TIMELY GREETINGS

— The Only Peace of Mind —

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KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS
THE STONY HEART AND THE CARNAL MIND

THE PEOPLE THAT HARDLY STAND A CHANCE

TEXT FOR PRAYER

Sowers Of The Seed

I shall read from *Christ's Object Lessons*, beginning on page 57.

"The sowers of the seed have a work to do in the preparing hearts to receive the gospel. In the ministry of the world there is too much sermonizing, and too little of real heart-to-heart work.... So the sowers have something to do that the seed may not be choked with thorns or perish because of shallowness of soil.... Every believer...should be taught that he is not merely to be saved by Christ's sacrifice, but that he is to make the life of Christ his life and the character of Christ his character. Let all be taught that they are to bear burdens and to deny natural inclination. Let them learn the blessedness of working for Christ, following Him in self-denial, and enduring hardness as good soldiers. Let them learn to trust His love and to cast on Him their cares. Let them taste the joy of winning souls for Him. In their love and interest for the lost, they will lose sight of self. The pleasures of the world will lose their power to attract and its burdens to dishearten."

We are to pray that we shall realize that we are not saved merely by the sacrifice of Christ but that we are to strive to be like Him in life and character, and as we interest ourselves in the salvation of others, our own lives will be refreshed; that we shall do more heart-to-heart work; that we shall bear burdens and deny natural inclination. Thus will the pleasures of the world lose their power to attract, and its burden lose its power to dishearten.

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KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS, THE STONY HEART AND THE CARNEL MIND

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SABBATH, JANUARY 17, 1948
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Our text of Scripture is found in Revelation 22:14, 15.

Rev. 22:14, 15 – *"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."*

Here we see that only those who do His commandments have the right to enter the City. When the work of salvation is finished and the people gathered home, they will be those who will still keep the commandments of God, even after sin is eradicated. Sin nevertheless cannot be eradicated while the law is transgressed, for the transgression of it is sin. (1 John 3:3, 4.) The Commandments of God, you see, are eternal, and only when Christians begin to live the life which the Word of God advocates, will they find themselves living above the law; then only will they be free from transgression.

Finally, if the commandments of God are eternal, then they must have always existed. The Sabbath that was made and hallowed in the week of creation, before sin came, is contained in the commandments. And, too, Adam could not have sinned if the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," had not then been in existence.

Rom. 7:7 – *"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."*

Saint Paul's inspired statement places the ten commandments, you see, in the very framework of the Gospel. Without the commandments, he declares, the followers of the Gospel would not know what sin is.

Verses 8-10 – *"But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."*

Here we see that the law does not save but it condemns; and that without the law there would be no sin. The law did not save Adam and Eve, but it judged them unworthy of the Tree of Life and of a home in Eden. In fact, it sentenced them to death. The law is only a teacher of righteousness. That is all. It is not a saviour.

Verses 12-14 – *"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then*

that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin."

The people who obey a state law think it an excellent statute of liberty, but those who delight in sinning, to them the law is anathema. Any murderer who by law has been sentenced to death, naturally does not delight in the law that sentenced him, nor in the people that executed his sentence. If such a one had his own way, he would abolish the law. All criminals would do away with the law of God, too, for the law is spiritual, and they carnal, sold under sin.

What would happen if there were no law in the Kingdom of God, no law against murder and theft, or against envy and jealousy? Who would want to be in the Kingdom even for a time? If such were the case, then, of course, we would be better off in the kingdoms of the world.

The Decalogue, moreover, is not only a moral code, but also a physical one, for sin against the law involves the sinner's descendants, too. It visits the "iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." Ex. 20:5.

Then, too, every descendant of Adam is naturally born in sin, is given to sin:

Verse 15 – *"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I."*

Such being man's lot, the carnal man hates the law of God, and more so because it crosses his will.

Verse 16 – *"If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good."*

If one abstains from theft, he consents that the law is good and effective, although by nature he might like the idea of stealing.

Verses 17-23 – *"Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."*

Here, you see, we are born with the law of sin within us, and so it is absolutely necessary for the law of God to restrain us from sinning.

Verses 24, 25 – *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."*

Yes, God and His law in our minds, which we acquire only by the study of the Word of God

are our only hope for victory over the law of sin and the flesh.

Rom. 8:1 – *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

The moment we accept Christ as our Saviour, all of our trespasses against the law are blotted out, and paid for by the death of Christ. Were this not the case we ourselves would have to pay the penalty of death, from which there is no resurrection to eternal life.

Verse 2 – *"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

Here the apostle introduces another law, the law of the Spirit of life – three laws in all: (1) the law of ten commandments, (2) the law of the flesh, (3) the law of the Spirit of life. But this third law, let us remember, is in Christ, and it makes us free from the law of sin and death only is we be in Him.

Verses 3-11 – *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

Because the carnal mind is enmity against

God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

It is our privilege to have the same Spirit that was in Christ. In fact, we must have this Spirit if we are to walk in newness of life, and if we are to have a part in the resurrection of the just.

From Paul's discourse you see that to be a Christian means to watch every step you make, and to war against your own flesh, lest you willfully fall into the pit from which there is no escape. The Christian, moreover, cannot sin; his righteousness in Christ is absolutely secured, for Christ has paid the penalty for his past sins. Moreover, if he should accidentally sin again, he has an Advocate to plead his case, even Jesus Christ, the righteous. Thus it is that though a righteous man fall seven times a day, he rises up, still continues the race and finally wins.

But suppose that you should have to struggle to keep the commandments of God in the Kingdom of God throughout eternity, should have to struggle as you struggle now? Suppose the law of the flesh should stay with you forever? – What

then? Would you then be as anxious as you are now for a place in the Kingdom? God tells us what to expect.

Jer. 31:31-34 – *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*

Here is a promise of a new contract, a new covenant. It is not the kind God made with our predecessors in the day they came up out of Egypt, the day He wrote the commandments on tables of stone and thus to keep them. Instead He makes a new covenant, a covenant to write them on our very hearts. Then every one of us will consequently know Him without having to be taught.

Take notice, though, He is not to make a new law, but a new covenant, a new contract for keeping the law. The difference is that rather than His writing the law on tables of stone, He will write it on the fleshly tables of the

heart, the seat which the law of sin now occupies.

This covenant, you see, is to be made with both the house of Israel and the house of Judah, – with all God's people.

The scripture, remember, does not say that we cannot keep the law while it is written on the tables of stone, but it definitely says that we can, for those who broke the law are reproved for so doing. We can, therefore, even now inconveniently keep the commandments though they be still written on stones. For convenience sake most Christians wish the law were abolished, and some make themselves believe that it has been abolished, although the only law that has been abolished is the ceremonial, sacrificial law, the shadow of the Lamb of God.

What difference would there be whether the law be written on stone, or on our hearts? – The experience of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon reveals the answer.

Had the king by force been made to live with the cattle, in a stable or in a field, he would have committed suicide if possible. But as soon as God took his human heart away from him, and put the heart of an ox in him, the king was perfectly contented to be with the cattle, and altogether discontented to live in his palace.

Were the same thing done to anyone of us, our desires would be the same as the king's. In like manner, when the stony heart is taken away from us, and the heart of flesh with the

law of God written on it put in us, we shall then find it altogether too inconvenient to sin, and most delightful to keep the commandments of God. And so you need not fear having to struggle to keep the law of God in the Kingdom, as you do here. You will then be perfectly contented to live a sinless life. In fact you will want to sin no more than you would now want to die.

Wonderful indeed! but when may we expect this miracle to take place? To find the answer to this question, we need connect Jeremiah's prophecy with Ezekiel's prophecy of the same event:

Jer. 31:8 – *"Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither."*

Ezek. 36:24-28 – *"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God."*

The records from both prophets clearly point out the time in which this miracle will be performed on the hearts of all God's people. Both prophets make it as clear as can be made, that this change of heart takes place in the Holy Land, Palestine, at the beginning of the kingdom which God promises to set up "in that days of these kings" (Dan. 2:44), not after their days. He moreover says that He will take us from among the heathen and gather us from all countries, and take us into our own land (Ezek. 36:24), the land in which our fathers dwelt (Ezek. 36:28). "Then," at that time, says Inspiration, not before, will He sprinkle clean water upon us, cleanse us from all filthiness, and from all idols. Also, a new heart will He then put in us (Ezek. 36:26). He will give us His Spirit and cause us to comply with His statutes, and to keep His judgments (Ezek. 36:27). Read these scriptures for yourself and see if they say all I am trying to tell you they say.

Jer. 31:35-40 – *"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: if those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever. Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb,*

and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever."

People can believe anything they wish to believe, but we will believe the Bible. I know that this is what the Bible teaches, and that this is God's schedule for these events. And since this is God's program for the cleansing of His people, and for their receiving the new heart, our message becomes exceedingly important to all who wish to be in the Kingdom. We can but put our heart and soul in the work, though, and leave the results to God. If we ever had to be all out for God and none for self, it is now.

THE PEOPLE THA THARDLY STAND A CHANCE

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY V.T. HOUTEFF,
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The text of our subject for this afternoon is found in Proverbs 29:18.

Prov. 29:18 – *"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."*

At the outset of our study let us ascertain to what extent this scripture has been fulfilled. In the days of Moses, you remember, the Egyptians had no vision, but the Hebrews did have a vision and a prophet to interpret the vision. With this gift among them when they came against the Red Sea the Hebrews were preserved, but the Egyptians perished. "The wise man," you see, was not guessing when he said "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Suppose, though, the people should have a vision, but no interpreter for the vision. What then? Let us see: You recall that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had a night vision but had no interpreter, no, not one among all his wise men in the kingdom. Consequently as they were unable to interpret his vision (Dan. Chapter 2), it was decreed that they should be put to death, and they would have perished if Daniel, God's man, had not been in the land to interpret the king's vision.

Pharaoh, too, had a vision but no interpreter. And if Joseph had not been in the land of Egypt to interpret the king's vision, the Egyptians and the whole ancient world would have perished during the seven years of famine. What the Bible says, is one hundred percent true, you see.

Now let me ask you a simple question. If the people with out a vision and without a interpreter perish, how are they then to get the vision and the interpreter? Saint Peter gives the clue:

2 Pet. 1:19, 20 – *"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation."*

Here we are told that prophecy, a vision, is the acid test by which to judge purported Bible Truth; that is, if the thing is not in prophecy, if there is no vision of it found in the writings of the prophets, then, there is no truth in it. Yes, the visions of the prophets are to be our visions if we must be preserved. Prophecy, though, he contends is of no more private interpretation than were Nebuchadnezzar's and Pharaoh's visions, that the wise men of any people are not able to interpret the concealed prophecies of God. Why?–

Verse 21 – *"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."*

This is exactly why prophecy cannot be privately interpreted, not without the Spirit Who dictated the prophecies to holy men of old. So, then, the prophecies are not interpreted by the will of men, but by the Spirit of Truth, "the Spirit of Prophecy," the same Spirit that dictated the prophecies. This, you see, is not my idea. It is the plain language of the Bible. But perhaps there is still doubt in your minds, and if so we would do well to give the Bible another test.

Let us, therefore, again consider the kings of Babylon and of Egypt. Both kings gave to their wise men the opportunity to interpret some of the things which we now find in the Bible. The kings of those ancient lands gave their wise men not only the opportunity baited with rich reward for interpreting the visions, but even threatened to slay them if they failed to do so. This was especially true in Babylon. Their wise men failed and even openly and wisely admitted that to reveal the secret things of God was not their business.

Are not these tests strong enough to convince any of you that the secret things of God, such as the concealed prophecies, are not disclosed by finite men, – no, not by the Devil either, that when God wants a thing to be a secret, it remains concealed until He Himself reveals it? Then, when it is revealed all are to know that God Himself is at work. Are not therefore the wise men of the day making fools of themselves by airing their private interpretations of the unrevealed Scriptures?

If it is hard enough for the average-mind to admit that he is wrong, then pray tell me

how easily will our wise men, who think themselves to stand without a peer, to admit their mistakes? For this is exactly what they must do to their audiences if they themselves are ever to accept the prophecies when unfolded by the Holy Spirit Himself. And if they do not give up their private interpretations and take the interpretations of the Spirit, will they not sin against the Holy Ghost?

The wise men of Chaldea and Egypt were not allowed to advance their private ideas as to what the kings' visions might mean, so at last it was an easy matter for them to say, "We do not know." But it was not at all easy for the priests, scribes, and Pharisees in Christ's day to recant what they had taught the people, and neither will it be easy for the private interpreters of today, even though they know that such an honest and trying confession would make them great heroes.

Today private interpretations have harmed and confused the world more than at any other time. Look at the shattered sectarian world of today. It has split Christendom into hundreds of sects, chips of all sizes, one disagreeing with the other. Who can say that their diverse private interpretations of the Scriptures are inspired, dependable, or profitable for anything but to cause Christians to quarrel and bicker among themselves over theories and doctrines? Are these presumptuous interpreters of the Scriptures bringing Christians to one accord, fitting them for a second Pentecost? or are they dividing and unfitting them? Are they not making fools of themselves in the eyes of the non-Christian world? It is plain to see that they are not even as wise as the wise men of Joseph's

day or of Daniel's day. It sounds hard, I know, but it would be worse to leave them sleeping without doing something to awaken them. No one can watch a blind man walking into an opened bridge without doing something to prevent him from walking headlong into the river. If they do not open their eyes now, then who can say that they are not the people who hardly stand a chance?

Their theoretical interpretations of the Scriptures are brewing discord within every denomination, and at the same time their adherents pray and talk of having received, or of expecting to receive the gift of the Spirit! They pray, not to have the gift of inspired interpretation, not to have their private interpretation corrected, or to know the Truth more fully, but they pray to receive the gift of working miracles! Yes, that is what they are all after. What presumption! and what an insult to Intelligence!

Miracles for what purpose? – For no other than to confuse an even greater multitude with their private interpretations. They may fool men but I tell you they can never fool God, and they had better try it no longer.

Now, suppose that we have a vision and also an interpreter, but do not have faith. Then what? – If such be our case, then I believe that in such an unhappy state of mind we would be better off if we had neither vision nor interpreter, because if we had both a vision and an interpreter, but no faith we would be held responsible for rejecting both, and thus doubly sin against the Holy Ghost. Then we would find ourselves in an even more unenviable position

than were the Jews.

There is no forgiveness for sinning against the Holy Ghost, against Inspiration, because once rejected there is nothing else by which a sinner can be brought to Christ. Consequently there is no more hope for such a one, for there is nothing more that Heaven can do to awaken him to his poverty, and hence no more remedy, no forgiveness of sin.

But one may say, "I do have faith in the Bible, in the Word of God." We may have even more faith in the Bible than had the Jews, but if such one-sided faith was a detriment to the Jews, then what would it be to others? No, the Jews were not condemned for lack of faith in the Bible, but for having no faith in the messengers of God, no faith in the prophets and their interpretations of the Scriptures. Moreover, faith in the Bible without faith in the Interpreter Who dictated the Bible is as good as to admit that bread is indeed the staff of life, but to refuse to take a bite of it! Let us see what the Bible itself has to say concerning such unfortunates:

2 Chron. 36:14-17 – "Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which He had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy. Therefore He brought upon them the king

of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: He gave them all into his hand."

The transgressors herein mentioned, you see, were not left to the slaughter simply because they were great sinners; God had compassion on them while sinning, and sent messengers to correct and to enlighten them. But after they rejected His messages, and slew His Spirit-filled messengers, they sinned against the Holy Ghost, then there was nothing more that He could do but to let their enemies destroy them.

Let us consider another example, this one in Jesus' time. The Jews in His time had even greater faith in the Scriptures than any before them. With the Scriptures they accused, tried, and crucified the Lord. The thing in which they had no faith was Jesus' *interpretations* of the Scriptures. As a result, some years later their city was destroyed, and every one that was found in it burned as rats, only because they failed to heed Jesus' instructions:

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." Luke 21:20-22

Without vision, you see, the people perish. And also without an interpreter and without faith

they likewise perish. And this is why "the Spirit of Prophecy" is an absolute necessity to the people of God in all generations.

Laodiceanism today, you know, is in a worse situation than any people at any other time, for by protesting that there is no need of prophets, no need of more truth, they have already rejected them, yes, actually killed them. If they expect no more truth and if Jesus Christ Himself should come with more truth would they not crucify Him also? I know that I am not making a rash statement, not exaggerating either, and I also know that the Bible will sustain me in what I am saying, else I would not say it.

We have now already seen that the Scriptures are not of private interpretation, and that Christendom as a whole has no inspired, Divinely-appointed interpreter, does not even claim to have one, and that the people are as confused as were the foolish Babel tower-buildings when their language was replaced with diversified languages.

Now, then, if it is Truth that makes anyone free, and if It comes only through Inspiration, and if Christendom fails to recognize this and thus give God no chance to save it, then what is to be its fate, and also the fate of the Church itself? You know the answer.

The root of this blundering, though, springs from the heart of the church that professes to be the light of the world, for she feels rich and increased with goods, in need of neither Truth nor prophets in spite of the fact that the Lord Himself tells her that she is wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, about to be spued out, and in need of everything (Rev. 3:14-18.)

To overlook this charge and still to say we have need of nothing is to insult the Lord, and to charge God with having forsaken the earth, the Church, and the people, and leaving them all to do the best they can in their confusion and carnal security, expecting to lift themselves out of their deception by the straps of their boots!

There is but one thing that her people have been taught to look for, and that is to look out for false prophets, and as the people do not realize that there can be no false where there is no true, can you not see their inconsistency? And what terrible self-deception for a people to think themselves right when they are all wrong! – *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, pg. 253. I say terrible, and I mean terrible, because if they keep on imagining that they are rich and increased with goods, in need of nothing, while they are destitute of everything, they will certainly be "spued out."

If they do awake to their poverty, it will be the greatest miracle since the beginning of the world. I say it will be the greatest, because they feel no need of God's help through Inspiration, expect none, are prejudiced, suspicious, and fearful of everyone that disagrees with their preconceived idea. They are therefore even harder to reach with the saving Truth for today than were the Jews of yesterday.

Will the Church forever remain in her self-deception, or will she awake to her great need? We shall have these questions answered if we turn to the Revelation:

"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth

opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ...for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy." Rev. 12:16, 17; 19:10.

Here is the Bible's own answer, which says that there is to be a people who will have the Testimony of Jesus Christ at the time the earth swallows up the flood, the hypocrites. And since this incident is yet future, it shows that there is to be a prophet in the Church, for the Bible's own interpretation of "the Testimony of Jesus Christ," is "the Spirit of Prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). The first part of chapter 19 you will note explains that the Spirit of Prophecy is brought to them by a man, a "fellow servant," and that those who receive him feel like worshiping him, but he directs them to worship God, not a man.

The remnant that are left, the saints who were not swallowed by the Dragon's flood as the earth opened her mouth, you note have the "testimony of Jesus Christ," the living Spirit of Prophecy active in their midst. The Church therefore will not sleep forever, the true people of God will awake to their poverty, they will profit at this rousing call, but the Dragon's flood will fill the bowels of the earth.

Let now no one deceive himself by thinking that the Bible Itself is the active Spirit of Prophecy. Let us be God's real people, logical thinkers, not bait hunters. The Bible, you know, without the human channel, is as inactive as though It were but ink and paper. Moreover, the Spirit, too, apart from man, is also inactive:

He, too, works through the human agent. Hence, without an inspired interpreter the concealed prophecies and the Spirit that unfolds them are inactive. Moreover, how could it be said of one particular group having the Spirit of Prophecy, when all the sects in Christendom have the Bible?

The remnant, who have the Spirit of Prophecy among them are directed to keep the commandments of God, while the rest of the world, through the influence of the Dragon, persecute them. In this light, you again see that a remnant will escape from the present self-deception that has befuddled the whole Christian world.

Finally, what could be the Dragon's flood that proceeds out of his mouth if not Dragon-prompted interpreters of the Scriptures through whom he expects to cause the Church to be carried away?

Truly the self-appointed prophets in Israel of today are more in number than were the prophets in Elijah's day. Here is a fact which only deaf and blind persons would try to deny. No, I am not taking pleasure in unveiling this Truth, I do it only because I must. God wants His people to have the Truth, and so I have no alternative but to tell it.

This flood against which the everliving Church is struggling to make her way, is, we are told, to be swallowed by the earth. It is to be done away with as were the self-appointed prophets in Moses' day: namely, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, "princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown." Num. 16:2. These and all their followers and sympathizers

perished: "The earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods." Num. 16:32.

Here we have the type, and the example, too, pointing out that what was done in Moses' day with the men who tried to promote themselves to the office of the Spirit of Prophecy, will be done with the men who aspire to the same office in our day. They are the people who hardly stand a chance.

Thus it is that any who are called to teach what the Spirit of Prophecy unfolds to them, should not aspire to private uninspired interpretation of the Scriptures. If they do, they and all who follow them will have their reward unless they repent.

Gal. 3:1-3; 4:16 – "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the Truth...? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

Let me again point out to you the people who are in the greatest danger of failing to serve the Lord as the Spirit directs. This we can again see from the examples of the past. I can go back as far as Cain and Abel. Cain was the first-born of Adam, and according to Bible rule, the first-born was to be the leader, the priest. From his experience we know that he, the leader, the minister in the family, was the first one in history to worship according to his own private interpretation of religion. And for Abel's failing to follow Cain's way of worship, Abel was put to death at Cain's own hands.

Next, I would take you to Abraham's time. You know that Ishmael was Abraham's first-born, and Isaac his second. Ishmael, the first-born, being of the flesh persecuted Isaac, him who was born after the Spirit.

Then, coming to Isaac's twins, Esau and Jacob: Esau was the mighty man of the day, and the first-born in the home; his was the birthright to lead out in the service of God. But he, too, was more interested in hunting than in the work of the Spirit. So little value he placed on the Spirit's work that he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. In spite of this, he still expected the promised blessings from his father, but Providence intervened! When he discovered his loss, he, of course, as Cain of old, sought to kill his brother.

In Moses' time we find the same spirit working through the first-born, for all those who were twenty years or over when they left Egypt, perished in the wilderness, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua.

From these examples in the days of our types, we see that those who are first, and those who are mighty, whose birthright in the church grants them the privilege to lead the people, are in the greatest danger of erring or losing their souls. But with such a clear picture before them through these Bible examples, we hope that they will turn against the old Dragon and come out from his clutches. If they do come out, they will indeed be regarded as valiant men of God as were the three Hebrews after coming out of the fiery furnace and as Daniel after coming out of the lions' den.

"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his

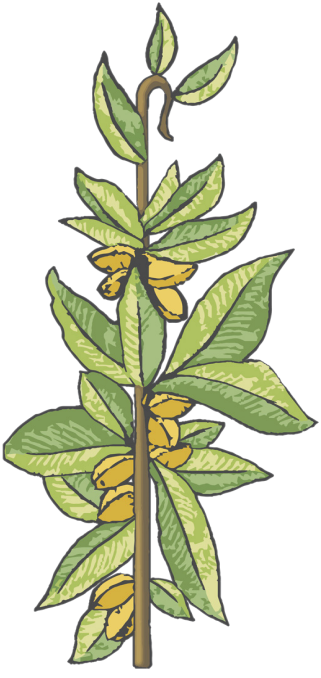
nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Isa. 2:22. Inspired Truth, Brother, Sister, is the only thing that counts, and only when you yourself investigate and personally decide to take your stand for it though the whole world rejects it and takes issue with you. Let us therefore no longer drift with the tide as a pebble with the waves of the sea. We must be men and women of stamina and stability if we are to follow God and His Truth.

We have now clearly seen that those who took such a stand as Truth here presents, were God's heroes of the past, and such must be His heroes of today, even though they be persecuted, laughed at, and cast out as were those who have gone before them.

Victory over every failure can be gained by Divine *vision*, Divine *interpretation*, Divine *faith*. These three, you see, are inseparable, and only these three lead to Christ and eternal life. This is indeed, the righteousness of Christ, not tarnished with the tinsel of men.

Of course, you will have to face the opposition, but so did the Lord Himself. Are you greater than He? There is, how ever, one thing that the enemies of Truth cannot do, and that is, they cannot win an argument against the Truth, let alone give anything as good. Their only aim is to take away your pearl of great price. And your aim therefore should be to keep it though you may have to lose everything else if you intend to avoid the people that hardly stand a chance and to win in the race with the Just. Divine vision, Spirit-filled interpreter, and unfailing faith, is what we all need to have, lest we all perish.

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