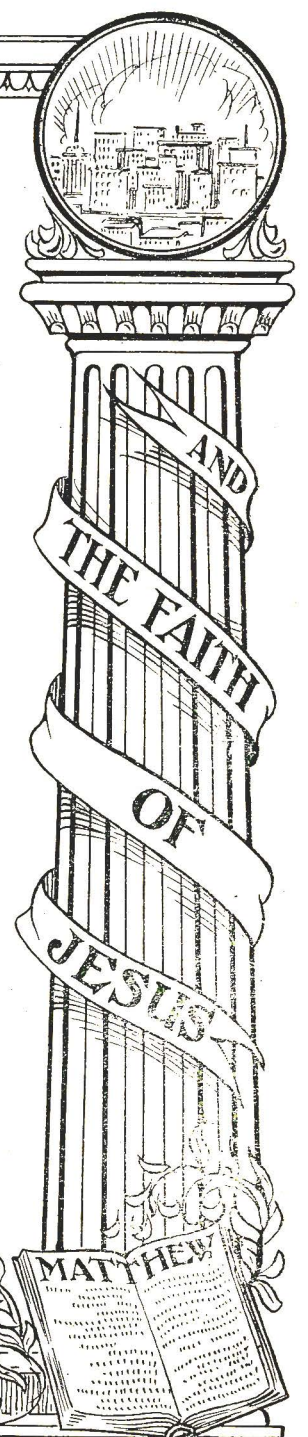
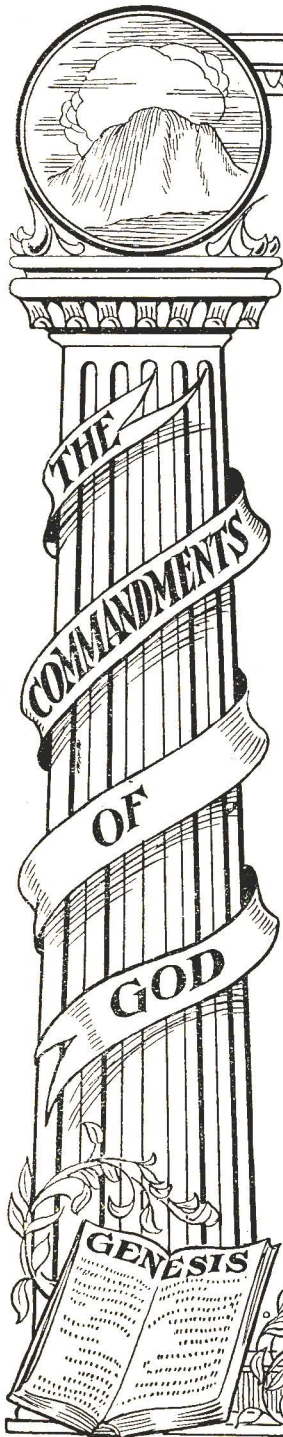


WEEK OF PRAYER—DECEMBER 23-30

The Hammer

WORLD WIDE REFORMATION

"He That Winneeth Souls Is Wise"



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(Reading for Sabbath, December 23)

THE WEEK OF PRAYER

L. L. JOHNSON

While every week should be a week of prayer on the part of the Church of God, it is fitting that stated seasons should be set apart for special intercession. This has been done many times throughout the history of the church, and marked blessings have come to the believers in consequence. We who read these words can recall many occasions in our own experience when heaven has been brought down to earth, and the special outpouring of the Spirit of God has marked the united intercession of the church. Such was the experience of the church one year ago; such has been every year for many years in the past.

The condition of the church itself is an incentive to prayer. Many among the Advent believers have become cold and indifferent. The spirit of lethargy exists in the great Christian world and has penetrated into many lives. The church needs a revival.

We are amid the perils of the last days. Dangers confront us on every side. These dangers are permitted in order that we may sense our own lack of power and may be driven to the Lord for help, which He only can bestow. So it is indeed fitting that we should seek God for special help at this time, and this help he has promised to give. He does not invite us to Him that He may turn us away empty. Not one

of His children throughout the entire history of the church ever truly sought His face in vain. He does, however, impose certain conditions, compliance with which on our part is necessary to the reception of His blessing. Some of these conditions it is well to consider at this time.

1. We must come to Him confessing our sins and iniquities. This He invites us to do. He suggests to us the very form of words we may employ in seeking forgiveness:

"O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." Hosea 14:1, 2.

This implies full and complete surrender to the Lord, placing our all upon His altar. To the one who does this He gives the gracious promise: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." Verse 4.

2. The exercise of simple, childlike faith. Declares the Master:

"Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24.

Faith is taking God at His word and believing that just as truly as we comply with the prescribed conditions so He will fulfill to us the full measure of His promise. Faith is acting as if God's promises are true, and to one who does this the fulfillment of the promise will be made sure.

3. The spirit of forgiveness. We must forgive those who have done us injury.

"When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven, forgive your trespasses." Verses 25, 26.

This spirit will eliminate from the life malice, envy, and jealousy. It will take out of the heart the old grudges which perhaps have been cherished for years.

4. The spirit of brotherly

love. The spirit of true intercession will lead us not only to forgive those who have injured us, but we will seek to reconcile ourselves to those whom we have injured or who feel that we have injured them. This is the instruction of the Master:

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Matt. 5:23, 24.

If this instruction were followed how many heartaches would be saved, how many misunderstandings avoided.

5. Obedience. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of obedience to all Christ says. When we are living in conscious sin we cannot come to Christ in faith except we come with an earnest determination to put that sin out of our lives. With a spirit to cherish sin, our transgression rises up before us like a great mountain, shutting God out of our lives. Declares the Apostle:

"If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." I John 3:20-22.

We do not seek to keep the commandments of God in order that we may obtain salvation, but the Spirit of Christ dwelling in our hearts will find its exercise in obedience to every requirement of the Lord, even as this was its manifestation in the experience of the Master.

6. In harmony with His will.

"This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." I John 5:14.

Many problems in life confront us, and we know not which way to turn. We know not the choice which the Lord would have us make. He desires that we shall patiently await the leadings of His providence. Sometimes when we go to the fork of the road and know not which way to go, He desires us to stand still until things are made plain. Many times it is harder to stand still than it is

to go forward, but the greater proving is in the waiting process. There are, however, many questions in which we definitely know what the will of the Lord is. We know that it is the will of God to forgive us our sins when we have complied with the conditions. We may confidently rest upon this assurance.

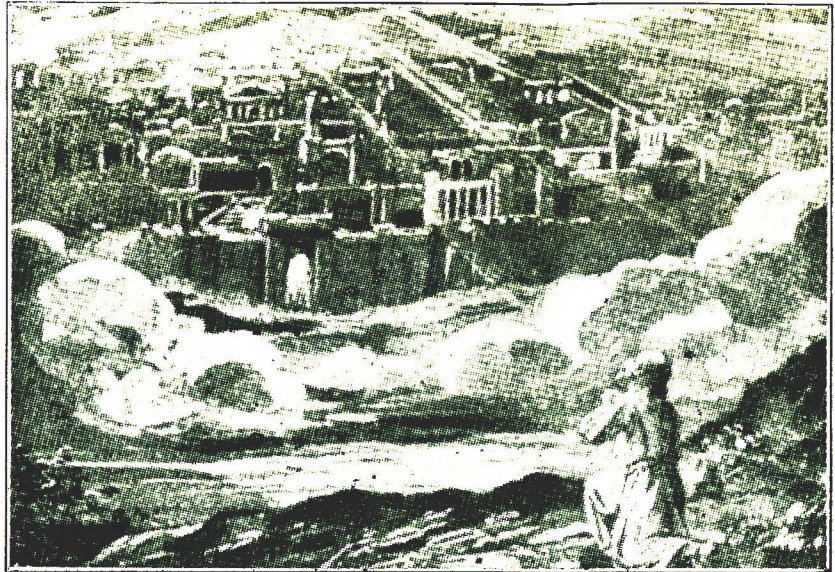
"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9.

How many who read these words are rejoicing today in the forgiveness of sin? How many have experienced the fruit of the Spirit in joy and peace in believing? This is the blessed privilege of the child of God.

Present Salvation

It is the privilege of the Christian to know the present salvation which there is in Christ Jesus. Christ came into the world to save sinners. He came not to save man in sin, but to save him from sin. It is our privilege to have in this life the experience of salvation from sin. Christ has promised to subdue our iniquities; to come into our hearts and take up his abode there; to give us a new life, even the life of the Lord Jesus. There are many in the Christian church today who have not taken hold of this Christ-life. They have obtained justification through the blood. God for Christ's sake has forgiven their sins and imputed to them the righteousness of the Lord Jesus; thus they have become justified through His blood for the sins of the past. But they go on repeating continually the experience of the past, sinning and repenting, looking continually to God for justification. There is an experience for them beyond these primary principles of Christian living. God calls them to perfection. After he has rescued them from the pit and placed their feet upon solid rock, He desires to enter into them by His own life, giving them the victory over sin, holding them so that they shall not fall back again into the pit from which they have been rescued. This is the experience to which the Apostle Paul points us:

"God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for



us. Much more than, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Rom. 5:8-10.

This life of Christ which He desires to impart to His children, is the power of the Holy Spirit. For this life we need to pray today. This keeping power we need to experience. It is ours, and belongs to us by right. We have been adopted into the family of God, and the Spirit and power of our blessed Lord is ours by family inheritance. Let us claim that power. Its possession will not lead us to self-righteousness. It will not lead one to boast of his freedom from sin or of his perfection in Christ Jesus. The nearer he is brought to the great Light of Truth, the more clearly will his own unworthiness be revealed, and the greater longing will possess his heart for more of the fullness and perfection of the Master.

During this week of prayer, let us so humble ourselves before God, so comply with the condition of His Word, that He may bestow upon us the baptism of His Holy Spirit.

'Tis the blessed hour of prayer,
when our hearts lowly bend
An dwe gather to Jesus, our
Saviour and Friend;
If we come to Him in faith, His
protection to share,
What a balm for the weary! O
how sweet to be there!

'Tis the blessed hour of prayer,
when the Saviour draws
near,
With a tender compassion His
children to hear;
When He tells us we may cast
at His feet every care,
What a balm for the weary! O
how sweet to be there!

'Tis the blessed hour of prayer,
when the tempted and
tried
To the Saviour who loves them
their sorrows confide;
With a sympathizing heart He
removes every care;
What a balm for the weary! O
how sweet to be there!

At the blessed hour of prayer,
trusting Him we believe
That the blessings we're need-
ing we'll surely receive,
In the fullness of this trust we
shall lose every care;
What a balm for the weary! O
how sweet to be there!

(Reading for Sunday, December 24)

A SOLEMN MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH

A. C. CHATMAN

We are rapidly nearing the close of this earth's history. The end is near, much nearer than many suppose: and I feel burdened to urge upon our people the necessity of seeking the Lord earnestly. Many are asleep and what can be said to arouse them from their carnal slumber? The Lord would have His Church purified before His judgments

fall more signally upon the world.

Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Christ will remove every pretentious cloak. No mingling of the true with the spurious can deceive him. He is like a refiner's fire, separating the precious from the vile, the dross from the gold. Like Levites God's chosen people are set apart by Him for His special work. Every true Christian bears priestly credentials, with which he is honored the sacred responsibility of representing to the world the character of his heavenly Father. He is to heed well the words: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and the judgments, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the Fathers to the children and heart of the children to their Fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

I am instructed to urge upon our people most earnestly the necessity of religion in the home. Among the members of the household there is ever to be a kind, thoughtful consideration. Morning and evening let all hearts be united in reverent worship. At the season of evening worship, let every member of the family search his heart. Let every wrong that has been committed be made right. If during

the day, one has wronged another, or spoken unkind, let the transgressor seek pardon of the one he has injured.

Often grievances are cherished in the mind, and misunderstanding and heartaches are created that need not be. If the one who is suspected of wrong be given an opportunity, he might be able to make explanations that would bring relief to other members of the family. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another," that ye may be healed of all spiritual infirmities, and that sinful disposition be changed. Make diligent work for eternity.

Pray most earnestly to the Lord, and hold fast to the faith. Trust not in the arm of flesh, but trust implicitly in the Lord's guidance. Let each one now say, "As for me, I will come out and be separate from the world. I will serve with a full purpose of heart." For we are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burneth with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice words; which voice they that heard entreated that the words should not be spoken to them any more for they could not endure that which was commanded.

And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

"See that ye refuse him not that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused him that speak on earth, how much more shall we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth, but now he has prom-

ised, saying, yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which can not be shaken may remain.

Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace, where by we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for God is a consuming fire." Shall we heed the warning that God has given? The Lord will show His loving favor to those who will keep His commandments. The word, the living word received and obeyed, will be a savior of life unto life. The reception of the truth will regenerate and cleanse the sinful soul.

This work of individual purification of character can not be delayed. Let our brethren and sisters take hold diligently of this work, co-operating with him who "loves the church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Put away all deception, let no one idolize his own opinions. Take your position decidedly to be fully consecrated to truth and righteousness.

Christ is ready to receive all who will come to him. Exercise a firm faith in all the promises of God. With confession and prayer, take your stand to be wholly the Lord's, henceforth and forever.

To my ministering brethren I would say unite in a work of humbling your souls before God. Some have lost their first love, and need a new experience. Be patient toward all men, remembering that Christ has died for them. Improve every capability for the Lord's work, and seek to arouse the church by your own zeal. Thus you may be the Lord's helping hand, laborers together with Him. We all have a part to act in the Lord's great plan for His work in the earth. We should find something to do, though it may be in jots and tittles, as opportunities present themselves. If these warnings

are not heeded, if diligent work is not made to overcome and put away defects of character, God will soon have finished the work of judgment, and many will be found wanting.

Shall we now, at once, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, preaching holiness in the fear of God? We can not delay this all important work. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

"Today if ye will hear His voice harden not your heart."

(Reading for Monday, December 25)

THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH

ALFRED DUDLEY

The conditions in the world today make a mighty appeal to the church of God to place a stronger condence in that blessed hope and glorious appearing of our Saviour, and to stretch every nerve toward the finishing of the Master's work on this earth.

"There shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

All causes working for the distress of nations are evident in the world today—competition, antagonism, excessive taxation, unemployment, famine, and rebellion against government. In the spring of 1931 an estimate was given by President Hoover that world expenditure for arms had increased about 70 per cent over that prior to the World War, with about 5,000,000 actives under arms and 20,000,000 in reserve. Each nation seems to be in a race with one another to obtain the greatest forces. The November issue of Current History relates that unless some agreement is reached in the October 16 session of the Disarmament Conference, the hope of arms reduction is likely to



suffer a complete eclipse, and that all the nations will probably go back to the discredited system of armed alliances and secret diplomacy.

Of all the causes working for distress of nations the great economic depression is foremost before the world today; America, Great Britain, France and Germany alike. A direct outcome of this situation is unemployment.

The New Deal, expressed in the N. R. A. has done much for America, besides many pensions and private subscriptions to the poor fund. It was announced from the Department of Labor that about 815,000 people had regained work during the month of August. But, by the end of the summer 11,000,000 individuals were still unable to obtain work.

Indeed there is no greater cause for the spirit of rebellion than unemployment. When a man sees no means to alleviate the distress of his suffering family, he becomes susceptible to radicals and agitation, and feels that the existing government is responsible for his depression. Truly men's hearts are failing them for looking after these things which are coming upon the earth.

The signs of the times are fast fulfilling. The passing of November 13, 1933, marked the centenary of the falling stars; the last of the signs in the heavens, the greatest of all heavenly phenomena. This means that nearly one hundred years have passed since the beginning of the Advent message.

Should the church of God and those trusting His word look for relief from the distress, the perplexity, the oppression, etc.? Perhaps for a time, but we have the words of 2nd Tim. 3:13: "Evil men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

Brethren, the only hope of the church is in the second coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, wherewith, He will destroy all sin and all manner of distress and He will reign in everlasting peace. Let us, therefore, go to our knees in prayer, forsaking sin, renewing our consecration to God, seeking the guidance of His Holy Spirit in doing His work. The Lord is at hand. May we all welcome that glorious appearing.

(Reading for Tuesday, December 26)

TOO BUSY TO BE STILL AND WAIT

MRS. A. B. BROWN

In this world of noise, hurry, and bustle, too often we lose the best of life, why? Because we have no time to wait, and we go hurrying along into this and that, only half realizing what we are doing. We are tearing down our nervous system, wasting our forces, and forgetting God. Ah, too often we forget to listen to that inner voice through which God speaks life, love, and contentment.

Why are we sad and discontented? Does our cross seem hard to bear? Then let us seek a quiet spot where we can be alone with God and open our hearts to Him in prayer. He will hear; for Jesus in divine compassion said, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "Whosoever" — That means all.

This week of prayer calls the brethren and sisters of many lands to seek God together at the throne of grace. We all rejoice in the same "blessed hope." Our hearts are united in the love of Christ, and we love His people and His work in all the world. The week of prayer brings us especially near to one another in all the wide world. "Though sundered far, by faith they meet around one common seat."

Have we prayed long and earnestly for some certain thing,

the need for which seemed so urgent we could not wait the answer; and years have passed and yet no answer?

Perhaps we did not pray as we should. It may be we forgot to say, "Thy will be done." Perhaps we are forgetting God's great promises: "All things work together for good to them that love God." It may be that we desire the things we should not have. Let us leave it to Him Who knoweth all, and wait in simple childlike faith, believing all His promises, and in time we shall see it was better so. You say, "that is hard." Yes, I agree it is not always easy, but things easily acquired are not worth the most to us. Those experiences that wring our hearts make the deepest impression. It may be just this experience that we need to bring out the beauty of our character.

It was not an easy thing for Jesus to drink that bitter cup, else He would not have said, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me." But listen, my friend: Jesus said, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." And there appeared before Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. It was not easy for God to deliver His only begotten Son to die for a sin-sick world.

Is our life full of temptations? Then let us pray, not that our temptations be removed, but rather for strength to overcome; for with no evil to combat, there would be no victory to win. It is promised that we shall not be tempted beyond that which we can bear. Is our environment uncongenial for our happiness and growth? Let us thank God; if we had no storms and clouds in our life, we could have no rainbows of God's love in our hearts. Let us rejoice with all our heart that we can suffer for Him.

We may have physical strength to accomplish our desires. Again we must be still, and wait. The thing we wish may not be the thing God desires for us. We may be able through our affliction to accomplish the work some one else could not accomplish. Yes, it is hard, if we do not put our whole trust in God and wait upon His divine wisdom. "I wait for the Lord,

my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope." Ps. 130:5.

The poet Milton taught us a most beautiful lesson of faith. After many years of slavery to his pen, at the age of forty the affliction of physical blindness came upon him, but oh, what a beautiful light he had! In spite of his affliction, he calmly waited saying: "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Faith and patience will convert our weakness into strength. The most beautiful examples of faith and trust in God with which we have come in contact have been those suffering great physical affliction.

The hardest lesson we have to learn in this busy world is to wait. We must remember that true development comes slowly. We like spontaneity, but spontaneous outbursts do not last long; they soon burn out, and are not true development. We must "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Growth is gradual, not spontaneous.

Jesus is our example. He moves quietly along, waiting for the guidance of God's holy will. There was no hurry, no anxiety, no fear, for He knew He was doing His Father's will. He "went about doing good." If we can live so that that can be said of us, how rich, how beautiful, our character will be!

Ah, Christians, I fear we do not consider enough the significance of silent trust. It was in the moments when Jesus went off to pray, that the Father came to Him. In His Gethsemane, Jesus was alone, save for the presence of His Father. Of all the lone people, Jesus was the most lonely. Yet, scorned, misunderstood, and persecuted, He suffered and died, in the silence of the divine wisdom of God.

It is a most beautiful picture of silent, trustful waiting. He dared to do His Father's will in the face of a most awful death.

Are we suffering affliction, temptation, scorn, and distress? Be still, and wait. Are we disappointed, misunderstood, despised, forsaken by our friends, our burdens almost beyond our strength? Then remember this, that we shall not be tempted beyond what we can bear. Just be still, and wait. Don't try to understand. It is in the silence

of experience we do not understand, that we grow.

Be still and wait, don't be too busy to be still and know that God is God, and He is calling out a people to finish the work in these last days. Surely the hour has struck for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. And should not this reformation begin by earnestly seeking God during this week of prayer for forgiveness for our sins and a blotting out of iniquity, a deeper consecration of our lives, that we may be instruments in His hands for the winning of many precious souls for His Kingdom?

Dear brethren, and sisters, let us not be too busy to note the cause of the present conditions. We note from a careful study of God's word that sin is the trouble. Sin has become exceedingly attractive in this, our day. The church is tolerating, if not openly courting sin. The solemn charge of spiritual feebleness brought against ministers and people, points unerringly to the open gateway through which a flood tide of evil is sweeping in upon the church.

Spiritual feebleness — what does it mean? Ah, it means a lack of power to resist, a lack of divine energy in the soul to withstand evil. The church is standing on Satan's enchanted ground. Men are seeing things crookedly. They are putting a wrong estimate upon things. Some are seeing sin as though it were not sin.

Some are looking at the world differently of late. Its standards and policies appeal to them. Where a few years ago danger was seen, now advantage appears; where then worldly standards were not recognized as meeting the needs of the Lord's people, now they are accepted and recommended by some as the most desirable. Some are bold enough to advocate openly that we are living in a new age, when things are changing rapidly, and that as a people we need to change accordingly, and readjust our ideals and standards to meet the new condition of things.

A careless disregard for the sacredness of the Sabbath and its proper observance is seen on every hand. Pride is creeping in.

There are many among us who are fast becoming "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." 2 Tim. 3:4. And all this because there are those who are seeing things in a wrong light. The power to resist evil is leaking out of the soul. Old time standards among us as a people are being forgotten by some, and changed by others.

Some are growing careless, indifferent, coldness and lukewarmness, with formalism, are paralyzing the spiritual energies of many. Gradually but surely they are losing their hold upon the truth. Their anchorage is giving way, their hold is slipping.

Some are stumbling over the wrong doing of others. Many are losing their experience because they are looking to those about them for an example, instead of keeping their eyes fixed upon Christ. Criticism, that blasting, blighting curse, is found on every hand. Many of our young people are drifting. Their feet are standing in slippery places.

Oh, may God help us to come prayin' for God to help us to be still and wait for the cleansing, and then the infilling, for the showers of blessing we need to make us ready and to keep us ready to meet the Saviour as our names shall come before Him in the swift approaching judgment.

(Reading for Sunday, December 27)

MORAL POLLUTION

W. T. DALY

Because iniquity abounds the love of many waxes cold, the Word spoken here, no doubt refers to the professed followers of Christ. They are affected by the prevailing iniquity and backsliding from God. But should it be that God's professed people should be so affected? No! Yet the cause of this condition is that they do not stand clear from this iniquity. The fact that their love to God is waxing cold because iniquity abounds shows that they are in some sense partakers in it (the iniquity). Otherwise it could not affect their love for God and His cause.

Immortality abounds everywhere. Licentiousness is the special sin in every country under heaven. Vice and crimes of

all different nature are the prevailing spirits of these days. What should God's professed people know? "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, dispisers of those that are good. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

This moral iniquity means sin in its worst sense, nothing is compared with the sin of iniquity. The apostle, here speaking, had reference to the condition of the professed people of God, those who will not cut loose from the customs and practices of the wicked world. To those that will cut loose from the snares of Satan, let us heed the inspired words of the apostle in Rom. 13:11-14. "And that knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep (the sleep of sin) for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

The night is far spent (when our souls were enslaved to Satan), the day is at hand; (the day of Christ's soon appearing). "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light; let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof."

If there was ever a time that this Scripture should be heeded by God's professed people, it is now. Never a time from the beginning of creation has the inhabitants of this world witnessed a time as the age in which we now live. Vices of all kind are dominating the world over. In this time of national perplexities what should God's people know and prepare for?

And Jesus spake to them in a parable; "Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come

to pass (the prevailing conditions of the world today), know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21:29, 30, 31.

Dear beloved brethren and sisters, according to the prevailing conditions of this soon finished world, let us seek God as never before for strength and power in His Spirit to stand amid these moral polutions to meet the Son of Man at His coming.

(Reading for Thursday, December 28)

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS

W. L. BLUNT

Infidelity prevails in many of the churches in our land; not infidelity in its broadest sense, an open denial of the Bible, but an infidelity that is robed in the garb of Christianity, while it is undermining faith in the Bible as a revelation from God.

Fervent devotion and vital piety have given place to a form of Godliness. 2 Tim. 3:1-5. As a result, apostasy and sensualism prevail. Christ declared as it was in the days of Lot, even thus shall it be in the days when the Son of man is revealed. Luke 17:28-30.

The daily record of passing events testifies to the fulfillment of the Saviour's words. The world is fast becoming ripe for destruction, soon the judgments of God are to be poured out, and sin with all who have not complied fully with the commandments of God, are to be consumed.

Said our Saviour: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." Upon all whose interests are centered in this world. "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 be-

fore the Son of man." Luke 21:34-36.

Before the destruction of Sodom, God sent a message of warning to Lot. "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." The same voice of warning was heard by the disciples of Christ before the destruction of Jerusalem; "when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Let them which are in Judea flee to the mountain." Gen. 19:17. Luke 21:20, 21.

They must not tarry to secure anything from their possessions, but must make the most of the opportunity to escape. There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escape for life. So it was in the days of Noah, Lot, and the disciples prior to the destruction of Jerusalem; so it will be in the last days.

Again the voice of God is heard in a message of warning, biding His people separate themselves from the prevailing iniquity. The conditions that were to exist in the last days, especially in the religious world, was presented to John in the vision of Babylon, that "great city, which reigneth over the kings on the earth," a state of corruption and apostasy. Where are we; are we living in such a time? I say yes. We are living in an age when the whole creation groaneth because of sin. If there ever was a time in the history of the church that much prayer is needed, it is now. And as we come together in this season of prayer, let us consecrate our lives anew to God for better service. Laying aside every wait and the sin which will separate us from our God, and pray earnestly for mercy and guidance to finish the work.

Before the final destruction, God's great love is extended in the great merciful call from heaven, come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. As in the days of Noah and Lot there must be a marked separation from apostates, or sinners. There can be no compromise between God and the world, no turning back to secure earthly treasure. Ye

cannot serve God and mammon. Rev. 17:18; 18:4. Math. 6:24.

Many who profess Christianity, like the dwellers in the vale of Siddin, are dreaming of prosperity and peace. "Escape for thy life," is the warning from God, but other voices are heard saying, be not excited; there is no cause for alarm. The multitude cry, "peace and safety," while heaven declares that swift destruction is soon to come upon the world and destroy all who disobey and transgress God's holy law. On the night prior to the destruction of Sodom, they rioted in pleasure about the cities of the plain and derided the warnings of the messenger of God; but those scoffers perished in the flames of fire. That very night the door of mercy was forever closed to the wicked, careless inhabitants of Sodom. God will not always be mocked; He will not long be trifled with. "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Isa. 13:9. The great masses of the world will reject God's mercy, and will be overwhelmed in swift, irretrievable ruin. But those who heed the warning message shall dwell safe in the "secret place of the Most High," and "abide under the shadow of the Almighty." His truth shall be their shield and buckler. For to the obedient and fervent in spirit is the promise, "with long life will I satisfy him, and show him My Salvation." Ps. 91:1, 4, 16.

O reaper, the storm clouds gather;

What of the golden grain?
Sheaves of wheat for the Master
Long in the field have lain.

O reaper, the storm is nearer,
Some grain still in the field;
How dare we delay any longer
When this is the Master's
yield?

O reaper, the storm is breaking;
The wheat all belongs to Him.
"Hasten" must be the watch-
word
'Till the sheaves are gathered
in.

May God help us to accept the last warning message and escape for our lives the destruction which is soon to come upon the world, is my sincere prayer.

(Reading for Friday, December 29)

STANDING ON
THE PROMISES

M. L. IVORY

Peter, in summing up what Christ has done for "them that have obtained like precious faith," says: "According to His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." 2 Peter 1:3, 4.

On these promises the hope of the Christian rests. "Which hope," says the Apostle Paul, "we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Heb. 6:19. The soul of the servant of God is anchored to the throne above. His hope is as sure and stable as that throne itself.

Heaven's part in the great plan of redemption has been faithfully performed. God's purposes in the salvation of man are sure and unalterable. Some time this earth will be peopled by the redeemed of the Lord. From each generation since the fall will be gathered a remnant of those who have been true to God and the principles of His government. To such the sure promises of God have been as a beacon light, to guide their feet through the gloom and darkness of earth's error and sin.

While God's promises are always sure, man must meet them in faith and hold their blessings by prayer. Faith in God and earnest prayer will bring to any human being the sure mercies of the wonderful plan of redemption.

Though we may wander far, and may long reject the overtures of a merciful God, yet the story of the prodigal son teaches how the arms of infinite love are ever stretched out to receive the returning wanderer.

The record of God's dealings with Israel has brought hope and confidence to many a despairing soul. This history is but a rehearsal of the experiences of the human heart. Tempted by Satan we wander from God, but the road is not easy. Afflictions

overtake us. As a parent chastens a loved son, so our Father with arms stretched out to receive us.

Over and over again did Israel wander from God into sin and idolatry. Then they were delivered into the hands of their enemies. But when these afflictions brought them to seek the Lord, how quickly He returned to them and brought confusion to their enemies. God's position toward His people during these experiences is well illustrated in the ninth chapter of Isaiah:

"The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." Vs. 12.

At this time Israel had gone into abominable idolatry, hence God had removed His protecting hand, and the heathen had come against them. His anger was strong against His people, yet through it all His hand was stretched out to receive them and protect them at the first indication of repentance and returning.

There is a human side to the plan of redemption. This calls for our co-operation with the efforts of heaven in our behalf. And although we cannot work out salvation for ourselves, neither can heaven save us unless we take our stand by the side of holy intelligences, and by earnest faith and humble prayer secure the help we must have.

So we come together in earnest prayer to God for forgiveness of sin and blotting out iniquity, and thanking Him for His manifold blessings and deliverance. While the world is rushing on in mad pleasure seeking, we stop to rest awhile with God, sending up our petitions to heaven for God's continual guidance.

Heaven listens to the faintest plea from those who come to God in sincerity. No one, however far he may have wandered, need fear to approach the throne of grace. Our Saviour left the promise, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37.

An the very throne is pledged to the protection of those who place themselves in the keeping of Almighty power. Our Lord has left to such the pledge, that

"no one shall snatch them out of My hand." John 10:28, R. V. Only our own action can take us out of the hand of God.

Guarded well are the true followers of our Lord. David says, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them." Ps. 34:7.

It is not alone to the mighty deeds in great emergencies that we must look for evidences of heaven's aid to God's people. The prayer of the simplest saint and of the vilest sinner is as sure of a hearing and an answer as that of the most godly prophet of Bible days.

David said: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." Ps. 34:6.

But we must come to God in faith. The prayer of faith commands the most powerful forces of heaven. Jesus said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." But He adds, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Matt. 17:20, 21.

But our will must be subject to the will of God. The beloved John writes, "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." 1 John 5:14, 15.

If we are true followers of Christ, our will is in accord with His will. Then the Holy Spirit leads and directs our prayer, and it is, therefore, in harmony with the designs of heaven, and the very throne of God is pledged in the answer.

But if we come with our will unsubdued, and with sins cherished and unrepented of, we are out of harmony, out of touch with heaven. We will then ask according to our unsanctified, unsubdued heart, and God can neither hear or answer such prayers. "If I regard iniquity in my heart," says the psalmist, "the Lord will not hear me." Ps. 66:18.

But more than this, God can not accept the prayers of those who disobey His requirements. Solomon says, "He that turneth

away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. Prov. 28:9. And David speaks of prayers that "become sin," because of wickedness and deceit. Ps. 109:7. When our prayers go forth in harmony with the mind of the Spirit of God, they will be prayers of faith, and can not fail to bring their answer. But no doubting, no wavering must be allowed to mingle with them. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." James 1:6, 7.

The waters composing the waves of the sea do not rush on with the waves. The wave is but the upheaval of the waters. The ship upon the billows does not move along with the wave. As the wave rushes along, the vessel rises upon the crest, and then falls into the trough of the sea, but it does not move forward with the wave unless propelled by sail or steam. And so with the life of many vasculating Christians,—sometimes on the mountain top, and again in the valley of doubt, but with no visible advancement in spiritual attainments or experience. Their condition is well described in the jubilee melody,

"Sometimes up, and sometimes down,
Sometimes almost to the ground."

But as we stand as it were on the brink of eternity, and view the broad harvest field at this time of the year, and see the vast multitude of souls madly rushing down to degradation, we rise on the arms of faith seeking a closer walk with God.

The Christian's hope is based upon the promises of God. Faith brings the reward. The sincere faith of the humblest suppliant at the throne of grace is more powerful than "all the power of the enemy." True is the word of the poet,

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

Simple faith makes real the promises of God. Paul writes: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. 11:1. God's promises to His children repre-

sent all the power of heaven. They are not promises merely, but they are backed by the oath of Jehovah.

Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord,

By the power of love divine;
May my soul look up with a steadfast hope

And my will be lost in Thine.

(Reading for Sabbath, December 30)

OBEDIENCE THE FRUIT UNION WITH CHRIST

E. G. W.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Lift Him up, the Man of Calvary. Lift Him up and cry: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Keep Christ before the people, and this will be given to every man his portion of meat in due season.

Jesus has said: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. . . . Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day: for My flesh is meat in deed, and My blood is drink in deed."

He that eateth my flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.

It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you they are Spirit, and they are life." This plain, simple statement may be understood by all. We are to preach Christ to the people. We are to act as if the clouds were rolled back, and we were in full view of Saraphims and Cherubims. We are to realize that we are under the eye of Jehovah. We are to fight for an immortal crown.

"Put on the whole armor 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 the world, against Spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may

be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore."

Every soldier engaged in the spiritual conflict must be brave in God. Those who are fighting the battle for the prince of life, must point their weapons of warfare outward, and not form a hollow square and aim their missiles of destruction at those who are serving under the banner of Prince Immanuel. How many who need to heed the words that Christ spoke to Nicodemus: "Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he can not see the Kingdom of God, . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. . . . Ye must be born again."

There are many who claim to be followers of Christ, and whose names are enrolled on the church books, who have not been of any strength to the church. They have not been sanctified through the truth. In the prayer of Christ for His disciples He says, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. As Thou has sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

It is not simply receiving the truth, but practicing the truth, that sanctifies the soul. Let those who would be sanctified through the truth search carefully and prayerfully both the Old and New Testament, that they may know what is truth. When the grace of Christ enters the heart, the mind at once becomes interested to know what saith the Scriptures.

Those who are truly converted to Christ keep constant guard, lest they shall accept error in place of truth. Those who think that it matters not what they believe in doctrine, so long as they believe in Jesus Christ, are on dangerous ground. There are some who think they will be just as acceptable to God by obeying some other law than the law of God, by meeting some other conditions than those which He has specified in the Gospel, as if they obeyed His commandments and complied with His requirements; but they are under a fatal delusion, and unless they renounce

this heresy and come into harmony with His requirements, they cannot become members of the royal family.

Goodness and truth alone will dwell with goodness and truth. Men may claim to be sanctified, but unless their sanctification is witnessed to by the law, and the prophets, it is not according to Bible requirements. There are some who refuse to listen to the words of the Scriptures. They declare that they will have nothing to do with the Bible, for the Lord Himself speaks to their soul. They declare that they are inspired by the Spirit of God; but when reminded that the Bible was written by men who were moved by the Holy Ghost, they reveal the fact that they are following the inspiration of another spirit.

True inspiration never rejects true inspiration, but is in harmony with the Bible. Any thing that leads away from the Word of God is proven to be inspired from beneath. "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

Those who claim to be sanctified, and who give no heed to the words of divine authority spoken from Mount Sinai, makes it manifest that they will not render to God the obedience that the Law-giver requires. The very excuse they urge for evading the requirements of God proves their sanctification spurious. They say, "I am sanctified," and seek to prove this by setting up a standard of self-righteousness, a law of their own.

The law of God requires nothing short of spiritual perfection and through the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God, complete provision has been made that man may become a partaker of the divine nature, and through the merits of the blood of Christ be an overcomer. Of himself he has no perfection. "With me," Christ says, "Ye can do nothing." Provision for our perfection is found in union with Christ.

"I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me. Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I

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am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world."

What pleasure could it possibly be to souls who would not be drawn to Jesus in this life, to study His character, and to be with Him in the life that is to come? They would prefer to be anywhere else than in the presence and companionship of Him in whom they had no delight. They did not know Him while in the world, and could not learn to know Him in heaven. But of His disciples, Jesus said, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: But I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them and Thou in Me."

IS IT WORLDLY FOR
WOMEN IN THE CHURCH
TO BOB THEIR HAIR?

By reading I Cor. 11:12 one can at once see and know the mind of the Apostle Paul concerning this question. "But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a covering." Verse 15.

Why then, should a woman cut off her hair and thus lose her glory? Why follow such a custom, as the "bob hair" introduced by women of notorious characters, such as murderers, gamblers and bank robbers? Such women are often seen, as was the old harlot Jezebel who painted her face and attired her head and looked out at the window for (a man) Jehu. Sixty-five years ago women who professed to have a knowledge of

the "third angel's message" would not dream of following the styles and customs of such notorious bandits. God says:

Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and better that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts." Jer. 2:19.

Read 2nd Kings 9:29-37. In this chapter the seeker for truth will learn that the noted Mrs. Jezebel is the mother of all who follow such custom. Jezebel wanted to attract a man, and so do her daughters. She painted her face and attired her head. The modern Jezebels do the same thing today. Where? In the world only? No, but in the professed commandment-keeping church, namely Seventy-Day Adventists. God commands His ministers thus:

"God and proclaim these words . . . Return thou backsliding Israel . . . Only acknowledge thine iniquity." Jer. 3:12, 13.

Speaking to His church, God says, "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking, mincing as they go . . . therefore, the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet and their round tires like the moon. The chains, and the bracelets . . . the ear-rings, the rings, etc." Isa. 3:16-26.

Why are these things (so forbidden by the Lord), found among His people? Where is the old time love for the truth?

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1st—A deeper consecration to do service in the vineyard of the Lord.

2nd—To do our BIT in preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, in all the world, for a witness unto all nations.

3rd—As a race, maintain self-respect, and do as Our Lord has said, "Occupy until I come."

4th—To establish among Negro Seventh-Day Adventists, Negro Conferences with Negro officers—Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers and Bookkeepers.

5th—To establish schools for the training of our children and for workers in our organization.

6th—To establish a publishing house in which we may furnish employment to Negro Men, Women, Boys and Girls, as we strive to preach the truth of the Third Angel's Message through the printed page.

An invitation is extended to all "INTELLIGENT" Negro Seventh-Day Adventists, those, with a vision, with moral courage, with backbone, those who are strong in the knees, in short, just common self-respect, who have the love of God in the heart, to join with us and help to put this program over the TOP, for over the TOP it must GO.

"Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34. Therefore, we are determined to, "Stand fast . . . in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us Free." Gal. 5:1.