possibilities, as some would have us believe. Death is not life, in any sense of the word. The message to Hezekiah was, “Thou shalt die, and not live.” If death had meant life under far better conditions than are possible on this earth, then we may be sure that Hezekiah, who all his life had “walked before the Lord,” would not have had any objection to it. But he knew better. When the word came to him, he said, “I am deprived of the residue of my years.” It was not that he was going to live in another place, under somewhat changed circumstances, much as one will go to a distant country;-a man does not weep sore over that, even if the country be not quite so good as the one he is leaving;-Hezekiah wept because he was not going to live anywhere any more. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.15}

“I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.” But this could not be if at death Hezekiah were going to be with the Lord. He had learned to see the Lord in His works and ways, but now this delight was to be cut off. He could no longer behold God or man. The same thought was expressed by David, when he had been delivered from death. He said, “I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.” Psalm 116:9. It is a fact that “God hath given to us eternal life,” so that the life that we now live, if it be by faith, is but the beginning of that which we shall live in the world to come. The future life will be but a continuation of this, so that while we live, whether in this world or that which is to come, we may walk before the Lord. At this present time we may walk in the light of His countenance (Psalm 89:15, 16), and in the new earth His servants “shall see His face” (Revelation 22:4); but “in death there is no remembrance” of the Lord (Psalm 6:5); only by the resurrection, at the coming of Christ, can the righteous dead “ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 483.16}

In verse 12 Lowth has it, “My habitation is taken away,” while our common version has it, “Mine age is departed.” The Revised Version has the same, with “habitation” in the margin as an alternative reading. The Hebrew allows both renderings, and both are in reality the same, since so long as a man lives he must live somewhere. When a man’s life is taken away, his habitation is taken away; and if there is absolutely no place for him to live, it is because he has no life any more. Most vivid expressions are used to indicate the great change that death brings. “My life is cut off, as by the weaver; He will sever me from the loom; in the course of the day Thou wilt finish my web.” Life is likened to a web in the loom, the threads of which are composed of moments; Hezekiah’s web was about to be cut off from the loom incomplete. An end was to be made of him. This explains the reason of his great sadness at the thought of death. It does not, however, excuse Hezekiah’s lack of resignation to the message of the Lord. Death is an enemy, and always hateful, and the fact that God Himself allows one of His servants to suffer it, does not in the least make it any more attractive; but the fact that the Lord Himself does allow His servants to die, and that even in death they do not suffer anything that He has not suffered, should make them resigned, and even happy, in the face of it. “The righteous hath hope in his death.” Christ, who died, is alive for evermore, and has the keys of death and the grave, so that, although Satan has the power of death, he can hold no one except at the pleasure of the Lord. The grave can no more hold a child of God beyond God’s will than it could hold Jesus after the third day. Therefore although the grave is indeed a hateful, terrible place, no one whose life is hid with Christ in God need fear it. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 484.1}

“Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.” What kind of place is the grave?-It is “the pit of corruption.” That is where people go at death. The patriarch Job said, “If I wait, the grave is mine house; I have made my bed in darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.” Job 17:13-14. The land of darkness, and the shadow of death, is “a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.” Job 10:21, 22. Yet the Christian, who knows the Lord, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike, may fear no evil, even in the valley of the shadow of death. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 484.2}

We must not think that Hezekiah’s prayer for deliverance from the grave was wholly selfish. No; the reason why he wished to live, and not go into the grave, is thus told by him to the Lord, “For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth.” “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.” Psalm 115:17. The psalmist also said, “I cried to Thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made my supplication. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise Thee? shall it declare Thy truth?” Psalm 30:8, 9. Thus we see that it is not wrong to ask the Lord to keep us from the grave: much of the Psalms, which are given for our guide in the matter of prayer and praise, is composed of this very petition. Again we read, “Mine eye mourneth because of mine affliction; Lord, I have called daily upon Thee, I have stretched out my hands unto Thee? Wilt Thou show wonders unto the dead? shall the dead arise and praise Thee? Selah. Shall Thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? or Thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?” Psalm 88:9-12. From this we get the facts as to the nature of the grave, and the conditions there. Who that has ever looked into an open grave cannot appreciate the description? {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 484.3}

“The living, the living he shall praise Thee, as I do this day.” In this there is something more than a point of doctrine for us. Notice in all the scriptures that have been quoted, that the inability to praise the Lord in the grave is the reason why these faithful servants of the Lord wished to be delivered from it. The matter of praising the Lord makes all the real difference between death and life. The man who does not praise the Lord is as dead. Idols of silver and gold, the work of men’s hands, which are in every respect the farthest removed from any likeness to the God that is in the heavens working all things after the counsel of His own will, are thus described: “They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.” Psalm 115:3-8. That is to say, that every one who does not trust in the Lord is like a dead piece of metal. The man who sees nothing in the world for which to praise the Lord, does not see anything, for all His works praise Him (Psalm 145:10), and is the same as though he had no eyes. And he who does not speak to the praise of God is as though he had no mouth at all; and if his feet and hands do not move in the service of the Lord, then he is as though he had no life. “Dead in trespasses and sins.” The same Psalm that tells about the deadness of idols and of those who trust in them, tells us that “the dead praise not the Lord.” See a man that does not praise the Lord;-he is dead, and needs to be made alive. As surely as a man is alive he will praise the Lord. “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.” Psalm 150:6. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 484.4}

One thing more must not be overlooked in reading this tribute of thanksgiving. Hezekiah said to the Lord, “Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.” Sin and death are inseparable. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12. God redeems our life from destruction, and heals all our diseases, because it is He that forgives all our iniquities. Psalm 103:3, 4. In the directions for prayer for the sick, given by the Apostle James it is said that “the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” James 5:15. Not that we are to understand by this that everybody who dies is a sinner: far from it; “the righteous is taken away from the evil to come” (Isaiah 57:1), and a blessing is pronounced upon those who die in the Lord. Revelation 14:13. Yet if it were not for sin, there would be no death. We have inherited mortal bodies, and they are allowed to go into the grave; but it is the power by which sins are forgiven, and the very forgiveness itself, that insures our resurrection from the dead. There will be a people, however, in the last days, just before the unveiled revelation of the glory of Christ in the heavens, who will represent Christ so completely that death will have no power over them, and they will be translated to heaven without seeing death. “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” 1 Corinthians 15:51. Therefore “Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 484.5}

**“The ‘Mystery’ of God” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Nebuchadnezzar dreamed and it passed from him so that he could not recall it, he demanded of the magicians, the astrologers, and soothsayers to declare to him the dream with the interpretation. But to them it way a secret that none could reveal, according to their own confession, “except the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh.” Because they were unable to do this, the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men should be slain, because, as he said, “ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 485.1}

Then the captain of the king’s guard brought Daniel and his companions to put them to death, as they were counted among the wise men. But Daniel confidently told him that if he would give him a little time he would make known the dream with the interpretation. Then with his companions he sought mercies of the God of heaven concerning the matter, and the simple record is, “Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 485.2}

This secret that they desired to know was the secret of God. He only could reveal it, and they knew it. But their experience is simply the experience of finding out the Gospel secret. The knowledge of this secret is to every individual just as much a matter of life and death, as was the knowledge of the king’s secret to the wise men of Babylon. And just as only God could make known to Daniel and his fellows the secret they desired, so a knowledge of the Gospel can be revealed only by Him. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 485.3}

In the Gospel the word used to represent this secret is “mystery.” Christ said, “Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God,”-“the mystery which was kept secret since the world began.” This secret, according to the apostle is in 1 Corinthians 3:16, is “God manifest in the flesh,” or “Christ in you the hope of glory.” Galatians 1:17. He is then the “mystery of godliness;” and anyone who knows what it is to have Jesus Christ dwelling within him, knows the Gospel secret, and in no other way can he know it. And yet it is a mystery after all. No one can explain it or reason it out, because the deep things of God are beyond human reason. It must simply be accepted as a fact. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 485.4}

There is something more to this secret than simply the abstract knowledge of it. To him who knows it, it is a “well of water springing up into everlasting life,”-not alone to himself, but to others also. Christ will in him be manifest in the flesh, and the works that the Master did for those around Him, he will do. In his everyday life, the Saviour will be lifted up, and thus others will be, drawn to Him. John 12:32. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 485.5}

**“Witness for the Truth” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Christ said to Pilate, “For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” The Christian is to bear witness to the truth in his daily experience, not to say that he believes this or that, but to witness for the truth by being the truth. Wherever Jesus went as He moved among the people, in His attitude toward them, in His speech, in the way in which He set principle above custom, He bore witness to the truth. “As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you,” were the Saviour’s words to His disciples, and those who go forth as witnesses for the truth must bear that witness as Christ did. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 487.1}

**“Little Folks. A Lesson from the Heat” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE LAW OF LOVE**

Remember that in all these things which we have been studying together lately, we are learning of God Himself. “All things come of Thee,” said King David, and in all things in nature that we can see, and even in things that we cannot see, like the air and the heat, the laws of God’s own life are written. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.1}

“The laws of nature” are the law of God’s life which is in all things controIling everything according to His will of love for all. Therefore “the Book of Nature” is really “the Book of the Law,” the book where God has written for us “the great things of His law,” and in all these things we are studying the law of God. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.2}

Read the first Psalm, and you will see that His special blessing is upon the one “whose delight is in the Iaw of the Lord,” and who studies it and thinks of it by day and night. As we see the laws of His life working in all the things that He has made, we shall learn from Him such lessons of practical wisdom that He says of the one who does this: “Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.3}

Let us then, dear children, as we go on with our study of God’s great works, pray earnestly the Psalmist’s prayer: “Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.4}

“God is love; His nature, His law, is love;” and so in all these different forms of His life we may learn the lesson of His love. See how plainly this is written for us in what we have been talking about lately, the heat, produced by the sun’s rays, God’s glory which He has “set upon the heavens.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.5}

In the description of love which God has given us in 1 Corinthians, chapter thirteen, we are told that love “seeketh not her own.” Love gives itself out freely wherever there is need. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.6}

It is one of “the laws of heat,” called the “conduction” or “diffusion” of heat, that it gives itself out constantly from things of a higher to those of a lower temperature, until there is “equalisation,” an equality of temperature, until they both have exactly the same degree of heat. Last week we spoke of how, when cold water is set upon the fire, the heat from the fire passes into the water, until it has received all that it is possible for it to hold. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.7}

If you want to cool anything, you put it in a cool place, or against something cold, or plunge it in cold water. It soon becomes cooler, while the air, the water, or whatever is brought in contact with it becomes warmer. This is because it has parted with some of its heat to warm that which had less. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.8}

We sometimes blow upon anything hot when we want it to cool quickly, and we are doing the same thing when we fan ourselves this hot weather in order to keep cool. This sets the air in motion and makes it pass more quickly over us, and as the air is cooler than our bodies, each puff of air carries off some of the heat. For the law of heat is “equality” or having “all things common,” so whatever has any degree of heat must give it out to anything having less with which it is brought in contact. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.9}

So the more cool air that passes over us, the more heat our bodies give out. Fanning or blowing does not make the *air* any cooler, but warmer; it makes whatever is fanned or blown upon cooler, because it gives out its warmth to the air which is colder than itself. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.10}

If you take a stone, or any cold object, in your hand, and hold it there a little while, you will find that it gets just as warm as your hand; your body gives out some of its heat to warm that which does not have so much, until there is an equality. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.11}

You see how God has written the law of His love even in your very body. If you yield fully to His life which fills you, He will write His law of love in your heart by His Holy Spirit, so that you will be just like Him. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.12}

When His Spirit filled the disciples on the day of Pentecost, we are told in the book of Acts that they “had all things common.” “Neither said any man that ought of the things that he had was his own,” but “they distributed to every man according as he had need.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.13}

This shows us what God is, for it was His Spirit resting on them that made them do this. He does not keep His glory to Himself; for Jesus said: “The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them.” Though everything in all the universe is His. He shares it all with every one of His creatures, and each may take just what he needs. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.14}

Here is a lesson of love for each little child to practise every day. All that God gives to you it is His law of love that you should not call it your own, but be ready always to share with those to whom He has given less than you, to give of what you have to every one you meet just according to his need. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.15}

Even if you have nothing but a light happy heart, you can give smiles and bright kind words to those who are downcast. If you have strength and health you can help those who are weak. “Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfil *the law of Christ*.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 490.16}

**“Sleep as a Restorer” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Sleep as a Restorer .-Children grow more rapidly during the night. In the daytime, while the child is awake and active, the system is kept busy disposing of the wastes consequent on this activity; but during sleep the system is free to extend its operations beyond the mere replacing of worn-out particles. This is why so many invalids need so much rest and sleep. The system has been taxed for years beyond its ability to repair the tissues, and hence the organism has become worn and disabled from the accumulation of waste products, and disease has resulted. With the proper conditions restores, and a season of perfect rest, nature will reassert herself, clearing up the clogged and dirty tissues, and restoring the organs to their normal condition. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.1}

**“Jottings” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

-An egg of the Great Auk was sold in London last week at auction for 300 guineas. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.2}

-In the province of West Gothland, Sweden, a strange disease has broken out which attacks cattle and human beings alike. Many are succumbing to its effects. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.3}

-An Anglo-Hungarian syndicate is soliciting the concession for a railway from Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, whereby the journey to India will be greatly shortened, and a vast tract of country opened up to trade. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.4}

-On the 16th July 9,000 men employed by the Brooklyn electric tramway lines went on strike, because of refusal to redress certain grievances and establish a regular working day of ten hours. The cars are being run under police protection, 2,000 policemen being engaged on this special duty. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.5}

-The latest trust is by Spiritualists. According to Dalziel such a trust has just been organised at Washington, U.S.A. “Only members of the trust are to be permitted to materialise spirits for their patrons, and the prices of *séances* are to be raised. It is intended to discourage the public belief in non-members of the trust, by asserting that such spirits as appear at their *séances* are evil, or at least untrustworthy.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.6}

-A violent earthquake shock was felt at Rome, Italy, and the surrounding country. Many houses were reduced to ruins, and much damage done. Shortly before the earthquake Etna broke out into eruption. The mouths of the volcano at present number fourteen, of which four emit fire and three sulphur. Over the central crater hangs an immense plume of smoke towering to a great height. The imposing spectacle is attracting large numbers of foreigners to Sicily. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.7}

-In official statements lately published, some startling facts are given concerning the number of suicides in the various armies of the world. Austria heads the list, the average rate for the year being 131 per 100,000 men. The French come next, with 92 suicides for each 100,000 men. Germany is given at 68; Italy 45; Belgium 24; Engalnd 23 (nearly all of them being in India); Russia 20 (which is believed to be far below the actual number), and Spain comes in at about the bottom of the list with 14. There are more suicides among the officers than among the privates. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.8}

-The final report of the Royal Commission on Licensing has been issued. It is a Blue Book of 330 pages, and there are many recommendations upon which the whole body of the Commissioners are in practical agreement. Among them are a large reduction in the number of public-houses with limited compensation to the owners; the making of simple drunkenness a crime without other disorderly conduct; that either husband or wife may be entitled to judicial reparation for habitual drunkenness; the sale of any kind of intoxicants to children under ten years old prohibited; habitual drunkards to be placed on a black list and license-holders warned not to serve them; to be drunk when in charge of a child of tender years to be a punishable offence; and complete Sunday-closing to be extended throughout Wales and Monmouthshire. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 494.9}

**“Back Page” *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1. It is because of the lack of faith that so many Christians feel that there is no real substance, no satisfying, sustaining evidence in their experience. Instead of always rejoicing, it would be nearer the truth to describe them as always murmuring. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.1}

They murmur for the same reason that ancient Israel did. “They forgat God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt: wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea.” Psalm 106:21, 22. It always seems to us a very wicked thing that Israel should forget the great things God had done for them. It was, but it is just as wicked for us to forget Him too, or to query in our hearts, “Is the Lord among us or not?” It is a sin to forget that God is our salvation, and that He has promised, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Hebrews 13:5. “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Romans 14:23. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.2}

Let us not forget that God is with us, but believe it. Then consider how much it means. He is not like us, weak and inconstant. The universe is upheld by His command, the innumerable angels do His will, all nations before Him are as nothing and “none can stay His hand, or say, What doest Thou?” What a wonderful effect it must have upon anyone’s life to spend his days in the presence and under the protection of such a Being! Suppose trials, difficulties and Satanic assaults come upon us. What can they do if the Lord of hosts be with us? {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.3}

Read what happens to God’s enemies when they come into contact with Him. “Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” Psalm 68:1, 2. Certainly. Nothing else could possibly happen. So if we will only remember that God is with us, never to forsake us, we will know that we are perfectly safe, and that for the enemy to come to close quarters simply means destruction to himself. Satan knows this too, and it not at all anxious to try his strength with the Lord. “Resist the devil, and *he will flee* from you.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.4}

The mistake we make too often is to think that we are alone, and think only of ourselves as meeting the assaults of the enemy. When we remember that God is with us, so that it is He who must bear the brunt of the fighting, that alters the situation entirely. Satan’s whole strength is not to be compared with God’s; therefore we are quite safe, and can dwell confidently. So we read on, “But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to His name.” {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.5}

Now here is an opportunity for us to discover whether we are believers or infidels. Do we walk in weakness and fear, often falling, or do we go in the strength of the Lord? Do we become discouraged because we are so sinful, or do we rejoice that God’s righteousness is upon us? God says He is with us, and that in Him we live and move and have our being. Therefore our life is made up of ourselves and God. He is everything, we are less than nothing. How much thought do we bestow upon Him, and how much upon ourselves? Do we remember Him more than ourselves, or is it the other way about? the life which acknowledges God in all its ways will be as much better and higher than the life which forgets Him, as the life of an angel is better than that of the brutes that perish. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.6}

“Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their strength; and in Thy favour our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.” Psalm 89:15-18. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.7}

“There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.” Deuteronomy 33:26, 27. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.8}

Work on Christ’s lines will be successful, as His was. He had no difficulty in getting the ears of the people. The secret of His success was that “He went about doing good.” Christianity has not changed. All the world knows of Christ is what it sees revealed through His representatives, and when their work is entirely different from that of the Saviour, He is not revealed, but His character is misrepresented. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.9}

There are many people who are physically weak because of lack of exercise. So there are many who are spiritually and mentally weak because they do not exert themselves. One good rule for a Christian worker is never to refuse to do any work that comes in his way, whether it be small or great. Do not despise the small things, and do not be afraid to take hold of the great ones. God gives strength according to your need. If you never take hold of any work that is beyond your strength you will never have any reason to expect more strength. There will be no occasion for God to give you more. No one can ever learn anything, if he never reads anything that is beyond his present capacity. Always be ready to every good work, and God will work in you to show the perfection of His strength in your weakness. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.10}

It is very easy for men to see the marks of the curse everywhere. In plague and pestilence, in famine and in drought, in havoc and disaster, in ruined homes and blighted lives, the deadly working of the curse is seen. But the curse is the cross of Christ. Christ has been made a curse for men. Galatians 3:13. It is He who bears its weight, and wherever we see the curse, we see Christ crucified. When we see it in our own lives, we are not to be discouraged, for wherever the cross is there is Christ. Where sin abounds grace does much more abound. Christ crucified is the power of God. “Though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God.” 2 Corinthians 13:4. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. {PTUK August 3, 1899, p. 496.11}

**“The Gospel of Isaiah. Going to Babylon. Isa. xxxix” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXIX., LOWTH’S TRANSLATION.)

At that time Merodach Baladan, the son of Baladan king of Babylon, sent letters, and ambassadors, and a present to Hezekiah; for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. And Hezekiah was rejoiced at their arrival; and he showed them his magazines, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and his whole arsenal, and all that was contained in his treasures; there was nothing in his house, and in all his dominion, that Hezekiah did not show them. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 497.1}

And Isaiah the prophet came unto King Hezekiah, and said unto him: What say these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said: They are come to me from a distant country, from Babylon. And he said: What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah said: They have seen everything in my house: there is nothing in my treasures, which I have not shown them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah: Hear thou the word of Jehovah God of hosts. Behold, the day shall come, when all that is in thy house, and that thy fathers have treasured up unto this day, shall be carried away to Babylon; there shall not anything be left, saith Jehovah. And of thy sons which shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah: Gracious is the word of Jehovah, which thou hast delivered! For, added he, there shall be peace, according to His faithful promise, in my days. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 497.2}

And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour; and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him substance very much. This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. 2 Chronicles 32:27-31. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 497.3}

**EXHIBITIONS OF SELF**

This lesson is very short, and very simple, yet it is one of the most important in the whole Bible. Everybody stands in need of it. The tendency to “show off” seems to be inherent in human nature, and it is most assiduously cultivated. The baby in its mother’s arms must exhibit its infantile attainments to every visitor, besides a hundred times a day to its admiring friends, until the child as soon as it begins to think, very naturally concludes that whatever he does must be of exceptional merit and interest, simply because it is he that does it. At home he must show off his accomplishments, in order that the parents may be complimented on having so wonderful a child. At school he must be put on exhibition for the benefit of the school and the teacher; and in Sabbath school he is used for the same purpose. No wonder that so many continue through life to exhibit themselves on their own account. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 497.4}

The good housewife gratifies her pride, and awakens the envy of her neighbors, by showing them all her stores of household goods; and the merchant and the farmer do the same. It is true that one may very often show another some of his possessions, in order to help that other one,-to give him some ideas as to how to get something for himself, or simply to bring some freshness and change into the life of one whose range is very limited. That is all right; but every one who reads this will know that very often there is in the exhibition of one’s attainments or possession merely the gratification of pride, and the desire to receive compliments, to excite astonishment, and to be the subject of conversation. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 497.5}

**“SEE MY ZEAL FOR THE LORD”**

It is this same spirit that leads religious societies and churches to publish many of the statistics that are continually being given to the world. So much of a business has this become that in many instances men are kept constantly employed to make note of every step of progress, or of supposed progress, so that no time may be lost on any occasion in impressing visitors with the amount of work done, the liberality of the donations, and the vast sums expended in buildings, etc. All this is done of course “for the good of the cause,” in forgetfulness of the fact that since even “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15), much less does the cause of God consist in material wealth. It is not what a man has, but what he is, that God looks at; even so progress in the Lord’s work is not indicated by numbers of professed converts, by large amounts of money contributed, or by huge piles of buildings in which church work is done, but in soul-growth, which can be measured by the Lord alone. Its praise is not of men, but of God. None of us are aware of how much emulation there is in our work for the Lord. We may not always say in so many words, with Jehu, “Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord” (2 Kings 10:16), but the feeling is present, nevertheless. Where there are hundreds who are willing to engage in even the most disagreeable work, provided it comes before the eyes of the public, there are very few who are willing to work for the Lord unknown, except by Him, and with none to recognise and applaud. In fact, we must all plead guilty to more or less selfishness in our work for the Master, who is unselfishness itself. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 497.6}

**THE BABYLONISH SPIRIT**

Now all this is evidence that God’s people have not yet got free from Babylon. It was at least a striking coincidence that it was to the ambassadors from Babylon that Hezekiah made this exhibition of his wealth and grandeur; for that was the very spirit of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar had received from the Lord “a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.” Daniel 2:37. It was He who made Babylon “the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency.” Isaiah 13:19. But he did not in humility of heart give God the glory, but as he walked in his palace he said, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?” Daniel 4:29-30. This is the spirit of Babylon, derived from Lucifer, the real king of Babylon, who thought only of exalting himself, and gave not God the glory. Isaiah 14:13, 14. Since the possessor of the treasures that were shown to the messengers from Babylon had the Babylonish spirit, it was very fitting that they should be taken to Babylon. They belonged in Babylon as much as in Jerusalem. They were in reality Babylonish possessions, although gathered by the kings of Israel. But Hezekiah did not know this at the time. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 498.1}

**A LOST OPPORTUNITY**

What a wonderful opportunity Hezekiah had to teach those Babylonian ambassadors the truth of God. They had heard that he had been sick, and had recovered, and they knew of the great wonder in the heavens, the sign of God’s healing power, and they came to enquire about it and at the same time congratulate Hezekiah. What better preparation of the way could anyone ask than that to make known the saving power of God? It was for that very purpose that God had put it into their hearts to come. But instead of improving the time by telling them of the God that made the heavens and the earth, and making Him known as the sole Healer of the souls and bodies of men, Hezekiah magnified himself in their eyes, by showing them his own treasures. What a mistake he made! {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 498.2}

But we must not condemn Hezekiah; our part is simply to note the facts, that we may see ourselves in his picture. Do not get the idea that there was conscious self-exaltation in Hezekiah’s act. The treasures were not his own personal property, but belonged to the kingdom. He had not gathered them all himself, but they had been accumulated through many prosperous reigns. It was not his personal wealth that he was showing to the ambassadors from Babylon, but he was impressing them with the greatness of the Jewish kingdom, to the throne of which he had been called. In this exhibition of the royal treasures, Hezekiah was trying to advance the cause of God among the heathen; for “when Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion.” Psalm 114:1, 2. We may be sure that Hezekiah thought he was impressing those heathen ambassadors with a sense of the greatness of God’s cause and people, and preparing the way for the Babylonian people to be favourably impressed with the truth. He did not know that he was preparing the way for the captivity of Israel. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 498.3}

**ROBBING GOD OF THE GLORY**

Hezekiah’s course has been repeated thousands of times to this day. Christians who would not boast of their own possessions, take great pride in telling what “our church” has done, how much it has contributed, and how great facilities it has for carrying on the work of the Lord. They forget that the only impression that can possibly be made on the world is that the men who have been engaged in this work are shrewd business men; for the world is full of instances of poor boys who have amassed great property, without any thought of Christianity. It is true that it is God who gives men the power to get wealth; but the possession of property is not by any means an evidence that God is pleased with a person or a society, or that He has any special connection with them over other people. If it were, then it would show that God’s favour is specially with the world, for more property is in the hands of the world than in the church. Babylon had greater riches than Jerusalem had, so that while the ambassadors might be impressed with the progress of the Israelites, they really could only think that their gods were greater than the God of the Jews. But there were none of their gods that could heal diseases or forgive sins, and in telling of that, Hezekiah might have led the proud heathen to worship in spirit and in truth. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 498.4}

But why should God say that for this error on the part of Hezekiah all the people and treasures of Israel should be taken to Babylon? Ah, there was nothing arbitrary in this; it was a necessity, and the natural consequence of the king’s act. God had sent the ambassadors to Jerusalem to learn the truth, and since they did not get it, He had to send His people to Babylon to teach it to them there. This was the necessary consequence of Hezekiah’s act. That the cupidity of the ambassadors should be aroused at the sight of the treasures, was a most natural thing. When the king of Babylon afterwards took it into his head to besiege Jerusalem, he knew what he was after. The treasurers in which Hezekiah had taken so much pride, “honest pride,” rejoicing to think that he was connected with so great a people, were scattered, and the treasure-houses destroyed, but the truth of God remained the same. That in which men can boast will all pass away, and God will make it plain to His own people as well as to the whole world, that His truth does not depend upon, and cannot be measured by, anything that men can make or gather together. It is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God, that His work is to be accomplished, and therefore no display of wealth or power, but only the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, can draw men to Him and His truth. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 498.5}

Hezekiah was a good man, one who sincerely loved the Lord. God was with him, and prospered him. God loved him, and He loved him none the less when he fell into the error concerning the visit of the ambassadors. But God left him to himself for a while, “that he might know what was in his heart.” And it was written for our learning, that we might know what is in our hearts; for the hearts of all men are alike, and what is in one is in all. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” Jeremiah 17:9. Pride of every kind is in the hearts of all men; when they turn to the Lord, then it is apt to exhibit itself in other forms. God has left this case on record for us, that we, knowing that it is in our hearts, may allow Him to cleanse us from it. May He deliver us all from Babylon and the Babylonish spirit, and fill us with His own Spirit, the Spirit of meekness. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.1}

**“Genuine Sacrifice” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

No good deed, no genuine sacrifice, is ever wasted. If there be good in it, God will use it for His own holy purpose; and whatever of ignorance or weakness or mistake was mingled with it will drop away, as the withered petals drop away when the fall flower has blown. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.2}

**“Christianity Practical” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

Christianity is practical. It is designed to give courage and strength to meet the trials of life, just when and where they come, and to be victorious over them. It was this that enabled Joseph and Daniel to live such upright lives, even amid the most adverse circumstances. If an individual has not such a hold on God that he can receive strength for the everyday and perplexities that come to him, of what use is his Christianity? None whatever. That kind of Christianity is spurious. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.3}

Only a short time ago a person said, “There is no use in my trying to be a Christian *here*-I can’t stand the pressure of the opposition I have to meet. If I could only get away from these temptations that would be different.” Yes, if he could; but he can’t. These trials come in consequence of a weakness in his character, and until that weakness is overcome, these trials will come in one form or another no matter where he is. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.4}

There was a time when Israel thought to escape the judgments that the Lord permitted to come upon them by saying: “We will flee on horses; we will ride upon the swift.” But the Lord immediately replied, “Therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.” Isaiah 30:16. So it is in the Christian warfare, in our struggle with the enemy of souls. There is no place we can go to that he cannot go also; and there is no means of flight so swift that he has not a way just as rapid. Then to think that by change of location, we can get away from the devil and his temptation, is only deceiving ourselves. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.5}

Then what is to be done? Put our trust in one stronger than Satan, and that is Jesus Christ. He has met the enemy and conquered him, and He says unto us, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” There is the secret of the Christian strength and security. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.6}

“Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness.” Deuteronomy 8. These words come to every one personally. When they were first spoken, many of the audience had not spent forty years in the wilderness, yet that did not excuse them from the obligation of remembering how God had led them forty years. Later generations were required, just as much as that one was, to keep the experience fresh in their memory. Some of us think if God would only give us bread from heaven, or water from the rock, we would never fall our life long, doubt Him again. Well, He has given these experiences to every one. Surely to us, in this generation, He says, “Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led *thee* these thousands of years.” Let us remember it with joy, and as we dwell upon what He has already done, and what He has promised yet to do, be glad that “this God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.” Psalm 48:14. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.7}

**“Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The River of Salvation. Ezekiel 47:1-12” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

Probably the last chapters of the book of Ezekiel are less understood than any other equal portion of the Bible, and they are doubtless the most difficult part of the book. Referring to the fortieth chapter, where the trying portion begins, we find that the prophet was in the visions of God brought “into the land of Israel,” and set “upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south.” Verse 2. This was in the fourteenth year after the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Now the Lord had already said through Ezekiel (21:25-27) that when Zedekiah ceased to reign, the kingdom of Israel should be no more “until He come whose right it is.” Therefore we must conclude that the description of the city and temple which is given in the last chapters of Ezekiel is not a portrayal of something that was for the Jews in their state as one of the nations of earth, but that it refers to the new earth, and is something that will be the portion of all who are saved. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.8}

It is true that there are difficult passages in the description, which seem irreconcilable with this presentation, but we must remember that a difficulty is not an argument against the truth. In the writings of the Apostle Paul there are “some things hard to be understood,” but that is no fault of the writings themselves. It is our dullness and slowness of comprehension, that makes the Scriptures difficult. The only way to understand difficult passages of the Bible is to hold fast to certain firmly-established principles. The plain facts of the Gospel are always the same, and must never be lost sight of. It must also be remembered that the whole Bible is given for the purpose of revealing God to men, and that this is done only through the cross; so that wherever we read, we may be sure that there is something that concerns the great work of salvation. Nothing is placed in the Bible merely to satisfy curiosity, or as a mere matter of history. “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” Romans 15:4. In this chapter of Ezekiel, therefore, we may be sure that there is something to give us hope. Holding fast to the truth that we know, we shall gradually come to an understanding of those things that are at present obscure. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 499.9}

After reading Ezekiel 40:2 read Psalm 28:1, 2: “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.” It was to this place that God was leading the children of Israel when He took them from Egypt. Exodus 15:17: “Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established.” It is this place which Ezekiel saw, and which he has described for us with so much minuteness that our minds are overwhelmed. Of the place which Ezekiel saw, God said to him: “Son of man, this is the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.” Ezekiel 43:7. It is when the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven, and there is a new heaven and a new earth, that the voice from heaven says, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.” Revelation 21:1-3. So we may be assured that what we read of in Ezekiel pertains to the new earth state. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.1}

It may be urged that in the course of this description we read of the offering of sacrifices, which is not consistent with the idea that it refers to the new earth state. That is a difficult thing to understand, it is true; but no more so than other statements. For instance, take Jeremiah 33:14-18, which undoubtedly refers to the redeemed state. There we read:- {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.2}

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness. For thus saith the Lord; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.” It is after Christ sits as a Refiner and Purifier of silver, and purifies the sons of Levi, “that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, as in former years.” Malachi 3:3, 4. Verses 1 and 2 show that the time referred to is the last days. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.3}

We must therefore rest content for the present with the fact that there are some things in this connection that we cannot understand, and not let them deprive us of the good of that which is plain, and evidently parallel to other scriptures concerning which there is no chance for a misunderstanding. And now we can consider the portion of Scripture that is assigned for the lesson, which, however, after we have settled the application of the last part of Ezekiel, as already done, is so plain as to need no comment. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.4}

The prophet was brought to the door of the house, where he saw the “waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; for the forefront of the house stood toward the east.” Verse 1. It was “eastward in Eden” that the Lord planted a garden (Genesis 2:8), and after He had driven man out of the garden He “placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim and a flaming sword,” the symbol of His presence. Genesis 3:24. The tabernacle built by Moses, which was a picture of the temple in heaven, was always pitched facing the east, and the temple of Solomon faced the east. We know also that out of the throne of God and of the Lamb there proceeds a river of water of life. It is this river, therefore, that we have presented before us in this lesson. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.5}

How wide is that river? We may ask that question, because in this lesson the measurements are given, and it is always allowable to ask anything of which the Bible speaks. All we can learn, however, is that it is very wide; for we find from the measurements made by the angel who showed the house to Ezekiel, that the river deepened gradually from the shore for six thousand cubits, or more than a mile, where the water was deep enough to swim in, that is, a man could no longer wade. We may know then that the river of God is of a size commensurate with the greatness of the God from whose throne it flows. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.6}

“And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed; it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine,” or “for healing.” Verse 12. All that is necessary in order to understand the reference here is to read Revelation 22:2: “On this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” The two passages of Scripture are identical. The tree mentioned by Ezekiel is the tree of life, or, rather, the trees of life, for it is many trees in one, extending along the banks of the river indefinitely. The river is the river of life, for “everything shall live whither the river cometh.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.7}

That river is a real stream, and is flowing to-day. It is the life of God sent out into all the universe, and wherever it comes there is life even in spite of the death that rests upon this earth. How little we know of the infinite variety of forms which the life of God can assume. We breathe in the air, we eat it in our food, we drink it in the pure water, we are cheered and strengthened by it as it comes to us, the sunshine, and in many other ways it refreshes us. There are many things that contribute to our existence here, but they are all forms of the one life. All proceed from God, who is our life. From that river of God, which is full even to overflowing, we drink day by day, since it is from it that the earth is refreshed and made to bring forth fruit. Psalm 65:9, 10. Every shower that falls upon the earth is but the overflowing of the river of life, which nevertheless never runs dry. From that river we drink, and since it is the life of God, which is righteousness, if we would but recognise God in His gifts, living by faith, we should drink in righteousness every time we quench our thirst. Only God can supply the desires of mankind He satisfies the desire of every living thing. Our hunger and thirst are but cravings for a renewal of the life which comes alone from God; and the drinking of the children of Israel from the rock in the desert, which Rock was Christ (Exodus 17:5, 6; 1 Corinthians 10:4), and the feeding of the five thousand in the wilderness, are demonstrations to us that when we eat and drink we are taking from Christ Himself. So it is God that we are unconsciously longing for when we feel the pangs of hunger and thirst. He satisfies our longings by giving us Himself; and if we would remember this, every meal that we eat, and every draught of water that we drink, would be to us healing both of body and soul, even as though we were standing by the throne, looking into the unveiled face of God, and eating and drinking from the tree and the water at life. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 500.8}

**“Made New” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Behold I make all things new.” Now they are old, but they were not always so. In the beginning, at the close of creation, the freshness of youth was upon everything, and it would have remained so, but for sin. Sin is death, and when it entered the world, everything began to grow old and show the marks of decay. Ever since then there has been a steady decline till the earth has waxed old like a garment. Isaiah 51:6. But a change will come. When that is removed which caused the earth and all that is in it to grow old, then everything will be new again. Then God will wipe away tears from all faces, sorrow and crying will be no more, death will be swallowed up in victory, the desert shall blossom as the rose, and all the former things will be passed away. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 503.1}

This is not only true of the earth, but it is also the experience that each individual may have within himself. Out of Christ, he is the “old man,” and eternal death is his portion. But “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” The change is in him. The “old” has been supplanted by the new, and the righteousness of Christ rules in his life. The fruits of the new life within him are manifest-love, joy, peace, Iongsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law. The old things are forgotten, as he presses forward in the new life, and by patient continuance in well doing, seeks for glory and honour and immortality.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 503.2}

**“Working with Christ” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

Great as is the work that God has to do in the earth, yet to all, even the humblest, He offers an opportunity to be a co-labourer with Him. “To every man *his* work;” so *every* man has something to do, and no one else can do it for him. This is a message to each one of us. God would have us show forth to the world what it is to be a man among men as was Christ, who though tempted in all points like as we, was yet without sin. Of ourselves we can do nothing, but united with Christ all things are possible. Remember how Jesus, after the feeding of the multitude, “constrained” His disciples to get into a ship and go to the other side, while He went into a mountain to pray. When the vessel was away out from the land twenty or thirty furlongs, in a boisterous sea, the disciples were nearly discouraged with their efforts to reach the port, they looked out upon the water and saw Jesus coming to them. The record says, “They received Him gladly,” and “immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.” Separated from the Master their efforts were almost fruitless; with Him in the ship, the transportation was instantaneous. So with us all when we connect with Christ, all things are not only possible, but easy to accomplish. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 503.3}

“And the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein.” Every one who professes to know the Lord must be measured by the standard of God’s Word, that it may be seen if he is complete in Jesus. As with the New Jerusalem, the length, and breadth, and height of it are equal. So the Christian should have a symmetrical development. To this end it is necessary that proper regard should be given to healthful living, so that not only the spirit and soul, but the body also shall be preserved blameless (healthy) until the coming of the Lord. Sickness comes in consequence of the transgression of some of nature’s laws-it is the penalty; and the one who lives in constant violation of God’s laws pertaining to his physical welfare will invariably find that be is weakened in his effort to develop his spiritual nature. The gifts in the church were for the perfecting of the saints that they might become perfect men, (physically as well as spiritually) and grow up unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Ephesians 4:12, 13. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 503.4}

**“Little Folks. The Flame of Life” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

We have talked together a good deal lately about fire, and what it is. But there is something we have not spoken of in connection with it,-something so necessary to it that without it no fire can burn,-that is, air. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.1}

You know that you cannot make the fire burn if all the air is shut away from it. There must be a draught, a current of air, to keep it burning. How rapidly a fire burns out in the open air, especially if the wind is blowing on it. And perhaps you have seen the old-fashioned bellows that need to be in every household for blowing air into the fire to make it burn brightly. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.2}

It is the oxygen in the air that makes the fire burn. Perhaps you are already learning something about this how this oxygen gas that is in the air unites with the gases that are in the fuel, and the light and heat that the fuel has absorbed from the sun’s rays are set free again into the air. We see the bright flame and feel the heat of this compressed sunshine. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.3}

When this takes place, and these things are turned back into what they were made up of, we can sea just what formed them,-gas and sunbeams! or, in other and truer words, God’s breath and His glory. Can you not see then, children, that all things in the earth are only different forms of the wonderful life of God? {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.4}

The air, without which no fire can burn, is the breath of God. So the fire, besides being, as we have found it to be, the gleaming of God’s glory, and all its light and heat coming from Him, can burn only in His breath which kindles it. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.5}

An ancient wise man once said: “Know ye that the fire in your huts and the life in your bodies are one and the same thing.” It will perhaps surprise you very much that he should think so; but I want to show you that there is truth in what he said. For the fire in the stove and the life in your body are both sparks from the Divine fire of God’s own life. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.6}

The fire is kept burning only by the air blowing upon it. You too are kept alive, as you know, by breathing in the breath of God, or rather by the breathing it into you every moment. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.7}

But have you ever thought what is the work that this breath does for you? It is the same that it does for the fuel in your stoves, it keeps the flame of life burning within you. Your life is a fire, for it is the life of God, and His Word tells us that “Our God is a consuming fire.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.8}

The food that we eat is the fuel that we need to burn to keep up this life, but like the fire it must have air to make it burn. It is the oxygen in the air that comes into us that burns this fuel, and so keeps life and heat in our bodies. When one stops breathing, the fire of Iife dies out, and the body becomes quite cold. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.9}

The oxygen burns up all the waste matter that is in our bodies; those things that are no good or that are harmful to us. Like the fuel in the fire, they are turned again into gas, which our blood carries to the lungs, and this poisonous gas is then breathed out into the air, and we take in a fresh supply of oxygen. How marvellous is the breath of God, which, like a consuming fire, is cleansing our bodies in this way every moment. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.10}

Then if you want pure, clean bodies, dear children, you must be sure to get plenty of fresh air; for air that has been breathed over and over again has much poisonous gas in it, and very little oxygen. So the poisons are not burned up and carried out of our bodies. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.11}

Then you must be careful too about the fuel,-the food,-that you put into your bodies. You know that if you put too much fuel into the stove, or things that do not burn well, you get a dull, smoky fire. Too much food, or things that are not good, taken into our bodies, have just the same effect upon our lives. Instead of bright, clear minds, and free happy lives, we become languid and slow, and have dull brains, and seem only half alive. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.12}

Exercise is another thing very necessary to keep a good clear fire in our bodies. How warm you get when you run, play, or work hard, do you not? This is because you are breathing quicker, and so taking in more air, and your blood is moving quicker and carrying the air through every part of your body. You can feel it tingling all over you. Then the waste water is all quickly burned up and carried away, and your body is kept pure and healthy as God wants it to be. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.13}

*“God make my life a little light
Within this world to glow,
A little flame that burneth bright
Wherever I may go.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 506.14}*

**“Out of Fashion” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. He is anxious that all should receive everlasting life, but the enemy is working against the purposes of God “with great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” It is his studied purpose to fasten upon men soul and body-destroying practices under the plea of fashion; and when the sinfulness of these practices is pointed out, the excuse for their continuance is, “What do all people say?-I might as well be out of ... as out of the fashion.” This is why the command is given, “Come out and be ye separate.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.1}

**“Jottings” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

-The world uses 3,500,000 steel pens a day. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.2}

-There are 6,400 square miles of coalfields in Great Britain. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.3}

-The preparation of human hair for the market gives employment to 7,000 Parisians. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.4}

-Germany has more electric railways than any other European country. England is third in order. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.5}

-The opening of the Dreyfus trial is fixed for August 7. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.6}

-Cleveland, Ohio, is under martial law, on account of the violent demonstrations of the trolley railway strikers. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.7}

-Robert G. Ingersoll, the noted American infidel, died on July 21, at his New York country home, of apoplexy. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.8}

-There is in Australia a continuous wire netting fence 1,295 miles long, its object being to keep out rabbits from the cultivated fields. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.9}

-An Austrian professor, in a recent lecture on hygiene, declared that England largely owes her supremacy over other nations to the national bath tub. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.10}

-The Spanish premier has made a proposal to his minister of war favouring the reduction of the country’s military force from 107,000 to 80,000. It has been favourably considered. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.11}

-After three years of inaction, the summit crater of Manna Loa, Hawaii, has been active, the lava flowing down in three streams, threatening coffee plantations and sugar lands. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.12}

-The spider is so well supplied with the silky thread with which it makes its web, that an experimenter recently drew from the body of a single specimen 3,840 yards of thread-a length rather more than two miles. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.13}

-During the final trip of the English torpedo boat destroyer, Bullfinch, on the 21st of July, an explosion occurred in the engine rooms of the vessel, resulting in the death of eleven man, and severe injury to five others. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.14}

-Four million women in the United States earn their own bread. They are found in all occupations, and one-third of all persons engaged in professional services are women. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.15}

-A school has been opened in Pekin, for the exclusive teaching of Russian, and for the training of Chinese as interpreters and railway assists by Russian teachers, at the expense of the Chinese government. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.16}

-The city authorities of San Francisco have ordered that the streets are to be sprinkled with crude petroleum oil instead of water. They claim that it is cheaper, and that it lays the dust for a longer time, also that it helps gradually to harden the road bed. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.17}

-Matters between Canada and the United States concerning the Alaskan difficulty are at a standstill. Each country declares that it has gone to the limit of concessions, and now the dispute can be settled according to Sir W, Laurier, only by war or arbitration. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.18}

-The eggs of a blue-bottle fly, if placed to the sun, will hatch in two or three hours. Linnaeus declares that the Iarvae of three blue-bottle flies will devour the carcass of a horse as quickly as would a lion, so rapidly do those insects increase, and so voracious are they. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.19}

-General Alger, Secretary of War under President McKinley, has resigned his position, owing, it is said, to the bitter newspaper attacks that are been made on him because of the “embalmed beef” scandal, and the general mal-administration of affairs during the Spanish war. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.20}

-At Carpinteria, California, is growing the largest grape-vine in the world, the trunk being seven feet eight inches in circumference. Its branches cover a third of an acre, and produce annually ten tons of grapes. It was planted in 1842. Eight hundred people can find protection from the summer heat beneath its foliage. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.21}

-After a canvass of the leading nations of the world, it is figured that the total number of newspapers printed in a single year is 12,000,000,000. To print these requires the use of 881,240 tons of paper per day, and it would take the fastest printing press made, 333 years to print a single year’s edition, which would make a stack of papers five hundred miles high. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.22}

-An interesting surgical use has just been made in a New York hospital of a powerful magnet which will support 260 pounds of steel. A man in whose eyeball was deeply imbedded a sliver of steel from a swift lathe, was the patient. He was placed on a table, and gradually moved toward the magnet. As the eye came nearer, it was drawn out from the socket, and the pain became almost unbearable, but the bit of steel soon flew to the magnet, and the eye returned to its intend position. It is said the operation with instrument would have been impossible without destroying the eye. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.23}

-Two cases of wholesale poisoning occurred in London on July 22. One was at Blackheath, where a large number of school children were attending a treat. After partaking of refreshments, many of them became very ill, and in the course of an hour, seventy of them were in a serious condition. They were removed to different hospitals, and medical attendance summoned. By midnight the most of them were able to be removed to their homes. Several came near dying. Impure milk is thought to be the cause of their illness. The other occurred at the Inns of Court Hotel, where twenty people became simultaneously sick after eating dinner. One of them died and several others were in a critical condition for some time. Special attention should be given to diet in hot weather, to see that it is perfectly wholesome before being cooked. It is poor economy to throw away human lives instead of throwing away unwholesome food. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 510.24}

**“Back Page” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

Beginning August 4, a ten days’ Convention for Bible Study will be held in a tent at Ashton Gate Park, Bristol. A large attendance is expected, and any of our readers who would like to join us for a part or all of the time will be very welcome. There will be two or three meetings every day. The subject for study will be the whole Gospel of healing for body, soul and spirit. Particulars as to reduced railway fares and lodging accommodation can be had an immediate application to the office of this paper. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.1}

A new monthly journal, *Life and Health*, makes its first appearance the beginning of August. The name of the paper indicates its scope and purpose. It will deal with the subjects of healthful diet, proper dress and hygienic living generally. So far as its space permits, *The Present Truth* has endeavoured to set before its readers, and will continue to do so, the underlying principles and most practical methods of healthful living, but those who desire to have a fuller acquaintance with the subject, will find all its branches dealt with in a practical and helpful way in *Life and Health*. The editor has been for many years connected with the Battle Creek Sanitarium. The price of the paper is two pence per copy, or, post-paid, 2s. 6d. per annum. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.2}

Our Swiss Camp-meeting will be held this year at Lausanne, August 17-27. There will be one service in English on each Sunday. Dr. De Forest, who has charge of our Sanatorium at Basle, will be present to render such help as he can to any who may desire it. Health foods will be obtainable on the Campground. The editor of PRESENT TRUTH will assist in the conduct of the services. All visitors will receive a hearty welcome. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.3}

**“Walking in Light” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Word of God is called “a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path.” In Proverbs 4:18 we read that “the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” So in truth there is progression. With this agrees the statement of our Saviour (John 12:35), “Walk while ye have the light.” Why?-“Lest darkness come upon you.” Then in Matthew 6:23 Jesus says, “If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness how great is that darkness.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.4}

But people will walk in darkness. They will not come to the light-they will not even recognise the light. Why is this?-The scripture is definite: “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, *because their deeds were evil*.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.5}

Now “darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people.” But this state of things will not always continue. There will come a time when the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light, and the counsels of hearts will be made manifest. 1 Corinthians 4:5. Then it is that those who have thought to avoid the “overflowing scourge” by placing their trust in lies and falsehood, will find that “the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.” Isaiah 28:15, 17. Then it is that God “will render to every man according to his deeds.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.6}

How much better it would be to come to the light of truth now-cherish every ray of light, let it reveal our defects, and by the help of Jesus Christ put them away, so that we may stand with God’s people who will be “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” But this means a sacrifice of self; it means to let Jesus come into our lives and work in them to “will and to do of His own good pleasure.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.7}

**“How to Be Strong” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

We heard a sister say the other day, “I wish I knew how I could be a *strong* Christian.” She is not the only one who longs to be a Christian with strength sufficient to withstand the temptations of the devil. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.8}

Now let us look at the matter in the simplest way. When we wish to become strong physically, we eat the right kind of food, and take proper exercise. Spiritual life is not much different from physical life, so far as its healthful maintenance is concerned. Christian strength is obtained in just this way. First there must be proper food-and that is, *the truth*. And what is that? “Thy Word is truth.” Then study the Scriptures with the heart open to receive the light that God will cause to shine into your soul. When the light comes, cherish it as you would a lighted candle on a dangerous roadway. Put its precepts at once into practice in your life. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.9}

It may be that it will require the forsaking of many former ways, and the giving up of many cherished idols, but *do it*, no matter what the sacrifice. Eve was driven from the garden because she listened to the words of Satan rather than the command of the Lord. Lot’s wife was turned into a pillar of salt because she “looked back” toward Sodom, contrary to the Lord’s express command. Joseph and Daniel and his three companions were strong to stand for the right in a great crisis, because they stood by principles every day in the ordinary duties of life. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.10}

There is nothing that begets weakness like hesitating when there must be a decision between right and wrong. So if you want to be a *strong* Christian, the first thing is to know what God requires, and then promptly, and without hesitation, do that thing. Remember that “to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” 1 Samuel 15:22. {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.11}

**“Always Watching” *The Present Truth* 15, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

Just before His trial and crucifixion, Jesus took several of His disciples and went into the garden to pray, for He was “exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” As He withdrew Himself a short distance from them, He said, “Tarry ye here, and watch with Me.” Then He fell upon His face, and in the agony of His soul He cried to God for strength to carry Him through the awful ordeal. When He returned to His disciples, “He findeth them asleep.” To Peter He said in tender reproach, “What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?” And then He gave that admonition, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.12}

As it was then, so has it always been; there is not one moment when we can safely cease to watch. The devil is a wily foe, and at this time especially he “is come down unto you having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.13}

Peter neglected to watch that “one hour,” and a little later on he denied his Lord. So there is no hour which may not prove an hour of defeat and overthrow, if we neglect to watch. The watching must be constant. Watch against evil; watch against sin; “Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” {PTUK August 10, 1899, p. 512.14}

**“Salvation Near” *The Present Truth* 15, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high if we to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed, The night is far spent, the day is at hand.” Romans 13:11, 12. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 513.1}

Paul’s words refer to the “blessed hope” of the church, the return of Jesus Christ and the restoration of all things. At that time the fulness of the salvation is made manifest, in destroying the last enemy, death, and freeing the earth from the curse. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 513.2}

But the rapid approach of that day is only bringing salvation nearer to those who already find it near now. If the church had only believed and realised how near salvation was to them, the fulness of it might have been revealed long ago. The prophecies of Christ’s coming are not to lead us to think that there is no time left in which to attempt much. He will come because a highway has been prepared for Him in the desert, and a people has been made ready to meet Him. We are encouraged to put forth every effort possible, knowing that a mighty work can be done in a short time. Christ cannot come until that work is done, and the way prepared for Him in every tribe and tongue and kindred and people; yet His coming is near, “even at the doors.” This is evidence that God is about to work mightily through His servants, and do a short work in the earth. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 513.3}

“Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land.” Psalm 75:9. So it is possible for glory to dwell in us, because His salvation is not far off, it is near. It is those who sin that come short of the glory of God (Romans 2:23), and the Saviour was named Jesus, because He should save His people from their sins. Therefore His salvation fills men with glory, so they do not come short of it. So we read, “Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it, ... that He might present it to Himself a *glorious* church, not having sport or wrinkle or any such thing.” Ephesians 5:25-27. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 513.4}

How near is the salvation? “The church is His body.” “For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” Ephesians 5:30. It is impossible for it to be any nearer than God has made it. He is one with us. “What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?” Deuteronomy 4:7. Jesus said to His Father, “The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.” John 17:22. “Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land.” {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.1}

We allow ourselves to forget too much how near the salvation is. We feel as though it were in heaven, but we are not to say in our hearts, Who shall go up to heaven to bring it down to us? because it is right in our own lives. This was Paul’s strength and rejoicing; it filled his life with glory. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now life in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.” Galatians 2:20. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.2}

This was Christ’s own strength also. In Him men saw glory, “the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.” It was because He remembered always that salvation was near Him. “I foresaw the Lord always before My face, for He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved.” Acts 2:25. “For the Lord God will help Me: therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth Me.” Isaiah 50:7. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.3}

When we remember that “surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him,” we will not be afraid of the temptations and evils that gather around. We can say with Christ, “Who will contend with me? Who is mine adversary? let him come near to me.” We will not be afraid, no matter how near the enemies come to us, because “He is near that justifieth me.” The constant recognition of this truth will fill our lives with the glory of God, prepare us to stand in the presence of the Saviour without shame at His appearing, and give us the needed qualifications for turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and making ready a people prepared for the Lord. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.4}

**“Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Coming Out of Babylon. Ezra 1:1-11” *The Present Truth* 15, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

Ezra 1:1-11

Two years after the fall of Babylon, Cyrus became ruler over the Persian empire. His accession marked the beginning of a great movement, which had been outlined in prophecy long before Cyrus himself was born. In the Divine plan, which gives to every man, small and great, his life work, Cyrus had been assigned his task. It was to rebuild the city and temple of Jerusalem, and to let the exiles of Israel go free from their captivity in Babylon. Isaiah 46:28; 45:13. The prophet Isaiah had named Cyrus as the one who should do this work, even before the captivity had commenced. Daniel, who was prime minister to Cyrus, understood the prophetic writings which foretold that, at the end of seventy years, Israel should return to their own land (Daniel 9:2), and he would have opportunity to show the king that which was foretold of him. Cyrus obeyed the word, and in his first year issued a proclamation, to every part of his kingdom, declaring that “the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem.” The proclamation went on to invite the people of Jehovah to return to Jerusalem and engage in the work of rebuilding the temple. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.5}

It is evident from the record that the influence of Daniel’s godly life had not been lost on the people whom he helped to govern. It had won for him and the truth he represented warm friends in every part of the kingdom. This was seen when Cyrus called upon his subjects to further the restoration by rendering the needed assistance to all who desired to return to Jerusalem, and to furnish the travelers with gold and silver, and goods and beasts, “beside the freewill offering for the house of God.” The proclamations which had been sent out by Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, declaring the power and greatness of Jehovah, as manifested in Daniel’s behalf, had spread the knowledge of God. Now when the call was made on the people to help “them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord,” we read that “all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.” When God requires a work to be done, He provides the means. While He was raising the spirit of His people to go up to Jerusalem to build a house for Him, He was also at work on the hearts of the people about them, raising the necessary funds. There is a lesson in this for Christian workers. If we yield ourselves to do God’s will, and be sure that it is indeed His work that we undertake, we may rest in the assurance that God will supply all our need. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.6}

Cyrus also brought out from his treasure-house, five thousand four hundred vessels of gold and silver, which had been originally taken from the temple at Jerusalem. It as not light thing for a king thus to strip his treasure-house, and the hearty way in which all took hold of the matter showed that a real work had been done for king and people. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.7}

The departure from Babylon recalls to mind the exodus from Egypt fifteen hundred years before. But how different was the circumstances! Then, the movement had been carried out in the face of Pharaoh’s opposition, and against the strength of Egypt. Now Cyrus was heartily supporting Israel’s journey to Jerusalem, and the resources of its empire or placed at their command. Yet only a handful of people, comparatively, went up to Jerusalem, numbering some fifty thousand. The remainder preferred to stay where they were and to merge themselves and their interests with the world around them, rather than face the hardship and uncertainty involved in a return to the ruins of Jerusalem. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 514.8}

When Israel first came out of Egypt, they were not really delivered from the house of bondage because their hearts were still there. This was why they did not enter into rest. They were still in bondage, and most of them died without entering into rest. It is little profit to have the body come out of Egypt and leave the heart in. In bringing His people out of the captivity of Babylon, the Lord desired to give them a perfect freedom, of soul as well as body. So all were left to come out or to stay in. None could be really set free, so long as the very thing that caused them to go into captivity was allowed to enslave their hearts. God was doing a deeper and more lasting work than merely to strike fetters of iron from the limbs of his people. So we are not to judge of the success of this work by the few that then heard the call and came out. As we read the prophecies of Isaiah, concerning the work of Cyrus, we can see that these go on to speak of the work of Jesus, of whom Cyrus was a type. It is Christ who alone can build God’s eternal city, and let go His captives, for only He can set men free from the bondage of sin. He is the Good Shepherd who shall perform of God’s pleasure. Isaiah 44:28. In the departure from Babylon, in the days of Cyrus, we see the beginning of a work which is not yet completed, and which will not cease until God’s people are all set free from every species of spiritual bondage. In the closing call of the Gospel, we find God’s last appeal to His people to come out of Babylon. Revelation 13. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 515.1}

But although Christ is the real deliverer, we may have a part in His work, just as Cyrus had. God is no respecter of persons, and to us, if we will receive it, He gives the commission to set the captives free and break every yoke. “He whom the Lord loveth shall perform His pleasure on Babylon. And His arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken, yea, I have called him; I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.” Isaiah 48:14, 15; margin R.V. If we will allow God to speak and live through us the same irresistible power which wrought through Cyrus, and made the lofty walls and brazen gates of Babylon an ineffectual defense against his attacks, will work through us to the casting down of strongholds, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. The promise given to Cyrus is just as much for us, “I will go before thee and make the rugged places plain; I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; and I will give thee the treasures of darkness.” Isaiah 45:2, 3. The souls of men, Satan’s treasure, shall be wrested from him by those who fight the good fight of faith. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 515.2}

The kingdom of Babylon bear rule over all the earth, and the work of restoration will not be completed until God’s true people are gathered from every tribe and kindred, and people and nation. The work to be done for these is set forth in the 49th chapter of Isaiah. The Lord says, speaking to His servant, “I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people... to make them inherit the desolate heritages; saying to them that are bound, Go forth, to them that are in darkness. Show yourselves... and I will make all My mountains a way, and My high ways shall be exalted. Lo, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.” {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 515.3}

The land of Sinim is China. That country, like many another, seems walled in by impenetrable prejudices, but it must be remembered by those who take up the work commenced by Cyrus, that they have the same promise that was made to him; “I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.” But those who desire to have a part in the grand consummation of the Gospel work, and to claim these promises, must live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. When a man rejects any part of God’s Word, he does not really believe even that part which he thinks he is accepting. Every word of God is infinite, and any particular scripture, before it can be appreciated and understood, must be taken with every other word given to man. No man can set others free who is bound himself. The first thing for one who would deliver others from Babylon, which is the kingdom of Satan, is to come out of it himself. And no man can come out alone. Whoever is content to leave a single soul in its bondage, shows that he himself is not free from the selfishness which is its vital principle. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 515.4}

The vessels of the house of God were also taken to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar, just as the ark had been taken by the Philistines centuries before. As the ark, when placed in the house of Dagon vindicated the majesty of Jehovah above false gods, so when Belshazzar brought forth the vessels of God’s house, wherein he and his lord’s might drink wine to the gods of silver, iron and stone, that very hour the fingers of a man’s hand traced his death sentence on his palace wall. Cyrus restored the vessels to those who returned to Jerusalem, but the sacred things which those vessels represented, remained in Babylon, for we read of their removal at a future time, when all the nations shall see the Lord’s arm made bear, and behold his salvation. “Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.” Isaiah 52:11. God’s people are His holy vessels (1 Corinthians 3:17), and until they recognise this, and acknowledge Him in all their ways, counting themselves dead indeed, they are still in Babylon. When the Lord gets entire control of human beings, He can do what He pleases in a way that other human beings cannot fail to understand, and thus He can make bear His holy arm in the sight of all the nations. The things of God are foolishness to the natural man, but when the Word of God is made flesh, and translated into every day life, even the flesh can see its working. So we see that those who would have a part in God’s great worldwide work must first be clean themselves. This the Word will do for them, when they let it. John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26, 27. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 515.5}

There is one important fact which must not be overlooked in this connection. Israel went into captivity because of their Sabbath-breaking. Jeremiah states this (Jeremiah 17:19-27), and the same thing is repeated in 2 Chronicles 3:6; 20:21, where the reason is given why the captivity was just seventy years in length. It was because the land, and therefore, of course, the people, had not kept the Sabbath. Now this being so, it is evident that no one can escape from the real spiritual bondage of Babylon unless he has ceased to commit the sin of Sabbath-breaking, and it is equally clear that all who come out of Babylon, at the call of God, will come out as Sabbath-keepers. They will not observe the false Sabbath, the Sunday which owes its origin to the king of Babylon, Satan, but will keep the true Lord’s day, the Sabbath of the Lord their God. They will bear the sign of God, which is only placed upon those who are His own handiwork, having ceased from their own works and enter into rest. Hebrews 4. This rest remains for all, ever since God ceased from His own works, and entered into rest on the seventh day. Babylon from the beginning has stood for man’s works directed against God, and its mark is the most presumptuous of them all, an attempt to substitute a man-made Sabbath for God’s own rest day. The Sabbath, on the other hand, calls men to show faith in a living God, by ceasing from their own works. The Sabbath can only be kept by faith, and those who thus keep it share God’s works, and bear the seal of the living God. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 515.6}

We see, therefore, that since in these days God is calling His people out of Babylon, He must also of necessity call them to observe the Sabbath according to His commandment, and thus show their faith in the sufficiency of His power to make them righteous and sustain their life. Yet because this calls for the exercise of faith, many who claim to live by faith, drawback on the ground that they would lose their living if they should keep the seventh day Sabbath. But they miss the point altogether. God is not calling them to starve, but to come out of Babylon. In Ezra’s rest time, doubtless many thought that they would starve if they should leave their home and business in Babylon, yet we do not read of any starving because they obeyed the call. On the contrary, they were immediately made stewards of great wealth for the cause of God, “gold and silver, and goods, and beasts, and precious things.” Much more will this be the case in the final departure from Babylon. “The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee.” Isaiah 60:5. Then it was only Cyrus to help the movement, but at its consummation we read, “Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet.” Isaiah 49:23. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.1}

“Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans; with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob. And they thirsted not when He led them through the desert: He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: He clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.” Isaiah 48:20, 21. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.2}

**“The Gospel of Isaiah. The Last Loud Gospel Cry. Isaiah 40:1-11” *The Present Truth* 15, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

*1. Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith
your God; {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.3}*

*2. Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry
unto her,
That her warfare is accomplished, that her
iniquity is pardoned;
For she hath received at the Lord’s hand
Double for all her sins. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.4}*

*3. A voice crieth: In the wilderness prepare ye
the way of Jehovah!
Make straight in the desert a highway for our
God! {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.5}*

*4. Every valley shall be exalted, and every
mountain and hill shall be made low;
And the crooked shall be made straight, and
the rough places a smooth plain; {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.6}*

*5. And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed;
And all flesh shall see together the salvation
of our God;
For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.7}*

*6. A voice sayeth, Cry! and I said, What shall
I cry?
All flesh is grass, and all its glory like the
flower of the field; {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.8}*

*7. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
Because the breath of Jehovah bloweth upon
it;
Surely the people is grass. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.9}*

*8. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth;
But the Word of our God shall stand for
ever. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.10}*

*9. Get thee up upon a high mountain, O thou
that tellest glad tidings to Sion.
Exalt thy voice with strength, O thou
that bringest glad tidings to Jerusalem.
Lift it up; be not afraid;
Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God! {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.11}*

*10. Behold, the Lord Jehovah shall come as a
Mighty One,
And His arm shall prevail for Him.
Behold, His reward is with Him, and His
work before Him. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.12}*

*11. Like a shepherd shall He feed His flock;
In His arm shall He gather up the lambs,
And He shall bear them in His bosom; the
nursing ewes shall He gently lead. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.13}*

In these first eleven verses of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah we have not followed any one translation, but have combined several, in order to present the best and most vivid rendering; for the passage is a very vivid one. The student can compare the variations with his own Bible. Nothing is given that is not strictly literal. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.14}

Although we have printed eleven verses at this time, we shall not try to cover them in this lesson. All we propose to do in this lesson is to give an outline, so that we may be perfectly sure of the nature of the message, and the time to which it applies, and may know to whom it is addressed, and who is to give it. We therefore request all who may be using these lessons in Sabbath schools to confine themselves at this time to these things; for the details of the verses will be considered in subsequent lessons. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.15}

Not a single reader of the Bible will have any difficulty in connecting this message with the work of John the Baptist, for the connection is plainly made in the Bible. John came preaching “the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Luke 3:3-6. Our lesson therefore has direct reference to the work of John the Baptist. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 516.16}

What was the work committed to him?-To prepare the way of the Lord. “Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Luke 1:16, 17. Thus spoke the angel Gabriel. John’s father, filled with the Holy Ghost, spoke these words to him. “Thou child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Luke 1:76-79. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.1}

If anything were needed to convince any reader that we have the Gospel in Isaiah, we have it here. It is that Gospel which preaches the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and makes known salvation through this remission; it brings men from the darkness of death to the light of life, guides their feet in the way of peace and righteousness, and prepares them for the coming of the Lord. And that is just the Gospel for this time. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.2}

Then it would seem as though the work of John the Baptist did not end with his death. Most certainly it did not; and the scripture before us teaches us that it did not. Indeed, it was only begun when he died. Most people have obtained the idea that John’s work was simply to prepare the way for and announce the coming of Jesus as a Preacher and Teacher in Galilee and Judea; but it was much more than this. The same portion of scriptures which tells us of his work, to prepare the way of the Lord, says, “Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.” Now compare this with Revelation 22:12, where Christ says, “Behold I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be,” and we cannot fail to see that the work of John the Baptist reaches to the second coming of Christ in glory; “for the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He reward every man according to his works.” Matthew 16:27. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.3}

Notice that this message is to be given with a loud voice. The voice that cries is to be lifted up with strength, and the crier is to get up upon a high mountain, in order that the sound may reach to the furthest possible extent. Now read Revelation 14:6, 7: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” This message, as might be expected from its nature, is followed by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven to reap the harvest of the earth, which is the end of the world. Revelation 14:14-16; Matthew 13:39. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.4}

Every message of importance must be earnestly proclaimed. One cries with a loud voice in order to make many people hear; and this message preparing the way for the coming of the Lord is to be proclaimed so extensively that all the world shall hear. The Gospel of the kingdom is “for all people,” and is to be “preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14; Luke 2:10. But the nearer one comes to the end, the louder must the message be proclaimed. If you saw a man approaching a precipice, you would cry out, to warn him of his danger. If he did not pay any attention, you would cry louder; and the nearer he approached, unconscious of his danger, the louder you would cry. Even so the nearer we come to the end of the world, which will be the destruction of those who are not looking for it, the louder and more clear must the Gospel message announcing it ring forth. So the scripture which we are studying has a more direct application to the people of this time than to any other people that ever lived. It is emphatically present truth. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.5}

Who shall give this message?-“Let him that heareth say, Come!” Revelation 22:17. Remember that John the Baptist was but a voice. “The Word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.” Luke 3:2. John was called “the prophet of the Highest.” A prophet is one who speaks for another. Compare Exodus 4:14-16 and 7:1. A prophet of God is therefore the mouthpiece of God, proclaiming the Word of God. Every one to whom the Word of the Lord comes is to sound it forth, that people may be saved from their sins, and be ready for the second coming of Christ. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.6}

From this it follows that the last message of the Gospel is preeminently a prophetic message. It is given by the power of the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of prophecy. God’s people are “a kingdom of priests,” and the holy wish for them is that all the Lord’s people might be prophets, and that “the Lord would put His Spirit upon them.” Numbers 11:26-29. Those who proclaim the Gospel and the coming of the Lord, must do so with authority as the oracles of God. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.7}

But there must be the most perfect unity, and there will be when the true message is given; for it is nothing but the unchangeable Word of God that is to be given. The voice is God’s; the people furnish only the mouth; so that although there be tens of thousands of mouths, only one voice is heard. In the days of the coming of the Lord the admonition of the Apostle Paul will be perfectly heeded: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10. “Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.” Isaiah 52:8. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.8}

Let us now sum up what we have learned from this first part of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah. 1. It is the message of John the Baptist. 2. It is the Gospel of the kingdom, the Gospel of salvation. 3. It prepares the way for the coming of the Lord, even for His coming in glory, that is, to the end of the world. 4. This part of the scripture has special reference to the last days, because then the imminence of the coming of the Lord makes a loud cry especially imperative. 5. It consists simply of the preaching of the Word of God. 6. It is to be proclaimed by every one who hears it, if he will. 7. There are many mouths concerned in the proclamation, but only one voice. 8. The Spirit of prophecy is in it, and it goes with power. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 517.9}

Finally, let it be noted that the whole of the remaining portion of the book of Isaiah is but the continuation of this message. Therefore as we proceed in our study let us not forget the setting of any portion of the text. There is no part of Scripture more important at this time than this book, and none that can more thoroughly furnish the student to good works, and fit him for the presence of the King in His beauty. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 518.1}

**“Little Folks. The Gospel of Life” *The Present Truth* 15, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

Shall we read together this week, dear children, another chapter in the wonderful Gospel of life which God has written for us in His works? The truths which He tells no in His Word are working out all about us in the things that He has made, for He is “the Truth,” and He “fills all things.” This world is full of disease and death, because it is full of sin. Yet there is a pure, sweet, healthy, life-giving influence coming to us from God. Still His life comes to fill all things, and everywhere His Spirit is working to destroy and overcome the deadly influences of sin which surround us. If it were not for this, we could not live a moment here in this earth where the curse and blight of sin have fallen. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.1}

You will remember that last week we were talking about the air, and how wonderfully, by the power of His breath, God is cleansing and renewing our bodies continually, burning up the poisons and impurities that are formed there. In this way we are experiencing with every breath we draw, the cleansing power of God’s life, and how it destroys whatever is hurtful to us, when it is allowed to circulate freely through no. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.2}

The sunlight also destroys and burns up impurity. Sunshine is nature’s disinfectant, for it destroys the deadly germs by which disease is spread. The healthiest rooms in the house are those into which the sun shines freely, bringing purity and life. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.3}

This is the light of God’s countenance, so you see that in this He is showing us just what He tells us in His Word: that “He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,” and “evil cannot dwell with Him.” Everything impure and evil coming into the pure and powerful light of His eyes, cannot exist there; it vanishes away, and ceases to be. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.4}

Fire, condensed sunshine, we know is a most powerful purifier. You have read in your histories of the Great Plague of London in 1665, and of the Great Fire that followed it. This great fire, coming at the time it did, is looked upon as a special blessing; for it destroyed the germs of the plague with which the city was infested, and so stamped it out. Otherwise it might have lingered, and broken out from time to time, even to the present day. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.5}

Think, too, of the cleansing properties of water, which has been called “The World’s Great Cleanser.” With it we wash our bodies, our clothes, our houses, our streets, and all the filth of our cities is carried into the rivers upon which they are built. Yet at some distance from the city the water will be found perfectly fresh and clear, without a trace of the impurity that it carried away. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.6}

How is this? Where has it all gone to? It has disappeared completely, for it has been swallowed up and destroyed by the power of God’s life that is in the running water. It is all blotted out. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.7}

Now what a beautiful lesson there is in this for us, and how clearly God is teaching us in it what He is able to do with our sins, with our sicknesses, with everything that would soil the purity of His life that fills all things. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.8}

He is showing us the power of His Cross,-how He has taken upon Himself the curse of our sins, and blotted them out “by the power of His endless life,” so that mortality might be swallowed up of life,” “death is swallowed up in victory.” {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.9}

God tells us in His Word of a time when the iniquity of His people “shall be sought for, and shall not be found,” for “there shall be none,” because He has blotted it all out. If we let His pure and Holy Spirit of life now fill us, its power will blot out and destroy all traces of sin in us, so that they shall not be found even though they may he sought for. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.10}

But if we will not do this we shall be like the wicked of whom we read in the thirty-seventh psalm: “Yet he passed away; and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but *he could not be found*.” If we cling to our sins, and do not let the life of Jesus cleanse them away from us, when He blots them out at last, as He will all sin from His universe, we also shall be blotted out, and “shall not be found.” {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.11}

“For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.” {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 522.12}

**“Jottings” *The Present Truth* 15, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

-India is threatened with a drought extending over a considerable area. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.1}

-Over 1,000 people die every year of delirium tremens in England alone. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.2}

-In consequence of the Tsar’s action in Finland, over a thousand persons, all young and healthy, have left Finland for other countries. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.3}

-Advices from Honolulu report that Hawaii has been visited by a terrible earthquake, accompanied by volcanic eruptions. Two hundred people were killed. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.4}

-The Wesleyan Conference at its late sitting rejected a resolution stigmatising as un-Christian those engaged in the manufacture or sale of its intoxicating liquor. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.5}

-A popular Episcopalian minister of New York City has ceased to preach for pay. He has rented a site opposite the Moody Mission, and has erected an immense tent, in which he holds services, and for a livelihood has opened a restaurant, where he acts as cashier. He claims to be setting an example that all minister should follow. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.6}

-There is only about two-thirds as much water in the Thames this year as there was last at the same time. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.7}

-There is a newspaper published in Pekin over 1,000 years old. More than 1,900 of its editors have been beheaded. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.8}

-The President of the Santo Domingo Republic has been assassinated, by the son of a man whom he condemned to death thirteen years ago. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.9}

-A disease hitherto unknown in the district has attacked the wheat crop in Alfold, the grainery of Hungary, as it is called. The ears and stalks turn white and then wither. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.10}

-In case of a non-peaceful settlement of the Transvaal question, arrangements have been made to transport 10,000 men from India. Several of the Colonies have offered their services if needed. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.11}

-Experiments with liquid air have been carried on by eminent physicians of New York with surprising results. It is claimed to be a cure for shingles, soiatics, and intercostal and facial neuralgia. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.12}

-Scientists have discovered that the memory is stronger in summer than in winter. Among the worst foes of the memory are too much food, too much physical exercise, and strangely enough, too much education. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.13}

-A bill is introduced into Parliament providing for the expenditure of over ?6,000,000 on new works, a large part of it to be used in building five new docks for the accommodation of the British war ships. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.14}

-General de Negrier, one of the most popular officers of the French Army, has been relieved of his duties as army inspector and member of the Superior Council of War for insubordination over the Dreyfus affair. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.15}

-The Russian Minister of Finance is projecting the adoption of measures to promote the extension of trade between Russia and Afghanistan in such a way as to nullify the importation of British manufactured articles into that country. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.16}

-Since coming into office in 1887, Sir William White the chief Naval Construction, has spent on the British navy, exclusive of money laid out and armaments, over ?66,000,000. He is responsible for a fleet of 212 ships, armed with 2,000 guns. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.17}

-A new disease has broken out among the sheep in Australia, affecting particularly the lymphatic glands. Seventy per cent. of some flocks are affected. The news should be of interest, if not of value, to consumers of Australian mutton. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.18}

-An Old-Age Pensions scheme, to be established at a cost of ?10,000,000 has been considered by the Parliamentary Committee charged with the matter, and it is understood that most of the members have agreed to recommend it to the Government. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.19}

-Wireless telephony is now claimed to be practicable. A Russian professor has invented an apparatus which will, he says, allow a person in London to converse with one in New York. This sounds impossible, but so did wireless telegraphy a little while ago. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.20}

-Another engineering strike is probable. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers has given fourteen days’ notice to Lincolnshire employers that the men will leave work unless a shilling increase per week is given, as promised provisionally in April. The employers say that business does not warrant any advance. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.21}

-A new explosive has been invented by an English chemist which is pronounced more destructive than dynamite, less dangerous to handle, and absolutely smokeless. It has been adopted by the Russian and German governments, and England, France, Austria, and the United States are experimenting with it. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 526.22}

**“Back Page” *The Present Truth* 15, 33.**

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After taking nearly three months to consider the matter, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have deliver judgment against the use of ceremonial incense and the carrying of lights in procession. These are declared to be illegal practices, at present, in the Church of England. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.1}

We know that heaven is deeply interested in the doings of men. There is joy among the angels over one sinner that repenteth, but there is no ground given us in the Scripture for supposing that the angels behold with joy the spectacle of a church divided over the question of whether it should burn incense or not in it services. The incense that God desires is the fragrance of a Christian life, and the light that He wishes to see is the word of life held out to a crooked and perverse generation, by those whom He has made lights in the world. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.2}

The church in Christ’s day was occupied with questions of detail and ritual, but was omitting the weightier matters of the law. Thus their eyes were blinded to the spiritual truths that Christ presented to them, and in their hatred of his simple, spotless life they crucified Him. Satan is still working in the same way. Men become very zealous in disputing over worthless trifles, but reject the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. While they think they are doing God service, they are unconscious the becoming members of the synagogue of Satan, and yielding themselves to work out his evil purposes. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.3}

People who wish to excuse themselves from obeying the fourth commandment as it reads, will often say that Sunday commemorates the work of redemption, because Christ rose on the first day of the week, while the seventh day commemorates creation, and since redemption is greater than creation, it is better to observe the first day than the seventh. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.4}

So far as the argument in this is concerned, it is not worth notice, especially as no one who has really accepted redemption would make use of it. The very thing that we are redeemed from is that which caused the fall of angels and of men, all lawless spirit of way in God’s commands against human imaginations or desires. But it is worth notice that redemption is comprised in creation, so that the two are really the same thing. Further, since creation and redemption are identical, it becomes evident that no one can honour the redemption unless he keeps the Sabbath which commemorates the creation. It is the Sabbath which reveals the oneness of Creation and redemption. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.5}

“We which have believed do enter into rest.” Hebrews 4:3. Paul is referring to Christians who have been purified from dead works, who believe and therefore enter into rest. Now it is certain that the works, the completion of which makes it possible for the Christian to rest, must include redemption. It is in that that the believer rest. But every work in which the believer rests was “finished from the foundation of the world.” Therefore redemption was finished from the foundation of the world. In other words, creation is redemption. “For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day, on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works.” Verse 4. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.6}

So we read of Christ as a “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Man and all things were created by the Word of God. But the Word was God. John 1:1-3. So that Christ, who was the Word, in the beginning shared His life with His creatures. The work of redemption simply revealed this truth in all its wonderful depth of meaning. Christ showed that He was one with us, and despite our fall, was “not ashamed to call us brethren.” {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.7}

Because the Word of God has creative power, and endureth for ever, God could rest from His works. That Word still upholds all things. Hebrews 1:3. Therefore, the rational thing for us to do is to rest upon it. The same Word which sustains our life has power to save and sanctify us. Therefore we may rest from our own labours and trust the Word. The creative Word “is the Word by which the Gospel is preached unto you.” 1 Peter 1:25. The power and the agent in creation and redemption are the same. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.8}

The Word is able to make us perfect, and to keep us so. Acts 20:32. All our labour is to be directed, not to sanctifying ourselves, but to entering into rest. Hebrews 4:11. But we cannot really rest unless we know that that in which we trust will not disappoint us, but will perform perfectly the work which we have dropped. This evidence we see in the creation, where the perfect and unbroken working of the Word shows it to be entirely trustworthy. So we may rest, with our minds kept in perfect peace, even counting ourselves dead, because the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:12. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.9}

Every excuse that men make for disregarding the Sabbath shows that they have not entered into rest. They claim to be believers, yet are afraid to rest on the seventh day for fear of losing their living. By this they plainly show that they do not believe that God has finished all His works. They say, in effect, “If we trust to that we shall starve. God has not provided for us. We must do it for ourselves.” If the Sabbath question had not come to them, they would always have supposed that they were believers, but now they find they are not. Still even they may enter straightway into rest and have a real experience instead of a sham one, for faith comes by the Word of God (Romans 10:17), and the Word is living and powerful enough for all needs. The Sabbath comes as a touchstone to test man’s faith. Those who have faith are led by it into a fuller light and deeper rest. Those who are strangers to real faith reject the Sabbath, and trust in their own works for salvation. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.10}

The sufferings of mankind are often looked upon as punishments, visited by the Creator. This has a tendency to keep men in ignorance with reference to the transgression of the laws of health which has brought about this condition. God’s relation to the sinner is not merely that of an executor of the judgment against sin. He simply leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves. The sinner is left to reap the results of his own transgression. The prophet, in speaking to disobedient Israel, said: “Thou hast destroyed thyself, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.” Isaiah 13:9. “Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee.” Jeremiah 2:9. {PTUK August 17, 1899, p. 528.11}

**“Christ Is the Tree of Life” *The Present Truth* 15, 34.**

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Christ “knew no sin.” 2 Corinthians 5:21. It is not at all necessary therefore that man should be acquainted with sin, in order to develop a strong, perfect character, for no character ever was known on earth as strong as Christ’s. One knows only what one has experienced. Now one may be sorely tempted by sin, yet if he resists, as Christ did, so that there is no taint of the sin on him, he does not know the sin. Sad to think, we have all known sin; but we do not need to continue to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Christ is the tree of life, and if we eat of Him we shall learn only the good. The ever new life will make us new creatures, so that “the former shall no more be remembered, nor come into mind.” Blessed, glorious thought! We may in Christ forget all about sin, although we shall never forget that we were sinners, and eternally indebted to Him for His salvation. The black abyss of sin from which He saves us will only be to us as the memory of a horrid dream whose details are forgotten on awakening, Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 530.1}

**“Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Rebuilding the Temple. Ezra 3:10; 4:5” *The Present Truth* 15, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

Ezra 3:10; 4:5

At the return of the Jews to Babylon, each family went to its own city and dwelt there. In the seventh month of the year however, “the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem,” and an altar was erected on which they might offer their burnt offerings. At that time the foundation of the temple was not laid, but steps were taken to prepare the necessary material, and, seven months later, the builders commenced operations, under the oversight of the priests and Levites. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 530.2}

When the foundation stones were laid, there was great rejoicing among the people. Musical instruments were brought, and songs of praise and thanksgiving arose to God “because He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever toward Israel.” “And all the people shouted with a great shout.” It was indeed an occasion for thanksgiving that God had not cast off His people, but had again delivered them out of the hand of their enemies. Another chance was being given to Israel to be unto God a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, exalted high above all other peoples as the children of the Most High, a wise and understanding nation. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 530.3}

We may learn a lesson from Israel’s joy on this occasion. To outward appearance their situation was not an enviable one. Hostile nations were all around them, and they themselves were poor and few in number. How came they to be shouting for joy! It was the blessing of the Lord that brought the rejoicing, and they had opened the way for the blessing to come by their liberality in contributing to the erection of the temple. Although Cyrus had undertaken to meet the expenses, the people desired to have their part in the work, and they offered freely for the house of God according to their ability (chap. 2:68, 69). The times of greatest rejoicing in IsraeI’s history had been the occasions when they gave freely of their substance to the work of God. The Gospel calls upon men to show liberality of spirit, not because its object is to impoverish its recipients, but because God gives everything freely. We are called to be channels of the manifold grace of God, and we never can give it away as fast as God will pour it into us. The only reason why men lack is because they refuse to be channels to others. God tells why some are cursed. It is because they rob Him of His own. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Malachi 3:8-12. So if we would find comfort in adversity, and joy in tribulation, let us open our hearts as Israel did, and remember God’s claims on us, and bless the poor and the needy. “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily.” Isaiah 58:7-11. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 530.4}

Yet while many shouted aloud for joy, there were some among the people, “ancient men, that had seen the first house,” who wept with a loud voice as they thought of the old-time splendour of the temple. Their lamentation was so loud “that the people could not discern the noise of the about of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people.” The old man may have been wrong in allowing themselves to cast a cloud of discouragement over the day’s rejoicings, but it may be too, that the younger generation needed to be reminded of the evil that had befallen their backsliding fathers. The Lord deals tenderly with all, and He declared later by His prophets to those who lovingly recalled the glories of the earlier temple, that “the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former,” for the Desire of all nations should come and fill it with His glory. Haggai 2:3-9. The discontented were warned by another prophet not to despise the day of small things. Zechariah 4:9. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 531.1}

Satan was determined to thwart, if he could, the re-establishment of God’s people in their own land. He had rejoiced to see Jerusalem laid low and its people go into captivity. His feelings are expressed in the rejoicing of Tyre. “Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished now she is laid waste.” Ezekiel 26:2. Satan himself was the king of Tyrus as plainly appears from Ezekiel 28:11-19, and so expected to have complete control over the earth, now that he had gained the victory over the one nation which withstood him. But in the captivity of His people, God’s strength had been made perfect in weakness, and He had won for Himself a glorious name. Now that Satan saw Israel returning to Jerusalem he set himself once more to the work of their destruction. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 531.2}

The adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple of the God of Israel, and they came to offer their services. They claimed to worship the true God, and said that they had sacrificed unto Him since the days that Esar-haddon, king of Assyria, had brought them to the cities of Samaria. But the superstitious character of their perverted worship can be seen from the record in 2 Kings 17:24, 41. “They feared the Lord and served their graven images.” The Lord had warned Israel not to enter into relations with the surrounding peoples, because they had made the land unclean, from one end to the other, with the filthiness of their abominations. Ezra 9:11, 12. Zerubbabel and the rest of the fathers of Israel acted on this instruction and refused to allow the people of the land to co-operate with them. Then these showed their true colours, by opposing the work all they could, hiring counsellors at the Persian court to frustrate the purpose of Israel, and writing complaints to the king. Satan’s most deadly devices often come in the guise of offers of friendly assistance. But if we hold fast to the Word of God, and make no move that He does not command, it will not be long before the cloven hoof of the tempter will show itself, as it did on this occasion. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 531.3}

It will be noticed that when Israel repulsed the offer of their would-be allies, they rested their position on the commission given to them by Cyrus. We might wonder that they did not take higher ground, but it was true that they were as much the servants of Cyrus as ever. They recognised this. Ezra in his prayer, recorded in the ninth chapter, said, “For we are bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia” (verse 9, R.V.), and Nehemiah confessed also, “Behold, we are servants this day, and as for the land that Thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold we are servants in it. And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom Thou hast set over us because of our sins also they have power over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress.” Nehemiah 9:36, 37. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 531.4}

In all this God’s infinite patience and long-suffering stand out. Since His people would not serve Him in prosperity, He goes with them into poverty and servitude. “In all their affliction He was afflicted.” Isaiah 63:9. He “delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the adversary’s hand.” Psalm 78:61. He desired to have a throne among a kingdom of priests and an holy nation, but He had to be content with an enslaved, backsliding and despised people. Yet, for all this, He did not forsake them. No matter how low we fall, we may know that God has not cast us off, and that even in the depths of sin and misery, He is able to make known the exceeding greatness of His power toward those who believe. So let no one think that God cannot do a great work for such as him for He has chosen to hamper Himself with every possible phase of human weakness in order that He may display to men how strong He is to save. The base and despised are His elect. 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 531.5}

There is one most important feature about this period of Bible history with which every Christian should be acquainted. The time of “the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,” marks the commencement of a prophetic period, revealed to Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27), which gives the time of Christ’s first advent. Seventy weeks are mentioned, divided into three portions,-seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. In prophecy, a day stands for a year, so that the full term here brought view is one of 490 years. Now it is important to fix the date of the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, for from this point the years must be reckoned. Without, going into details, it is clear that the command was not fully given until the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (See Ezra 7), which was B.C. 457. The Scripture (Ezra 6:14) shows that the decree of Artaxerxes must be included in the commandment. Therefore in B.C. 457, the 490 years began. In seven weeks, or 49 years, the city of Jerusalem was rebuilt. Another sixty-two weeks equal 434 days, or 434 years, and Messiah appeared on the same in A.D. 27. In the midst of the last week, after three and a half year’s ministry, He was cut off, but not for Himself, and in another three and a half years, the period closed with the stoning of Stephen and the preaching or the Gospel in every direction. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 531.6}

We saw, in the last lesson, that the restoration of the temple under Cyrus was but the beginning of a great work which Christ was to do for His holy temple, the church. To Daniel was revealed the time when Christ would come “to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.” Daniel 9:24. In a previous vision he had seen how long the sanctuary of God should be defiled and trodden under foot. It was to be for 2,300 days, or years. Daniel 8:14. Both of the periods we have mentioned refer to the same subject, and both begin at the same time, B.C. 457. The 2,300 years, therefore, ended in 1844. Then began the work of the cleansing of the sanctuary. What took place in 1844? Great light began to shine into the hearts of many at that time from the prophetic Word, and many rejoiced in the discovery that the coming of the Lord was nigh. They saw the importance of being sanctified through the truth, and living by every word of God. At this very time, the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14, which are to be proclaimed just before the second coming of Christ (Revelation 14:7-16), began to be studied and understood, and one of those declare, that Babylon is fallen, and all must come out of her. As we saw last week, these who come out of Babylon must be observers of God’s Sabbath, and in that very year of 1844, light came on the Sabbath truth, and many began the observance of the seventh day. From that time to this, the Word of God has been opening more and more, and its purifying power has been working on men’s hearts, to make them meet temples for the spirit of God, cleansing the sanctuary. It is true that men have been slow of heart to believe, but because God has waited to be gracious for so many years, let no reader conclude that it was a mistake to believe that the end of all things is at hand. Let him rather “account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation,” and see that he cause no delay himself by refusing to walk in the light that comes to him. Meantime, the message of the everlasting Gospel with its final appeal to men, is encircling the earth, and it will not be long before the Israel of God will be gathered from all places where they have been driven. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.1}

Remember that when the Jews left Babylon in the days of Cyrus, they were a feeble and despised people, yet the arm of their God was not shortened, and although they were confronted with hardship and contempt, yet their lot was more to be desired than that of any people on the earth. So now, although the wealthy and the learned turn away from God’s call to come out of Babylon, rest in His power, and be sanctified through His truth, so that only the humble and despised are connected with the message, it will be better to share the reproach of Christ than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. “Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.2}

**“The Gospel of Isaiah. The Comfort of the Gospel” *The Present Truth* 15, 34.**

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Isaiah 40:1, 2: “Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received at the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.3}

1 John 2:1, 2, R.V., margin: “My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have a Comforter with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.4}

John 14:16-18: “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.5}

John 14:26: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.6}

John 16:7, 8: “It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of Judgment.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.7}

2 Corinthians 1:3-5: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, even so our comfort also aboundeth through Christ.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.8}

**WARFARE ENDED**

John 16:33: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.9}

Ephesians 6:11-13: “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.10}

Hebrews 2:14: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 532.11}

Colossians 2:15, margin: “And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.1}

1 Peter 4:1: “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.2}

John 14:27: “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.3}

1 John 5:4, R.V.: “Whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.4}

**DOUBLE FOR SIN**

Hebrews 1:3: “God ... hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son... who... when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.5}

Romans 5:20: “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.6}

John 1:16: “And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.7}

Isaiah 55:7, margin: “Our God... will multiply to pardon.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.8}

**SPEAKING TO THE HEART**

Recall the marginal rendering of the second verse, as given in the study last week, which is literal: “Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem.” When God speaks words of comfort to His people He speaks to the heart. A great many people have an abundance of words at their command, which they can pour into the ears of the afflicted, but which do not really comfort, although they may all be true, and very appropriate to the occasion. Only those who have shared the same experience as the sufferer can speak to the heart; and they may do this without many words. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.9}

**THE LORD’S PEOPLE**

Doubtless some one will say, “But I am not one of the Lord’s people, and therefore His words of comfort are not addressed to me.” Do not allow the devil to cheat you out of your comfort in that way. It may be that you have not acknowledged the Lord, but He has never cast you off; He claims you as His own. The prodigal son is a son nevertheless, no matter how far away he has wandered. The whole of the book of Isaiah shows that it is not merely the good people whom God claims as His own. Read the first chapter, and that alone is sufficient to show that the comfort here offered is for those who are “laden with iniquity.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.10}

**COMFORT FOR ALL**

“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.” Matthew 5:4. There is no exception. Christ does not specify a certain class, and say that they that mourn in a certain way, or for certain things, shall be comforted. His comfort is for all that mourn. Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and sent “to comfort all that mourn.” Isaiah 61:1, 2. Doubtless the words from the talk on the mount are generally applied to those who mourn departed friends. Well, they apply there, but they go deeper. Death and pain are but the consequence of sin. It is sin that has caused all the sorrow and mourning in the earth. Therefore the Lord sends comfort to all who mourn because of sin, that is, to all whom sin has in any way caused to mourn. His comfort is as boundless as His life and His love. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.11}

**WHO IS THE COMFORTER?**

God is the “God of all comfort,” and “the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.” John 1:18. So Christ is the Comforter which we have with the Father. Note the close connection of the statement that He is the Comforter with the one that “He is the propitiation for our sins,” and for those of the whole world. It is the comfort of pardon, and freedom from the bondage of sin, that He gives. He comforts us by giving us Himself. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.12}

The Holy Spirit is Christ’s Representative. He is Christ present in the flesh of all men, and not simply in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, He comes in the name of Christ; not merely taking His name, but revealing the living Christ. Therefore He is another Comforter. His comfort is the comfort of Christ. “The comfort of the Holy Ghost” has the effect to multiply believers. Acts 9:31. This is because the Holy Ghost teaches all things that pertain to Christ. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.13}

**THE COMFORT OF REPROOF**

Comfort does not always consist merely of smooth words. The surgeon has sometimes to use a knife, and for a time add to the pain, before he can give a sufferer complete relief. So when the Holy Ghost comes to us, He reproves us of sin the first thing. He comes with conviction. In this way He often causes pain where there was before only numbness and insensibility. Shall we complain of this? {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.14}

Shall we say that we do not wish any such comfort? By no means. Is it not a good thing to rouse the man who is fast becoming insensible through cold? When a man is freezing to death he falls into a condition of insensibility to the cold. He feels as though he were falling into a delicious sleep. But it is the sleep of death. When the rescuer finds him, and begins to restore him to life, he experiences great pain. It may be that he will wildly say that it would have been far better to leave him in his former painless condition; but when he comes to himself, and understand what has been done, he will for ever thank the one who brought him to life at the cost of much suffering. Just as much comfort as there is in life, so much comfort was the rescuer giving the frozen man when he was causing him the pain of experiencing his condition. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.15}

Let us never forget, therefore, that the Holy Spirit is always the Comforter. In convicting of sin, He is imparting comfort. If the way of life leads by the cross, then there is just as much comfort in the cross as there is in the life that is gained by it. We must never think that God is angry with us because He makes us know how greatly we have sinned. He is not doing it to taunt us, but to comfort us. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.16}

**CONVICTION NOT CONDEMNATION**

Remember that conviction does not mean condemnation. This is true even in an earthly court. A man may stand convicted of a crime, and still not be under sentence. But this is but a feeble illustration; for we are all condemned already. We are “born under the law.” Therefore the conviction of the sin-the bringing home to our consciences the fact that we are sinners-does not make matters any worse than they were. That conviction is but the first and the necessary step towards our freedom from the sin; for we must know and acknowledge the sin before we will accept the remedy for it. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.17}

**CONVICTED BY THE REVELATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

It is by the revelation of the righteousness of God, that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:20. But the law is not sin; on the contrary, it is “holy, and just, and good.” Romans 7:7, 12. No man could ever become convicted of sin by looking at sin. It is by looking at the righteousness of God that we may become conscious of the fact that we are sinners. He who knows nothing of any better state than the one he is in, never desires anything better. Dissatisfaction with one’s condition comes only with the knowledge of something better. God produces a feeling of dissatisfaction with our sinful condition, by revealing to us His own perfect righteousness. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 533.18}

**NO CONDEMNATION FROM GOD**

This is a most wonderful and blessed thing. That which causes the conviction is that which saves. Therefore we need not be condemned at all. Neither need we go a long time mourning under conviction of sins. If we will but grasp God’s way of working, we shall in the very moment of conviction find the comfort of pardon. The righteousness that is revealed for the purpose of taking away the sin, is that which makes it known to us; therefore if we will but believe God’s word our suffering for sin may be but as the lightning’s flash; the moment of the revelation of sin may be its departure. To be sure the Spirit abides with us as the continual reprover of sin; but since He does this by the revelation of the righteousness of God, we may be in a state of continual justification, although continually conscious of the fact that we are sinners. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1. “It is God that justifieth. Who is he that comdemneth?” Romans 8:33, 34. Every soul that is condemned is self-condemned; and even wherein our heart condemns us, we may have confidence, and may assure our hearts before Him, because God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things, and by His knowledge He justifies. 1 John 3:19-21, R.V.; Isaiah 53:11. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.1}

“Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience.” Romans 5:3, 4. Patience means suffering, endurance. No man has patience unless he has something to suffer, for without suffering there is no need of patience. The word is from the Latin word that means, to bear, to suffer. Therefore the possession of patience necessarily imposes suffering. It is not suffering that makes people impatient; it is the lack of faith that does that; suffering works patience, when our faith in Christ makes us suffer with Him. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.2}

**THE OBJECT OF COMFORT**

Patience works experience. If we wish experience, we must not shun suffering, nor refuse to bear burdens. No matter how great the tribulation, God has comfort enough to enable us to endure it. He comforts us in all our affliction and tribulation. Do not forget this; His comfort is inexhaustible. “My grace is sufficient for thee.” And why does He comfort us?-In order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any sort of tribulation with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. We are to accept God’s comfort, and pass it along. God thus makes us sharers in His own work. The Holy Spirit takes us into co-partnership, as it were. He makes us comforters. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.3}

**REJECTING COMFORT**

Nobody can give to another that which he himself does not possess. We cannot comfort another unless we have been comforted. And if we never have any tribulation, then we have no need of comfort. There are burdens and tribulations enough in this world for everybody, and we do not need to seek them; but the fault with us is that we often refuse to bear those that naturally and legitimately fall to us; and thus we refuse the comfort that God would bestow upon us. But when we reject the comfort of the Holy Ghost, we reject the possibility of comforting others. Thus we see that by refusing to bear burdens, and by refusing to face tribulation, we are simply refusing to be fitted for the work of helping those who are in trouble. What would be thought of a man who should see people in great distress, perishing before his eyes, and should have the means wherewith to help them, but should turn away, saying, “It is none of my business; I don’t care; I shall not lift a finger to help them?” We can scarcely conceive of so heartless a man; and yet that is what we virtually say whenever we refuse to bear some burden that falls to our lot. We are saying, “I do not wish to be a helper of the poor and needy; I do not care to comfort those that mourn.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.4}

**INVINCIBLE ARMOUR**

God comforts us by telling us that our warfare is accomplished. We are enjoined to “fight the good fight of faith;” but we do so by laying hold on eternal life. 1 Timothy 6:12. We are to fight only in the armour of God, which is Christ Himself; and He has overcome the world. Note the various pieces of armour. We are to have our loins girt about with truth; and Christ is the truth. John 14:6. Next comes the breastplate of righteousness; and Christ is made unto us righteousness. 1 Corinthians 1:30. Our feet are to be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; and Christ is our peace. Ephesians 2:14. Most important of all is the shield of faith. Now “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;” and Christ is the Word. It is by the faith of Christ that we are saved. Then we must have the helmet of salvation; and God in Christ is become our salvation. Isaiah 12:2. Jesus Christ is the Saviour. “And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” Christ is the Word. So we see that to put on the whole armour of God is but to put on Christ. That armour has been tested in the fiercest fight, and has been proved invincible. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.5}

We have to fight with principalities and powers and wicked spirits; but Christ has “spoiled principalities and powers,” and has led them openly in His triumphant procession. He triumphed over them in Himself. He is the Conqueror. He has won the victory. Therefore the foe with whom we wage our warfare is already defeated. What is it then but that our warfare is accomplished? We have but to share in the victory already gained. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.6}

We are promised tribulation in this world, but in the midst of it we may be of good cheer. What we have already learned as to the use of tribulation should be enough to make us cheerful; but here we have additional reason: “I have overcome the world.” We are in danger of forgetting that all that Jesus did and suffered was for us. He did not need to come to this earth on His own account. It was our sins that He bore, our battle that He fought. Therefore the victory that hath overcome the world is the faith that lays hold of Jesus Christ. He is our peace, because He is our victory. “Thine, O Lord, is the greatest, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty.” 1 Chronicles 29:11. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.7}

Because Christ is our peace, in Him we have peace. But peace means a victory won. The fact that in Christ we have peace, shows that the warfare is accomplished. When we fight in the strength of Christ, the battle is won before it is begun. Read the twentieth chapter of 2 Chronicles. See how Israel gained the victory by faith. They began to sing a song of victory, and, lo, the battle was won. There is therefore no need of ever being defeated. Who would run from a defeated foe? Moreover, Christ has disarmed the principalities and powers; for that is the meaning of the statement that He “spoiled them.” In some versions it is so rendered. Surely there is no excuse for defeat, when we have invincible armour, and the foe has none at all. Is not this comfort enough for anybody in any tribulation whatsoever. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 534.8}

**OUR SINS CONQUERED**

Remember that it is through our own sinful disposition that the devil works, and therefore it is our own sins, our sinful nature, that we have to contend with; and it is this that has been overcome. Do you doubt this? Then tell me whose sins it was that Jesus bore. With whose sinful nature did He contend? Was it with His own? Did He have sins of His own, that He must overcome? “Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.” 1 John 3:5. All that He suffered was altogether for our sakes. It was our sins that He bore, our sinful nature that He took upon Himself. Therefore the victory that He gained was gained over our own personal sins, our own peculiar besetments. So whenever we are tempted by our own lusts, and enticed, we have only to remember that that particular sin has been overcome. What then?-Why, we have only to give thanks to God, who “giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57. What glorious comfort the Lord gives us! {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.1}

**THE DOUBLE**

“But what about the *double* that we are to receive?” How many people have been troubled over that, and in their trouble they have consulted doctors who did not heal their hurt even slightly. Some translators have even gone to the length of inserting the word “punishment” in the passage. It is not there, and nobody has any right to put it there, or to think of it as being there. Poor souls stand appalled at the thought that they must suffer punishment equal to double the amount of their sins, and of course they see no hope of escape. Strange comfort that! Can anybody extract any comfort from the thought that they are to receive double punishment for their sins? Certainly not. But this is a message of comfort, and therefore there can be in it no such thought. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.2}

Even if it were punishment that is referred to, bear in mind that the text does not say that we are to receive double. A good deal is lost by a too hasty reading of the Word. “She *hath received* of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” Suppose it is punishment; we are alive, and the subjects of the mercy of God; therefore if we have already received double punishment for our sins, we have abundant cause for rejoicing. Surely that is enough, and we are entitled to go free. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.3}

There is in this the key to the mystery. God has made to light on Him the iniquity of us all. “He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:4-6. Christ has suffered in His own body all that any unrepentant sinner will ever have to suffer; therefore there is no need that any sinner should suffer for sin. If we but accept the sacrifice of Christ, that is, accept the person of Christ in our own lives, we are freed from all the consequences of sin. We are “dead to the law by the body of Christ.” We are counted as having already received our punishment, and therefore are free. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.4}

**MULTIPLIED PARDON**

Thus it is that in Christ grace and peace are multiplied to us. And it is the grace of God that bringeth salvation; therefore we have received of the Lord’s hand double salvation. Grace abounds over all sin. God is not niggardly. He gives “good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.” He has enough, and to spare, and of His fulness have all we received. Let us then accept it, and rejoice in the Lord. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.5}

That this is not in the least a straining of the text, is provided by the text itself. “Her iniquity is pardoned.” Of whom is this spoken? Of a people “laden with iniquity.” Has God already pardoned my sins? Certain He has; He says so; can you not believe Him? You never heard of such a thing? Well, then hear it now, and rejoice as you never did before. Let me recall to your mind something that you surely have heard at some time in your life. It has come into your own experience. You have, wilfully or otherwise, committed a wrong against somebody. Afterwards you have gone and confessed it, begging pardon, and have been stopped before you could finish your confession, with the words, “Don’t mention it; it was forgiven long ago.” Perhaps you have yourself used just such language, and have spoken from the fulness of your heart. If you have, then you know the free pardon of God, for it was only His love in your heart that could have made you do so. Can you not admit that God is better than any man, even though that man be a saint? If a man can refuse to hold a grudge, cannot God do the same? Is it so strange a thing that the God who is love should forgive our sins even before we ask forgiveness, and should be longing for us to come and accept the reconciliation? He took all our sins on Himself, and in giving His life for us, He made a purging of sins. Christ “His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.” 1 Peter 2:24. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” 2 Corinthians 2:14. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.6}

*“Christ hath for sin atonement made;
What a wonderful Saviour!
We are redeemed!-the price is paid;
What a wonderful Saviour! {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.7}*

*“He gives me overcoming power;
What a wonderful Saviour!
And triumph in each trying hour;
What a wonderful Saviour!” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 535.8}*

**“Little Folks. The Power of God” *The Present Truth* 15, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

A little while ago we told you something about the power of steam, and showed you what this power really is, the power of God’s own life, for “there is no power but of God.” Steam is water in another form, into which it is changed by heat which the sun brings to the earth. So you will see whose is the power; it all belongs to God, who is “the Fountain of living waters,” and “the Light of the world.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.1}

I hope you will remember, too, what we have told you about the laws which are working in all created things, being the laws of God’s own life, of which they are all but different forms, and then you will learn from them precious lessons of the power of God to fulfil His own will in all the things that He has made . When there is nothing in the way of their fulfilment, these laws bring life and blessing. But when there are obstacles and hindrances in the way, the purpose of God is carried out just the same, only, it brings destruction and death to everything that would hinder it. So “that which is ordained to life, is found to be unto death.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.2}

Sometimes we are reminded of the awful power of God which is in the water, by hearing of some accident which has been caused by something which has stood in the way of the carrying out of His laws which are in it. How often in the winter we hear of burst water pipes and water jugs; and even solid stones and rocks will split open in the frosty weather. Do you know why this is? {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.3}

It is because the water expands as it freezes, and the jugs, or whatever holds the water, is burst open to make room for the increasing volume. When the moisture that is in the rocks and stones freezes and expands, even the rock is shattered. The water is the life,-the visible Word of God, and He says, “Is not My Word like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.4}

You have sometimes heard of a boiler explosion, or perhaps other accidents caused by the expansion of steam when there has been no outlet for it. Nothing can then withstand its terrible force; it bursts whatever would confine it. Boiling water, if there is an opening, expands upward and runs over, as you have often seen it, and the steam escapes into the air. But if it has no way of escape, it makes a way for itself by bursting open and destroying whatever is in the way of its fulfilling the law which is in it. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.5}

Did you know that earthquakes and volcanoe eruptions are also caused by the power of steam? (Read Mr. Kingsley’s description of this in the article following this one, and perhaps next week we will tell you more about it). These things are becoming more and more frequent as the earth “waxes old,” and Jesus has told us that they are one of the signs of His coming “to restore all things,” to “make all thing new” again. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.6}

This is to be a warning to the people to prepare for His coming, and let His power working in them make them “new creatures,” and take away from them everything that is not in harmony with His law of life, instead of destroying them at His coming. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.7}

“When the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make Thy name known to Thine adversaries, that the natioms may tremble at Thy presence.” “He putteth forth His hand upon the flinty rock, He overturneth the mountains by their roots.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.8}

But these things should not make afraid, but lead us to rejoice in the mighty power of our God, and of His life that is in us. If “God is our refuge and strength” and we are letting Him do His own will us, we shall be able, even in such terrible times, to say, “Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and thou the mountains be carried into the midst the sea.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.9}

An old woman who remained perfectly peaceful in the midst of an earthquake was asked why she was not afraid. She answered that she was “glad that she had a God who could *shake the earth*.” So to His children everything that shows the power of their Heavenly Father is a cause of rejoicing and not of fear. They know how safe they are in His keeping, and how strong He is to “perform all things for them.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.10}

There is power in His life in us to overcome and remove every obstacle that would hinder Him from doing His own will in us. So let us yield ourselves to Him in loving trust, knowing that He is able to “make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which well-pleasing in His sight.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.11}

*“Let mountains from their seats be hurled
Down to the deep, and buried there,
Convulsions shake the solid world,
Our faith shall never yield to fear. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.12}*

*“Loud may the troubled ocean roar;
In sacred peace our souls abide;
While every nation, every shore,
Trembles, and dreads the swelling tide.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 538.13}*

**“Health and Temperance. Something About Drinking” *The Present Truth* 15, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

The matter of eating and drinking is always an important one, since it is by eating and drinking that we live, and those acts must be repeated every day; but in the hot weather of summer it is necessary to give more attention to our drink than at any other time, because we now feel the need of drink more than at any other time. The principles, however, that should guide us at this time are always applicable. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.1}

**THE IMPORTANCE OF DRINKING**

Our bodies are composed largely of water. The blood, by means of which all the nourishment we receive is conveyed to the body, is seventy-nine per cent. water. If it were not liquid, so as to hold all the solid substances of our food in solution, the extremities of the body would be deprived of nourishment, and would starve. Our vital organs, as the heart and lungs and brain, are encased in water, and depend on it for free movement. Our muscles have a large portion of water in their composition; if they were to become dried, they would be utterly useless; we should be palsied; and so it is with all the organs of the body. Even the bones have a portion of water in their composition, so that fully two-thirds of the entire body is water. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.2}

Evaporation is continually taking place from the body. There is always in health insensible perspiration, and moisture is given off with every breath. In order, therefore, for the body to be kept in a normal condition, water must be taken in every day. A portion, of course, is taken in with our food, even though it is dry, but not sufficient to make up for the lose, and we must therefore drink. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.3}

**WHAT SHALL WE DRINK?**

Water is the universal solvent; it is the cleansing fluid. It not only serves to clean our clothing and houses, and to cleanse the outside of our bodies, but it also removes the impurities from the interior; and it is water that God has given for the drink of all living creatures. Men have adopted many other drinks, but whatever fluid it be, water is the basis of it, and is the portion from which we receive the benefit. Only man has added to the original drink which God gave; beasts are content to drink water, refusing all other drink, and they are strongest and healthiest. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.4}

If alcoholic liquors be taken into the system, they tend to increase thirst, instead of to diminish it. Alcohol extracts water, so that in drinking it men make the conditions of life more difficult. The various organs become dried, so that every vital function is carried on at a disadvantage. Beer, therefore, is not an improvement upon water, but a degeneration of it. it is not food, and it is a very poor drink, not really satisfying the need of the body, but actually increasing it. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.5}

Even so it is with tea and coffee. It is true that the water which is the basis of these drinks, does good, in that it supplies fluid to the body, but this good is to a great extent counteracted by the active poisons which are conveyed throughout the system at the same time. No one who has any respect for his stomach will dose it with these poisons, which hinder digestion, and destroy the nerves. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.6}

The only thing that may properly be added to the water as it comes from the heaven and the earth, is the fresh, natural juice of fruits, lemons, grapes or any other kind. Fruit is one of the means God has provided for conveying to us both food and drink. “The blood of the grape,” “the fruit of the vine,” is the “wine that maketh glad the heart of man.” It is the only wine that gives real gladness, in that there are no sorrowful after effects. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.7}

**WHEN TO DRINK**

If people drank only at the right time, there would be far less drinking of substances that are injurious; for it is a fact that the greater portion of the tea, coffee, chocolate, etc., which ought never to be drunk, are taken at meal time, when one ought not to drink anything. If it we not for the “table beer” and wine, a great deal less of those harmful beverages would be swallowed. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.8}

Drinking at meals is injurious in that leads one to eat more than is really needed for satisfying hunger, and it dilutes the digestive fluids, so that the result is indigestion. No one knows better than the writer, how difficult it is to eat dry food when the habit of drinking at meals has become established; but a little perseverance, together with the adoption of proper diet, will make it a matter of enjoyment; and the gain in strength of body and clearness of mind will amply repay the preliminary self-denial. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.9}

If people would take pains to satisfy their thirst from half an hour to an hour before eating, they would not care to drink when they come to the table; and if at table they eat proper food, masticating slowly and thoroughly, they will not feel the need of drinking immediately at the close. Those who have not tried this do not know the real satisfaction there is in eating and drinking,-a satisfaction the great recommendation of which is that continues without interruption from one meal to the next. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.10}

Even though we may feel somewhat thirsty when the meal begins, if we slowly eat a little dry food we shall soon find this thirst quite disappear; and if there should still be a slight thirst at the close of the meal, if it be resisted, the process of digestion, which will be accelerated by the refraining from drink, will remove it. Thus after two or three hours, where one is in ordinary health, water may be drunk freely. One may also drink freely at night and this will well replace the late supper which so many imagine that they need. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.11}

**HOW TO DRINK**

This is an important matter in hot weather, especially if one is engaged in exercise that increases the heat of the body. Do not, when hot and thirsty, swallow a glassful of water at a drought. Exercise a little self-control, and wait a bit before drinking. Take the mouth full of water hold it for a moment, and then spit it out. Do this several times, letting it run down the throat as far as possible without swallowing it, until mouth and throat are cooled off. This will materially assuage the thirst. Then little sips of water may be swallowed until the thirst is wholly quenched. By so doing there will be no danger of injury. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 541.12}

It should also be stated that much unnatural thirst may be avoided by keeping the teeth clean, and the mouth well washed. We ought to drink all the water that the system requires, but we must guard against artificial thirst. All the drinking that is done to satisfy artificial thirst, is an injury, and not a benefit. So the mouth should be kept free from any portions of food that by fermenting, will produce inflammation. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.1}

These are some of the things which, if heeded, will add materially to one’s welfare. If there be any who think that this matter is out of place in a Gospel journal, let them read the inspired words: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 2. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.2}

**“Jottings” *The Present Truth* 15, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Anthrax has reappeared at Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, in a virulent form, and the cattle owners are fearing serious results. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.3}

-In Louisiana, a mob recently caught a negro supposed to be guilty of a crime, and without investigating, at once lynched him. It was afterwards found that their victim was the wrong man. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.4}

-According to the report of the Prison Commissioners just issued, there has been a marked increase in crime and committals to prison in both Wales and England since the last report was rendered. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.5}

-An unknown man, who escaped, shot Ms. Labori, one of Dreyfus’s counsel, in the back, as he was on his way to the court-martial, August 10. The evident plan was to secure important documents which the counsel had in his possession. The shot was not fatal. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.6}

-The Pope of Rome claims the honour of inducing the Czar of Russia to call the late Peace Conference, yet through the influence of the Italian Government, no papal delegation is present at the Congress. Now Cardinal Rampolla, the Papal Secretary of State, has sent out a note in the name of the Pope, denouncing the attitude of the Italian Government in the matter, and attributing the failure of the Conference to accomplish what it was hoped it would, to the fact that no delegate of the Papacy was present. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.7}

-The General Post Office Department of the United States will ask the next session of Congress for an appropriation for the use of automobiles in collecting the mails at all first-class post-offices. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.8}

-The plague has appeared in Europe. There have been twenty-six cases and eleven deaths at Oporto, Portugal. Other countries are taking precautions against goods and passengers from the infected country. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.9}

-An American tender has been accepted by the Glasgow Corporation for driving power for their electric tramway plant. This is caused much comment in Glasgow, the centre of an immense engineering industry. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.10}

-The first day all of this year’s American cotton crop has been sold by auction at many towns in the States, bringing as high as ?400 in some places. The proceeds of every sale have been given to the sufferers from the Texas floods. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.11}

-The Report of the Government Laboratory shows that there have been thirty-six prosecutions against the sellers of “temperance drinks” for mixing them with an excess of proof spirit. People who wish to be temperant had better leave all such uncertain compounds alone. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.12}

-Greenland has only one newspaper. It is owned and edited by a man who at first used a little more than rough illustrations. Gradually he taught his subscribers to read, first words then sentences. After the paper is printed, he dons his snowshoes and goes out over the ice fields to distribute it to his subscribers. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.13}

-As an instance of what litigation costs, in 1851 a money lender in San Francisco foreclosed a mortgage on a property for ?320. The case was contested by the owner, and has been in the courts ever since until a few days ago, when it was settled and judgment rendered to the defendant for ?4,250,000, including interest and costs. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.14}

-The plague continues to rage in Poona, and there is little likelihood of its being checked for some time to come. The natives are fleeing from the town. The victims of the scourge are cremated outside the city, but this work is only partially done, and jackals and vultures are devouring the partially burnt bodies. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.15}

-The action of the Council of American Catholic bishops, recently held in Rome, has been ratified by the Pope, decreeing that all the decisions of the Council of Trent and the subsequent decrees of the Pope are valid in America. This is regarded as a mortal blow to the aspirations of those who desired a Catholicism in conformity with the social conditions of the New World. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.16}

-During the first week of this month a hurricane passed over portions of the West Indies with terrible results. Thousands of lives were lost, whole towns blotted out of existence and the crops and live stock over large areas were destroyed. The worst havoc occurred in the Dominican Republic. Puerto Rico was devastated, and several hundred were drowned. In Ponce and surrounding districts the loss of life is estimated to be nearly 2,000. This calamity, following the peri of commercial depression, has produced a terrific state of distress, and appeals are ever were being made for help. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.17}

-The third Zionist Congress has been held in Basle. Dr. Herzi stated that the movement was progressing, they had 1,000 subscribers and the executive were in possession of ?2,000,000 sterling. All that was needed was Turkey’s permission of the Jewish colonists to settle in Palestine. It might be thought that the history of the Jew would have cured them of any tendency to put their trust in princes. Besides, why should any of Abraham’s descendants look for their inheritance in a country where he counted himself a pilgrim and a stranger. He looked for a better country, that is an heavenly, and only those who are Christ’s are Abraham’s seed. Galatians 3:27. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 542.18}

**“Back Page” *The Present Truth* 15, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

At one time when Jesus stood by the multitude, He lifted up His voice and said, “Father, glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said it thundered.” John 3:28, 29. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.1}

That was the voice of God, and was perfectly intelligible to Jesus, but to the others it sounded like thunder. Why? Simply because they did not understand the voice of God; they were not sufficiently acquainted with Him to recognise His voice, and so to them it was only a loud noise. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.2}

The Lord is now speaking in the ears of the people a message of salvation. “Turn ye from your evil ways”-“why will ye die?” It is the personal word of God Himself to every waiting soul, “Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation.” Plain and definite as that message is, and easy to be understood, yet if it is refused to-day, it becomes as thunder to-morrow, and so is meaningless. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.3}

As with the hearing, so with the sight. There is no need that anyone walk in darkness, for Jesus is “the light of men”-“the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” But the reason why so much darkness exists is because when that light is not received, the eyes become blinded to it, and the power to see is lost. So Jesus says: “Yet a little while is the light with you. *Walk* while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” And “if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.4}

God has “dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3), and “unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” Ephesians 4:7. The power by which Jesus overcame is given to every one. Out part is to *keep the faith*, as Paul did. 2 Timothy 4:7. Christ alone is righteous; He has overcome the world, and He alone has power to overcome it. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of God, and if he dwells in our hearts by faith we shall be filled with the same fullness. Ephesians 3:17-19. He has kept the law to perfection, for it was in His heart; by His faith,-by *living* faith, that is, the faith that comes by His life in us,-can we be made and kept righteous-obedient to God’s holy law. “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.5}

The law of God convicts us of sin, and condemns us to death. But instead of waiting to be driven to execution, we willingly and gladly suffer death with Christ, who gave Himself willingly for us, and who for our sakes “was reckoned among the transgressors.” It is in Christ that we receive the penalty of the law-death. So long as the “old man,” “the body of sin,” that transgressed the law, and which the law condemned to death remains destroyed, and a “new man” lives in his stead, the law has nothing against us, any more than it has against Christ. We are to remain dead to sin, but alive unto God. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.6}

“By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:20. The law which condemns also kills. The law condemns all, and therefore it will kill all; but each one has his choice as to how he will die. He may either die now willingly, or have his life taken from him at the last day. If in Christ we willingly allow the law to take our life now,-yielding it up even as Christ did,-then so long as we remain in Christ we are considered dead by the law, doing nothing to offend it; and at the last day it will have no occasion to take our life. It cannot do it then, for there will be no cause of death in us. “In those days and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve.” Jeremiah 50:20. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.7}

Christ is “the Holy and Righteous One.” Acts 3:14, R.V. “He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him is no sin.” 1 John 3:5. Therefore it is impossible that He should impart any sin to anybody. In the stream of life that flows from the heart of Christ, there is no trace of impurity. It is impossible that he should be the minister of sin, that is, that He should minister sin to anyone. If in any persons who seek righteousness through Christ, or who have actually found it, there appears any sin, it is only because they have dammed up the stream, and allowed it to become stagnant; they have not kept the channel open, so that the water of life could flow freely. The Fountain is pure, but the purest water becomes corrupt if it is confined after it has left its source. Keep the channel constantly open; let the stream of life from the slain Lamb in the midst of the throne flow through you, and cleansing from sin will be constant. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.8}

It is through much tribulation that we enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many put the kingdom of heaven entirely in the future, and think that the Scripture means that only those who suffer persecution from wicked men or who suffer severe affliction, can get to heaven. With this thought in mind, they often wonder how it can be that so many godly people have led such quiet, peaceful, uneventful lives. The erroneous thought leads many to seek persecution, in order to make sure of reaching heaven. That, of course, is pure heathenism, of the same class as that which leads the Hindu devotes to try to throw himself before the car of juggernaut. {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.9}

The fact is that “the kingdom of God is at hand.” It is now. It is “within you.” It is a hidden treasure waiting for discovery. We enter into the kingdom of God when we enter into perfect fellowship with God, sitting with Christ on His throne. It is only through tribulation that this is attained. The Psalmist says, “Before I was afflicted, I went astray.” Deep sorrow,-the very deepest, so deep that nobody but the one who has it is conscious of it,-is necessary in order to make us acquainted with the fulness of the joy of Christ. He suffered alone, and “as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. Therefore we glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” {PTUK August 24, 1899, p. 544.10}

**“The Mercy of the Lord” *The Present Truth* 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

“For Thy name’s sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.” Psalm 25:11. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 545.1}

How different that is from the way persons uninstructed by the Holy Spirit would come to the Lord. Ordinarily, when we are asking for mercy we minimise the offence as much as possible; plead great provocation and extenuating circumstances, and thus cover up for the moment the extent of the sin until it is passed over and forgiven. But in this prayer David makes no excuses-“Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 545.2}

No matter how much we know about the Lord, we need continually to be reminded of the basis of pardon, or we shall get discouraged, give up, and fall out of the way. The only thing, that keeps us in the way, is the one thing that starts us in the way. We, can never get discouraged so long as we are holding on to that which started us, and the more we get of that the stronger we are. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 545.3}

When we sin, the only way of escape is to be lifted out by the Lord, and have the sin forgiven and taken away. Jesus can do that, and the way He does it is by putting righteousness in the place of sin-Christ putting Himself there, taking the sin on Himself, and swallowing it up. Although He had the sin of the world upon Him, no one ever saw anything but righteousness. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 545.4}

It is as though all the refuse matter and corruption were cast into a pit, yet the pit swallows up everything, hides it away, disinfects it, so that no miasma, foul odours, or disease come from it. So with Christ. All the disease and sin and filth of the world were put upon Him, yet nobody ever saw it there. There is the marvel, for with men “the works of the flesh are manifest;” they are visible in the very flesh of men, women, and children as you pass them on the street, even though not a word be uttered. Christ puts Himself in our lives, and that takes the sin away. It is buried. And the magnitude of the sin makes no difference. He can pardon a great offence as well as a small one. To limit the Lord when He says He pardons, is to say that He will pardon up to a certain point, and then will go no further. This would make Him a finite being. That was the sin of ancient Israel-“they limited the Holy One of lsrael.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 545.5}

Look at it in another way. The true physician is the one who can give relief in the most critical cases. It is the cases of extremity that need help; but if the help fails when it is most needed, what is it good for? “If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.” The Lord never fails. So we can come to Him with this thought right before us-“Lord, my sin is great-greater than I can measure, therefore, I want pardon;” and because it is great; is the reason why the Lord pardons. It is our *great need* that commends us most to Him. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.1}

Again: If we were to follow an army as nurse, to help the wounded-extend our aid to all alike, friend or foe, after a battle,-it would be the most urgent cases that we would help first. Those who were but slightly wounded we would leave till the last. Or, if a house were on fire, or a flood coming, those who were in the greatest danger would appeal first to us for the help we could give. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.2}

It is just this that most recommends us to the Lord. In Isaiah, the first chapter, the Lord speaks of His people as a sinful nation, laden with iniquity, the whole head sick, the heart faint, from the sole of the foot, even to the crown of the head there is no soundness; but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores. This is no figure of speech, for at the very last, when men have filled up the measure of their iniquity, and there is no hope for them, the very next thing is that a “noisome and grievous sore” break out upon them. It is even so now, for sin will break out upon men who have rejected God. And even though the body may appear fair to look upon, yet when sin is there inside, to the Lord that body has within it a loathsome ulcer, and that is the condition, in God’s sight, of all mankind whom the blood of Christ has not cleansed. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.3}

In the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah we find another characteristic of this rebellious people brought out. In the first verse we read: “Ye take counsel, but not of Me; ye cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit.” And in the 9th verse and onward: “This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord. Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things; prophesy deceits. Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to come from before us.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.4}

Yet in the face of all that-to this people, unsound from head to foot, lying children, rejecting the Lord altogether, to them it is said: “And therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you.” What loving-kindness, what tender mercy! {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.5}

**“Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The Desire of All Nations. Haggai 2:1-9” *The Present Truth* 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

Two kings have reigned in Persia since the period of our last lesson, and one of them, Artaxerxes in response to complaints to assist those who were not allowed to assist in rebuilding the temple, has given orders that the work of restoration is stopped, “So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia.” In that year, Haggai and Zechariah began to prophesy unto Judah and engaged them to go on with the work of rebuilding the temple. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.6}

It is evident from the first chapter at Haggai that the people had become discouraged. They were saying that the time had not come for the Lord’s house to be built. Yet they were building goodly houses for themselves. It was just as true then as it is now that those who seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness will find all other necessary things added to them. The prophet called the people to consider their ways. He reminded them. “Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink, ye cIothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.” Haggai 1:5-11. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.7}

We may find in this lesson an explanation of much of the misfortune that attends the plans of men in these days. A lack of liberality toward the cause of God is no economy. “There is that withholdeth more than is meet but it tendeth to poverty.” “He that watereth shall be watered also himself.” Proverbs 11:24, 25. It is true that there were a great many very serious obstacles in the way of building the temple, but because of this the people were not justified in concluding that it was not yet time to build the Lord’s house. Faith is that which connects us with God. No one can come to Him who does not believe Him. Hence it is important that faith shall be able to endure testing and trial. Men would like to escape this experience and go right into heaven without a trial, but if they did, it would not be heaven very long. Israel desired to go straight from Egypt into the Promised Land, but till the influences of Egypt and the love for the ways were taken out of their hearts they would have turned Canaan itself into a copy of Egypt. In the building of the second temple, God was not so anxious to see the completion of an erection of wood and stone, as to see in the hearts of His people that preparation for a pure and spiritual worship which would make it possible for Him to bless them. The people had not arrived at this state, and it was necessary that they should be schooled and disciplined by the trying of their faith, that this being much more precious than gold that perisheth, or even the structure of a magnificent temple, might be found unto praise and honour and glory. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 546.8}

For this reason, they were tried, to see whether, in the face of difficulty and temptation, they would still seek first the kingdom of God, or make the food and raiment of chief account. That they did the latter, showed them lacking in the first principles of the service of God, but they were not for this rejected. They needed instruction, and prophets were sent to teach them the right way. The words spoken by these prophets are for us also, that we may not make the mistake of letting the service of God become secondary to anything else. Nothing is more foolish than for a man to weigh his chances of getting a living against the call to obey God. It is true now, as it was in Haggai’s day, that faith must be tested, but there is no question about the Word of God being sure. The only uncertain element is our confidence in that Word. When we believe it and obey it with all our heart, our welfare is assured, for it rests upon the security of promises which cannot be broken. We must learn now to trust God’s Word, even in the face of adverse circumstances, for the unbelieving and fearful never enter the city of God. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 547.1}

Even after the Jews had set to work on the temple, their hearts were discouraged when they remembered how far short it fell of approaching the splendour of Solomon’s temple. Some of the people had seen this before the captivity, and they despondingly compared these two. But this was a small matter. The Lord sent a message by Haggai to all the people of the land bidding them work and be of good courage. The most splendid temple that men could have built would have fallen far short of God’s grand purpose. This was that men themselves should be His temple. “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest?” Isaiah 66:1. Solomon had recognised how impossible it was to build a habitation meet for the God who had created all things. In his prayer of dedication he had said, “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded?” 1 Kings 8:27. God’s chosen dwelling place is not in temples made with hands. He Himself has constructed a temple, a living one, in which He may reveal His glory. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.” “The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17. We cannot make ourselves holy; God has done that already; but we can defile the temple of God by enthroning idols in the holy place where God has chosen to dwell. The sacredness of the human body can only be measured by the holiness of Him who dwells there. “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit.” Isaiah 57:15. But in this same verse, we read, “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.” Think how much is brought into God’s temple. There is the loftiness and height of God, as well as His eternity. So we read that we are to comprehend the length and depth and breadth and height of the love of Christ, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God. Ephesians 3:18, 19. God will infinitely enlarge the life that is submitted to Him, so that it shall be a fit temple for Himself in every respect. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 547.2}

This was the truth which God desired to teach Israel. So long as they got no farther than to build Him a temple of wood and stone, it was evidence that they could not see His purpose or enter into it. “The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.” Hebrews 9:8. The lesson will be learned when God’s people enter the New Jerusalem, for John says, “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” There is no shadow needed there of the good things to come, for the good things have came. Then we know even as also we are known. “The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them.” The relation between God and His people, in their perfect union, is typified by the relation of the bridegroom and the bride. These are one flesh, yet each can see the other as a separate person. In a perfect marriage there is perfect union so that both lives are merged in one, yet the happiness is wonderfully increased by reason of the separate existence of the loved one. Thus not only do the heart and will and judgment find enjoyment, but also the senses that convey impressions from the inner life. So, “as in a glass, darkly,” does the Lord instruct us how we may be temples for His indwelling, and yet see His face, and find in Him our temple, wherein we may dwell always, and go no more out. “At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.” John 14:20. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 547.3}

This was the truth which God spake to the Jews through Haggai, if they had had ears for it. “I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you.” God does not withdraw His Spirit from men, though they grieve it more, and resist its working. Psalm 139:7-10. He dwelt in Israel, and that fact made them an holy people unto the Lord their God. Deuteronomy 7:6. Now the Lord assures Judah that His Spirit remains among them still; therefore they are holy, if they will but acknowledge it. The same thing is true to-day. Men have lost the knowledge of God and think that to be saved, they must purify themselves. But “in returning and rest shall ye be saved.” It is true that God requires holiness, but how shall it be gained? God sanctifies every place where He dwells, and what men need to learn is what God does not cast off, but that He dwells in them still, and therefore they are holy. The holy place may be defiled, the sanctuary trodden underfoot, but He who dwells there can cleanse it, and He alone. We are called to rest in a work which has been completed from the foundation of the world (Hebrews 4:3); and to show our faith in God’s finished work, by resting on the seventh day, whereon God rested from all His works. The Sabbath is a sign between God and His people “that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them.” Ezekiel 20:12. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 547.4}

Because God has formed every man for His own dwelling place, and implanted in every soul desires that can only be satisfied by the fulness of God dwelling within, Christ is truly “the Desire of all nations.” Men are ever in a state of unrest, seeking variety for satisfaction in the things of this world, “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” but, as we have seen, man was made for “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity;” consequently nothing short of this gives lasting satisfaction. The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest; there is no peace for them; because they do not receive the one thing that brings peace and rest,-the fulness of God. Do we hunger and thirst after something we have never yet attained? It is the crying out of our heart and our flesh after God, like a thirsty land. Perhaps we have same ambition or longing, which, if we can only get it satisfied, will, we think, be all we desire. It is not so. Let no grasp longer after fleeting shadows, but take the substance that is freely offered, and which makes the receiver “satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord.” The highest stage of Christian life is to be “filled,” and by the infinite greatness of that which fills, we may learn the insatiable character of the desire which God has placed in men. It is folly to think of finding satisfaction in the broken cisterns of this world. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 547.5}

“I will fill this house with glory.” It was to this building, though much enlarged by Herod, that Christ came so many times in His earthly life. The Son of God, whose glory could not be contained by the heavens and the earth, filled the temple with His sacred presence. The mere adorning with silver and gold was nothing compared with this. “In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.” Christ, came to give peace to every restless, unsatisfied, longing heart. Malachi foretold that the Messiah, whom Israel desired, should suddenly come to His temple, but “who shall stand when He appeareth?” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 548.1}

Jesus Christ has come to the temple which was building I Haggai’s time, but that does not fulfil the prophecy in its completeness. “Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations.” The Lord will come to His temple, the men and women who are His dwelling-place, and fill them with glory. but how will it affect them? “Who may abide the day of His coming? for He is like a refiner’s fire.” Those who have defiled His sanctuary with their detestable things, will desire to be hidden from the wrath of the Lamb. His glory is to them a consuming fire; and they are “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.” 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. It is not that they did not obey His law. They “obey not the Gospel.” The Gospel declared that they were the holy temple of God, and made known to them His sanctifying rest in the Sabbath, but they would have none of it. God is no respecter of persons, and it is His life that has been revealed in all mankind. Those who have confessed that Christ has come in their flesh and have acknowledged Him in all their ways, when He appears in His glory, are made like Him, for they see Him as He is. 1 John 2:2. “He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe,” but the disobedient are unable to bear the revealing of His glory. Christ must fill all things, and it is for those whom He has chosen for His dwelling-place to decide whether He shall purify them form sin now, that they may be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; or whether they will forget that they are not their own, defile His temple, and be consumed when he gathers out of His kingdom “all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 548.2}

**“The Gospel of Isaiah. Preparing the Way of the Lord. Isaiah 40:3-5” *The Present Truth* 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

(Isaiah 40:3-5.)

*A voice crieth: In the wilderness prepare ye the
way of Jehovah!
Make straight in the desert a highway for
our God!
Every valley shall be exalted, and every moun-
tain and hill be brought low;
And the crooked shall become straight, and
the rough places a smooth plain;
And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed;
And all flesh shall see together the salvation
of our God;
For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.1}*

Psalm 119:1-3: “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.2}

Psalm 125:5: “As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace shall be upon Israel.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.3}

Psalm 103:7: “He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.4}

Psalm 25:9: “The meek will He guide in judgment; the meek will He teach His way.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.5}

Psalm 18:30: “As for God, His way is perfect.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.6}

Psalm 145:17: “The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.7}

John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto Him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.8}

Psalm 77:13: “Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God?” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.9}

1 Corinthians 3:16: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.10}

Luke 1:76-79: “And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.11}

Luke 1:16, 17: “Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the Spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the father to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.12}

Malachi 4:5, 6: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse,” or “utter destruction.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.13}

Psalm 85:13: “Righteousness shall go before Him; and shall make His footsteps a way to walk in.” Revised Version. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.14}

Psalm 19:7, 8: “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.15}

Let us not forget, in studying this lesson, that while all Scripture is always true, and the Gospel is always applicable, this prophecy of Isaiah has special application in these last days. This message is one to make ready a people prepared for the coming of the Lord in glory, to give reward to His servants, and to give every man according as his work shall be. Do not make the mistake of thinking that because it was written twenty-five hundred years ago, it does not specially concern us. The Word of the Lord is living, and never loses any of its force. Its exhortations are more emphatic “as we see the day approaching.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.16}

Remember also what we have learned concerning the message of John the Baptist. It reaches till the coming of the Lord in glory, and all who love the Lord and His coming are commissioned to proclaim it. John the Baptist therefore stood not as a single individual, having a work to do that ended with his death, but as the type of a great movement embracing tens of thousands of people, and reaching till the end of time. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.17}

The command to the voice is, “Prepare ye the way of Jehovah!” It is to prepare the way for the Lord’s coming. Well, what hinders His coming now? Why could He not have come at any time in the past? Simply because the people were not prepared for His coming. The condition of His professed followers hindered His advent. The way of the Lord is in the sanctuary, and His sanctuary is His people, therefore we see that the way of the Lord is prepared only by the preparation of His people,-by the cleansing of the sanctuary. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.18}

The words “straight” and “right” are really the same. The Latin word *rectus*, from which we derive our word “right,” as seen in the word “rectitude,” the meaning of which everybody knows, means literally, “straight,” as can be seen from the word “rectilinear.” A “right” line is a straight line, just as a “rectangle” is a right or straight angle. To make the way of the Lord straight is therefore to make it right. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.19}

But all the ways of the Lord are right; His way is perfect. Therefore there is nothing about the Lord that needs correcting. Everything with which He has to do is as good as it can be. But we have refused to allow the Lord to have His way, for “we have turned every one to his own way.” Isaiah 53:6. His rightful way is in us, but we have kept Him back by our unrighteousness. We have made our ways crooked. So the Lord sends His messengers to straighten us out-to make us right before Him, so that there may be nothing to hinder His complete possession of us. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.20}

God is light. The characteristic of light is that it proceeds in straight lines. So with God, who is “the Father of lights,” there “can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.” James 1:17, R.V. Consequently all in whom He has His way must be sincere, that is, clear and transparent, so that the beams of the Sun of righteousness may not be hindered in their course. The work of this Gospel message is to “give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.” “Ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light.” Ephesians 5:8. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.21}

“He made known His ways to Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel.” Ways and acts are the same. When we say of a person that we do not like his ways, we mean that we do not like his habits, his actions. So the way of the Lord is His manner of life. He made His ways or acts known to Moses and the children of Israel, in revealing to them His law. “Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments; and madest known unto them Thy holy Sabbath, and commanded them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses Thy servant.” Nehemiah 9:13, 14. The law of the Lord is His way, as we learn from Psalm 119:1-3. The way of the Lord is prepared, therefore, by putting His law into the hearts of the people. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.22}

When the Lord comes in the clouds of heaven, it will be with glory. “The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory.” Psalm 97:5, 6. Since God is light, and dwells in light, being clothed with light as a garment, it follows that wherever He goes the glory must be revealed. So we read that when the way of the Lord is prepared, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. This will be because that when His way is prepared He Himself will go in it. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.23}

The way of the Lord is in His sanctuary, and His sanctuary is His people. The idea prevails that the coming of the Lord is an arbitrary affair; that He will come when He is ready, regardless of the condition of people on this earth. That is a great mistake. The coming of the Lord is but the consummation, the crowning act, of a great work. It is the natural and inevitable result of what has preceded. Christ came to reveal God to men, so that they might know His will concerning them. It is God’s will that men shall be like Him, so as to be fit companions for Him, and to this end Christ was once manifested, to reveal God to men, in man; and the possibility of this was secured by His death. His coming to this earth was the emptying of Himself, really His death, so that it is only by the death of Christ that God can be manifest in the flesh. The whole work of the Gospel is to secure this revelation of God in man. It is the work that God began at the creation, when He made man in His own image; and to restore this image is the work of the Gospel. The “new man” is after God “created in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephesians 4:24. But the heavens must retain Christ “until the times of restoration of all things.” Acts 3:20, 21. His coming means the restoration of the earth; but this cannot be until the new man is made ready for it-until it has a ruler,-and so before the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven, He must be fully revealed in His people. The shining forth of the Lord from heaven is but the fulness of His revelation. “He shall come to be glorified in His saints.” 2 Thessalonians 1:10. He cannot come, therefore, until in the church the ways of God are seen as perfectly as they were in Jesus of Nazareth. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 549.24}

When the way is prepared, the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see it. This is because as soon as the way is prepared, the Lord goes in it, and wherever He goes the glory must be revealed. But His way is in His people, therefore His glory is to be seen in them. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” 2 Corinthians 4:6. Why has God shined in our hearts?-To give the light of the knowledge of His glory. To give the light of the knowledge of His glory to whom?-To others, of course; for no candle shines for the purpose of giving light to itself. God shines in our hearts in order that others may take knowledge of His glory. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16. Good works are the light, according to these words of Christ. So again we see that God prepares the way by putting His law in our hearts by His Spirit; “for the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light.” Proverbs 6:23. The preaching of the law of God as revealed in the life and character of Christ, must precede the coming of the Lord. When the last message shall have been completed, these words will be uttered: “Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 19:12. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 550.1}

“And all flesh shall see it together.” When the glory is revealed, it will be seen. That will be the testimony to the saving power of our God. In the inanimate things that God has made, His power and Divinity are seen. Romans 1:20. Although man has proved unfaithful, and has even imposed his evil traits upon the creation that was given into his care, God has not left Himself without witness. “The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.” Psalm 19:1. But that is not enough. Man, the highest creature of God, ought to give the most perfect testimony to His power and goodness, and this will be the case before the Lord comes. Not only must all the works of God praise Him, but His saints must bless Him. When the voice in the wilderness has completed its message, then will the work for which Christ ascended to heaven, namely, “that He might fill all things,” be accomplished, and He will come. Then all creatures, animate and inanimate, will unite in saying, “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.” Revelation 5:13. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 550.2}

**“Little Folks. The Blessed Hope” *The Present Truth* 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Where is the promise of His coming?” for “all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” This, dear children, is what will be said in the last days, the Apostle Peter tells us, by “scoffers” who do not believe the Word of the Lord that tells them of His coming, of which we talked a little last week. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.1}

From “the beginning of the creation,” from the days of Adam and Eve, God’s people have looked forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This has been their one great hope and comfort through all the ages. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.2}

Enoch, “the seventh from Adam,” prophesied of this time, saying “Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His holy ones.” Job who lived very early in this world’s history, spoke also of the game “blessed hope,” in these beautiful words:- {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.3}

“I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I me God.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.4}

He knew that although his body should go into the grave and crumble into dust, yet at the coming of Jesus, “the Resurrection and the Life,” he should awake from his long sleep to “see God.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.5}

In another beautiful passage he tells us what was to waken him in that glorious day for which he longed: “Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee.” Yes; at the voice of Jesus, even the dead awake, and answer to His call. He “calleth the things that *be not* as though *they were*,” and immediately *they are*. He calls *the dead*, and *they live*.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.6}

Perhaps you are thinking of how He showed His power to do this when He was on the earth,-how he stood at the grave of Lazarus, and cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” “And he that was dead came forth,” even though he was “bound hand and foot with grave clothes.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.7}

Oh, there is power in His Word of life, dear children, power that can overcome death and every obstacle, and cause all things to be just what He says. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.8}

Before this Jesus had told His disciples, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep;” and they answered, “Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.” They did not understand that his was the sleep of death,-a sleep from which Jesus alone could wake him. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.9}

Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, “Thy brother shall rise again,” and she answered, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus said: “I am the Resurrection and the Life.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.10}

It was just as easy for Jesus to call Lazarus forth then as it will be at “the last day,” in “the hour that is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.11}

The Apostle Paul tells us not to sorrow as those that are without hope, over “them that are asleep.” For “the Lord Himself shall descend form heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise.” And again he tells us that at the coming of the Lord, “the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.12}

Think how much, then, dear children, depends upon the coming of the Lord Jesus. Think of the thousands of His children still sleeping in the dust, waiting for His mighty voice to shake the earth, and rend the tombs, and form them again from “the dust of the ground,” out of what He made man in the beginning by the power of His Word. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.13}

As you, little ones, fall peacefully asleep at night, knowing that in the morning you will hear the voice of your mother calling you from your slumbers to the light and joy of a new day,-just so peacefully, and in the sure hope of a joyful awakening, did those holy men of old, of whom you love to read in your Bibles,-Abraham, Jacob, Samuel, David, Daniel,-lie down to rest when their appointed time came to “sleep with their fathers.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 554.14}

And of the “early Christians,” those who lived in the centuries just after the time when Jesus was on earth, we are told that “they were accustomed to bid their dying friends ‘Good night,’ so sure were they of their awakening in the Resurrection morning.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 555.1}

But what a long, long night, you will think; thousands of years for some of God’s children, and, still “all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation,” and “Where is the promise of His coming?” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 555.2}

Read the third chapter of the second Epistle of Peter, where you will find his answer to the “scoffers” who say these things, and we will perhaps talk it over together next week. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 555.3}

**“Jottings” *The Present Truth* 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

-There is great distress in large sections of Central India because of lack of rain. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.1}

-A great fire at Victor, Colorado, on the 21st instant, destroyed eight hundred buildings. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.2}

-The plague has broken out in Hong Kong, and twenty-three deaths occurred last week. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.3}

-The coast of North Carolina was recently visited by a hurricane. Sixty lives were lost and much damage to property done. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.4}

-A manufacturers’ trust to control the price and output of wall paper in England has just gone into operation, with ?3,000,000 capital. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.5}

-On the 20th instant there was a riot in Paris, in which 380 persons were more or less injured, and considerable damage done to property. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.6}

-Terrific gales and floods are reported from Santiago. A passenger train fell into the river when crossing a bridge, and fifty people were drowned. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.7}

-There are new cases of the plague at Oporto, and the city has been quarantined. There were 1,076 deaths from the plague at Poona during the past week. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.8}

-According to the official reports just issued, the number of lunatics in England and Wales has increased 105 per cent. since 1869, although the population has increased but 45 per cent. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.9}

-On the 19th instant there occurred at the Llest Colliery, in the Garw Valley, South Wales, a terrible explosion, by which nineteen lives were lost, and a number were seriously injured. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.10}

-A dispatch from Ponce (Porto Rico) states that as near as can be determined 2,500 victims of the late hurricane there have been buried. 1,000 persons were injured, and 2,000 are missing. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.11}

-Anti-Imperialism is so strong in America that a convention has been called to frame a policy for the next presidential campaign, making a declaration against territorial expansion its chief plank. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.12}

-Captain Welby, who recently made a journey of exploration through Abyssinia and regions to the southwest of the country, reports on his return, that he discovered a tribe of immense stature, most of the men being seven feet in height. They had long hair extending to their waists. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.13}

-Major Ronald Ross, head of the Malarial Mission, which left Liverpool a few weeks ago for Sierra Leone to investigate the cause of the malaria in that section, has sent back word that it has been discovered in a particular kind of mosquito which frequents the malarial swamps. The mosquito injects the germ into the human body with its sting. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.14}

-The strike of the street-car company’s employés in Cleveland has assumed the form of a general boycott. Not only are merchants and business men punished if they use the streetcars, but they are warned not to sell to any who do ride under threat of losing the trade of the union men. At New York 2,000 newsboys struck against selling papers because of some grievance. To win them over, one of the leading dailies made them a present of all the papers of a certain edition that they could sell. After the papers were handed to them, with one accord they tore them up and shredded the pieces in front of the office, declaring that to sell them would be a “violation of their principles.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 558.15}

**“Back Page” *The Present Truth* 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is not great learning and wisdom that gives a person knowledge of the Bible, but it is knowledge of God’s Word that gives wisdom and understanding. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.1}

The Lord makes everything so simple and this is one reason why men do not come to the knowledge of the truth and accept salvation,-it is so simple, and yet infinite. Men know that it must be a mighty thing, and so they think that it cannot be found in simplicity. Yet the least thing that God has made is mighty and shows forth His power. There is no simple thing that does not show the everlasting power and divinity of God just as much as the sun or the planets. In simplest things God reveals His infinite salvation. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.2}

The thing which supplies the most news for the columns of the daily papers, and which is a constant subject for editorial comment, is “the Dreyfus Affair.” The attention of all the world is directed toward this celebrated case, and many thoughtless and unjust statements have been made about the French people. Now it ought to be known that the French *people* have nothing to do with that piece of evident injustice. It is the army, and the army only, that has to do with it. The military power has acquired the supremacy, and proposes to hold it; and the death of a few innocent persons is not considered as worth taking into account. The same acts of injustice would occur in any other country where militarism prevails. There is nothing more mercilessly cruel than the military spirit. It was the army that ruined ancient Rome, and every nation on earth to-day that is zealous to strengthen its army, will ere long find that it is simply planning for its own destruction. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.3}

There are few people who can speak eloquently as the world counts eloquence; but to *live* eloquently is within the reach of all. Jesus spake as never man spake; but the reason He could do this was because He lived as never man lived. Who does not respect a man, eccentric though he may be, if he lives in his everyday life what he preaches? The reason that so few would be reformers fail to accomplish anything is that they have not first learned to reform themselves. The one that *lives* the Gospel, without a word, preaches sermons a thousand times more effective than the most eloquent discourse from one known to be a hypocrite. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.4}

While in prison, John the Baptist, hearing concerning the works of Christ, sent two of his disciples to Him to inquire, “Art Thou He who should come, or do we look for another?” Instead of answering him as we would naturally think he would, He simply replied: “Go, show John again these things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them.” In this case it was the works that testified to the true messiahship of the Saviour. So to-day, it is the “works we do and the words we utter” that tell for or against the Gospel. May they all be wrought in Jesus Christ, so that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may do it to the glory of God. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.5}

The Lord supplies all our needs. So many people do not believe this. If they would but open their eyes, they might see the illustration of it on every hand. Not very long ago a rat, by accident, got into a cold storage house, and when discovered, had on its tail a thick, heavy coat of hair. Why? Simply to protect it from the cold. There it was, in a cold place, no way to get out, it needed more covering than it had, and so the Lord supplied it. Why do certain birds leave when cold weather approaches? Who tells a young robin six or eight months old that cold weather is coming, and that warm weather is in the south? Now, if God supplies all the needs of the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, why should we, who are of infinitely more value in His sight, worry and be anxious concerning our needs? Let us stop it, and from this time forward believe the Lord. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.6}

Sin is so destructive. It comes in the guise of a friend, but proves to be an enemy. It first ministers to the enjoyment, but after leads its victim away in utter bondage. Dr. Taylor tells how once he read in the memoirs of a detective, that having discovered his man, he joined himself to him as a boon companies, went with him to his haunts, seemed his confidence by long friendship, until at length, when all suspicion had been allayed, he got him, as a mere jest to try on a pair of handcuffs, and then trapping the spring that locked them, he took him, all helpless as he was, an easy prisoner. On every hand the devil is handcuffing men and women-not alone those of the world, but even God’s professed people. It takes diligence to keep out of his entanglements, and only those can succeed whose “life is hid with Christ in God.” {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.7}

**“A Parable” *The Present Truth* 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

A Parable .-A locomotive, drawing behind it a loaded train, was speeding along the line, when a large fly came against it with an angry buzz-z-z. The locomotive paid no attention, but continued on its course. The fly, however, returned to its companions, almost bursting with a sense of its own importance, and said: “I challenged that locomotive, and even attacked it, and it did not dare strike me back, but ran away as fast as it could. It recognises that I am the champion!” But the locomotive did not so much as know of the existence of the fly. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.8}

This is the parable, and we will give the interpretation thereof. Some time ago some one sent us a little book attacking the Sabbath of the Lord. We paid no attention to it, because there was nothing in it worth noticing, and the PRESENT TRUTH does not exist for the purpose of advertising error. Now we have received a letter form a friend who has zeal for the Sabbath, asking us to reply to the statements of the book, because the writer of it is stating that the silence of the PRESENT TRUTH concerning it indicates that it is unanswerable. We are not alarmed. “The foundation of God standeth sure.” The PRESENT TRUTH has a fixed course to pursue, and cannot turn aside to struggle in profitless controversy. The truth is as unconscious of attacks upon it as the locomotive is of the buzzing of the fly. The truth does not need to be defended, because it is of God. The heathen must defend their gods, but our God is the defence of His people. We would not give anything for faith or religion that needed to be defended by us. Let it be attacked on all sides; if it cannot by its very existence withstand all attacks, it cannot save us. But the truth is not in danger; it will stand for ever, flourishing when all its enemies have perished, and their names are forgotten. Blessed are all they who take it for their shield and buckler. {PTUK August 31, 1899, p. 560.9}