

is not for them to know the times and seasons, but for them to be on the alert continually, not only during the first watch, but during the second and during the third, that at whatever time the Master's knock may be heard they may respond promptly. It is not the thought, let it be noticed, that the servants are never to know when the Master will come: it is the thought that on his arrival he will cause such a knocking to be made as will be appreciated by all of his servants who are awake and waiting and watching. Wherein would be the use of the knock if the servants were not to know when they heard the knock? The knock is to be the evidence of the presence, and the servants are not to know in advance, but are to know at the time of the arrival and that without seeing.

THE MASTER WILL SERVE HIS SERVANTS

What will be the special reward of these servants? The parable states it: their Master will "gird himself [he will become their servant] and will make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them." This implies that at our Lord's second coming he will be present before any of his servants know of his arrival. He will knock or cause announcement of his presence to be made. Those who will hear the knock will be such only as are awake and ready, expecting him and on the alert for the knock. These will receive a special spiritual feast. It will be special because it is on a special occasion and intended as a special reward for their manifestation of interest and devotion. It will be special also, because the Master of the household, turned to be its servant, would have all the keys to all the riches of grace and blessing, and, as elsewhere explained, will bring forth from his treasuries—his pantries—things new and old, substantial and delicacies. The faithful ones will surely have a royal feast, such as never before was granted them.

These things, we hold, have already been fulfilled. The knock, or proclamation of the Lord's presence, as indicated by the Old Testament prophecies, has been given since 1875 and is still being given. The knock of the parable might appropriately be but for a few seconds, but the fulfilment would properly cover a period of years. The servants of the household are taking notice, and each one as he opens his heart and mind to the fact of the Lord's presence receives a fulfillment of the blessing promised—receives a feast of fat things, spiritual—an understanding and appreciation of the divine plan and a soul nourishment and strengthening such as was never his before. That this serving of the servants by the Master should be understood to be an individual work and not merely a collective service and feast, is evidenced by the Lord's statement in Revelation 3:20. Here the Lord represents the same event in connection with his message to the last phase of his Church nominal, the Laodicean phase. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man [individual] hear my voice [knock] and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me."

"A THOUSAND YEARS . . . ARE AS A WATCH IN THE NIGHT"

According to the ancient Jewish method of reckoning the night time, the second watch would be from ten to two o'clock and the third from two to six o'clock. The parable does not state in which watch the Master may be expected. That question was left open; the faithfulness of the servants would be tested in proportion to his delay. Many would find it easy to keep awake and alert during the first watch, not so many during the second watch and still fewer during the third. It is in accord with this implication of the parable that we find today general lethargy prevailing amongst Christian people respecting the return of the Bridegroom and the glorious things of the kingdom then to be brought unto his faithful household. Many are asleep in Zion, many are overcharged with the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Not only have worldly people made a god of business, money and pleasure, but many who are at heart lovers of righteousness and who desire to be considered servants of the Lord, are seriously overcharged—absorbed in worldly things. Their hearts are so filled with these and their minds so occupied with dreams of Churchianity and pleasure and personal interest that they cannot hear the knock. They know not of the Master's presence; they open not their hearts to this wonderful announcement, for which the Lord's people have waited so long and prayed so earnestly, "Thy kingdom come." They are missing as a consequence, a great blessing implied in our Lord's parable, and definitely stated in Daniel's prophecy—"Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days!"—Dan. 12:12.

HIS PRESENCE UNKNOWN TO THE WORLD

"But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through."

The reference here is to a thief-like coming, and the Greek word translated broken through would mean literally "dug into." Many of the houses of olden time were not built of stone or bricks but of dried mud, somewhat like what are known as adobe houses in some parts of the West and Mexico. Entry into such houses could be gained more quickly by digging through the wall than by forcing the door. The goodman of the house or its master does not refer to the Lord, for the house referred to is the "present evil world"—the social structure as at present organized. It is not necessary to conclude that Satan is meant, although he is in a general way the master of present institutions, "the god of this world," the "prince of this world." We may properly enough understand the good man of the house to here signify earthly governments, the powers that be, the representatives of the ten toes of Daniel's image and of his fourth beast.

This matter of the second coming of the Lord and the knock which will be heard by those of his servants who are awake, but not heard by his servants who are asleep and overcharged, will be totally unknown to the world. To them his presence will not be that of a master longed for and served, but that of an opponent whose house they have in his absence taken possession of and used contrary to his interests. These, if they knew the time of his coming, would have fortified themselves in some manner and have sought to defend present institutions and to perpetuate them.

The coming as a thief upon the world signifies a quiet coming, unostentatious, unknown, without heralds or any commotion likely to disturb. The breaking up of the strong man's house—the breaking up of present institutions, civil, religious, political, financial—is already under way, just as the knocking for his servants is in process. The entire social structure is under control of the new Prince. He is marshaling his forces, and will cause even the wrath of man to praise him and to work out his purposes in the overthrow of every known institution built upon selfishness. Great will be the fall thereof—"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation"; but upon the ruins the King of kings and Lord of lords will rear the grand kingdom of the Lord, for which all who are his already pray, "Thy kingdom come," and which, when it shall come to be instituted by the Lord, will be indeed the "desire of all nations."—Haggai 2:7.

"IN SUCH AN HOUR AS YE THINK NOT"

The essence of this lesson is summed up in the 40th verse, "Be ye also ready; for in an hour ye think not the Son of man cometh." No one will be aware of the hour of the Son of man's coming; it is not a matter that is left in such a form as to be speculated upon in advance. His knock will be the first intimation of his presence. And so it has been fulfilled: none of us knew in advance when the Lord's coming would take place; it was after it had occurred that we heard the knock—his voice through the prophets of the Old Testament, declaring to us that we are already in the harvest time and in the days of the presence of the Son of man. Here we have fulfilled the words of the Lord in Matthew 24:37, "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the *parousia* [presence] of the Son of man be." The text shows that the thought is that as the world was ignorant of coming events in Noah's days, and, being ignorant, was eating and drinking and planting and building, so it will be in the days of the presence of the Son of man: the world will be ignorant of the fact of his presence, and the ordinary affairs of life will be progressing as usual. Only "ye brethren" who hear the knock will discern the presence and get the blessing.

Peter inquired whether or not this parable was applicable only to the twelve apostles, or to all those who were disciples in a general sense. Our Lord measurably ignored the question in his reply, "Who then is the faithful and wise steward whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?" The implication seems to be that when the right time should come for understanding the parable, it would be clearly set forth: that at the time of the parable's fulfillment the Lord would appoint a servant in the household to bring these matters to the attention of all the servants, and that certain responsibilities would rest upon such a one respecting the dispatch of his duties. If faithfully performed a great blessing would be his reward, and if unfaithful to his charge severe penalties would be inflicted. The implication would be also that if faithful the servant would be continued in his service, and if unfaithful he would be dismissed and another take the position and its responsibilities.

"THE FAITHFUL AND THE WISE STEWARD"

We would naturally enough endeavor to interpret our Lord's words as signifying a composite steward—that is that a certain number or class of brethren together would constitute the steward of this parable. In endeavoring to make such

an interpretation we are met with several difficulties, however.

(1) To suppose such a class in the church would be to recognize what is elsewhere denied—to recognize a clerical or authoritative class as distinct and separate from the remainder of the church, because this steward is to dispense the meat in due season to the household, to the fellow-servants. The church of Christ, we hold, is not composed of clergy and laity; but "ye are all one in Christ Jesus," and "one is your Master, even Christ." There would be no violation of principle, however, in supposing that the Lord at the time indicated would specially use one member of his church as the channel or instrument through which he would send the appropriate messages, spiritual nourishment appropriate at that time; because at various times in the past the Lord has used individuals in such a manner. For instance, Peter used the "keys" of the kingdom of heaven at Pentecost, and again at the home of Cornelius, and in both places he was used as a special servant in connection with the dispensing of special truths. This did not constitute Peter a lord over the other apostles or over the church, but merely a servant.

(2) However much we might endeavor to apply this figure to the Lord's people collectively, the fact would still remain that the various items stated would not fit to a company of individuals. For instance, in the 42nd verse, in the common version it is rendered, *that faithful steward*; the revised version, *the faithful steward*; as though a particular one were meant and the term not used indefinitely for a number. Turning to the Greek text we find that the emphasis is there also and in double form—the faithful, the wise steward. If it were a case in which we could apply this text to Christ, there would be no difficulty, or if it were a case in which it could be applied to the whole body of Christ, there could be no difficulty, in harmonizing the one with the many members of the one body of Christ; but since the servant mentioned is to dispense food to the other members of the body, his fellow-servants, the term seems to be limited to some particular individual. However, just as we said of Peter, that he was not by reason of special use made a lord over the brethren, so we say of whoever is meant in this passage, that in no sense of the word would this constitute him a lord, or dictator or master, or imply his inspiration. All that we could say would be that it would be one who would be privileged to be a servant, and not many seem anxious to fill such a position in the true sense of the word. This servant, if found faithful, would be intrusted more and more with the distribution of every feature of present truth as represented in the parable, by his being given the

dispensing of the food in due season to the household. Unfaithfulness on the part of this appointed one would mean his degradation from this service, and presumably the service would go on at the hands of another, his successor.

The expression, "Verily I say unto you, He shall make him ruler over all his goods," should not be understood to apply to future glories and honors, but merely to a more general charge or stewardship as respects the dispensing of the Lord's "goods" or truths due to be protected or disbursed during the remainder of this "harvest" time. In other words, the steward through whom the Lord will dispense present truth in this "harvest," will, if found vigilant, humble, faithful, be continued in the stewardship and be used of the Lord more and more in the service of the household—down to the close of the "harvest."

'NOT AS LORDS OVER GOD'S HERITAGE'

That this servant must not act or be regarded as a lord is clearly indicated in the 45th verse, which shows that such a misuse of his appointment would work his downfall. At no time has the church ever had need to be on guard against its servants who really endeavored to serve it and to hand forth from the Lord's treasure house the meat in due season. The church's dangers have always arisen from those who sought to lord it over God's heritage, and to dispense their own wisdom or the wisdom of other men instead of the Word of the Lord.

Verses 47, 48, seem to imply that the servant's responsibility to the Lord will be in proportion to his knowledge of the Lord's will; and that the Lord will deal with him on the principle that having had much knowledge and opportunity, the requirements at his hands will be proportionately large.

While this exhortation in general seems to apply to one particular servant through whom the other servants are to be supplied (see Matt. 24:45-51), we can see that the same principles in a general sense would apply to each servant in turn, as he would receive either food or stewardship. His responsibility would be in proportion to what he received or had opportunity to receive, and to the manner in which he used the blessing. We of today, living under such great favor from the Lord, enjoying the light of present truth as we do, have every reason to give thanks and more and more to appreciate the things new and old from the Master's storehouse of truth that he is now dispensing to us, and which each in turn is privileged to dispense to others and has responsibility for in proportion to his knowledge. The Lord help us each to be faithful, and to remember that our Lord was a servant as well as a Son, and that our highest privilege as sons is to be faithful servants, stewards of the manifold grace of God.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

CONCERNING BAPTISM OF JEWS

Question.—Would a Jew coming into Christ today symbolize consecration just as do Gentiles, or would his baptism signify repentance for remission of sins, as per Acts 2:38?

Answer.—The special favor of God toward natural Israel as a nation ended at the time of Christ's rejection when their house was "left desolate." A personal favor continued with the true Israelites for a further 3½ years to the end of their covenanting 70 weeks of years. It is possible that some sort of special favor continued with this class until the full end of the Jewish "harvest," A. D. 69, but certainly no longer.

The Apostle Paul refers to this change, saying that "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile had been broken down. It follows, therefore, that Jews could not now come into relationship with Christ on any other terms than could Gentiles. As natural branches they are "broken off," and would require re-grafting just the same as would the wild-olive branches.—Rom. 11:19-24.

Question.—Was there any difference between the immersion of John and that mentioned by Peter (Acts 2:38)?

Answer.—Yes; John's preaching of repentance was merely an exhortation to renounce sin and prepare for a coming Messiah. The exhortation of Peter was to repent of sin, because the Messiah had come, and the sin to be repented of included the national sin of rejecting Messiah and crucifying him; hence, of the latter it is said that it is a baptism in the name of Jesus.

Question.—In Eph. 4:5 we read that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." How does this agree with the thought that the Jews were immersed for the remission of sins, whereas the Gentiles were immersed into Christ?

Answer.—The one baptism is not the symbolic one, but the actual one, viz., the burial into Christ. This, in the case of those who are Gentiles, signifies a full consecration and full burial into the will of Christ; but this same baptism to the Jew would mean a transfer from Moses to Christ, from being

dead in Moses to being dead in Christ. The sin of violation of the Jewish Law Covenant being repented of and forgiven, the Jew who was under that covenant is thenceforth counted as being under the *New Covenant, and to him the outward form or symbol of baptism would mean a repentance from the works of the Law and his failure under the Law Covenant, and his acceptance in Christ, the new Mediator of the New Covenant. To us who are by nature Gentiles there can be no such repentance from the dead works of the Law, for we were never under that Law, and there can be no such transfer from Moses to Christ, because we never were in Moses.

Question.—Does Rom. 10:12 have any bearing on this question? "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him."

Answer.—It has a bearing, but not as contradicting the foregoing. There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek when both have come into Christ—thenceforth they are on the same plane, on the same footing; but there was a difference in the way the Jew and the Greek properly attested their coming to Christ at the opening of this Gospel age.

Question.—Was the re-immersion mentioned in Acts 19:3-5 made necessary because the persons were Gentiles, and had symbolized their baptism in a manner appropriate only to the Jews?

Answer.—We think it was, for the latter reason.

HOW DOES THE ANTITYPICAL SCAPEGOAT CLASS BEAR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE?

Question.—What is represented in the typical confession of sin by the high priest over the "scapegoat" in the Tabernacle sacrifices, as recorded in Lev. 16:20-22?

Answer.—We understand that this goat represents a consecrated class which fails to perform sacrifice; and that its being sent into the wilderness at the hand of the "fit" man represents that all the consecrated who have not sacrificed

* See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of Covenants.

THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY was organized in the year 1884 as a means of putting forth the message of the kingdom in an orderly and systematic manner. The Corporation is controlled and managed by its Board of Directors and officers. The Board of Directors is composed of seven members. The Charter of the Corporation provides that the Board of Directors shall be self-perpetuating; that is to say, when a vacancy occurs by death or resignation the surviving members are empowered to fill such vacancy. Brother Russell was a member of the Board of Directors. Two days after his death the Board met and elected Brother A. N. Pierson as a member of the Board to fill the vacancy caused by Brother Russell's change. The seven members of the Board as now constituted are A. I. Ritchie, W. E. Van Amburgh, H. C. Rockwell, J. D. Wright, I. F. Hoskins, A. N. Pierson and J. F. Rutherford.

The Board of Directors thereupon provided for an Executive Committee of three, and elected as that Committee Brothers A. I. Ritchie, W. E. Van Amburgh and J. F. Rutherford. This Executive Committee has general supervision of all the work of the Society, both in America and abroad, subject to the control of the Board of Directors of the Society.

The Charter of THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY provides that the officers shall be elected annually by those who have contributed to the funds of the Society, and that those officers must be elected from among the Board of Directors. Brother Russell was the President of THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY from its organization until his death. The next annual election, as provided by the Charter, will be held Saturday, January 6th, 1917, at Pittsburgh, at which time officers will be elected; viz., a President, Vice President, and Secretary and Treasurer.

THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY is the most wonderful and unusual Corporation on earth. It is the strongest corporation, not financially, but strong because it has been, and still is, used of the Lord for the carrying on of his work. It is unusual in this: that all who are in any wise connected with it gladly render their services without salary: those giving all of their time taking only the bare necessities of life. It will continue in the same manner as in the past to spread the Gospel, so long as the Lord indicates this as his will.

THE WATCH TOWER

This publication is the medium through which the kingdom message is brought regularly to the members of the "household." "That Servant" used this medium to give out the "meat in due season." By his last Will and Testament he provided for the continuance of THE WATCH TOWER by a duly constituted Editorial Committee. The names of the members of this Editorial Committee appear upon the title page of each issue of THE WATCH TOWER. It is the province of this

Committee to put in proper form and publish, twice each month, that which goes to the church. THE WATCH TOWER is not the organ of the Editorial Committee. It is the official organ of the church. It is the only publication in the world declaring the presence of the King and announcing the nearness of his kingdom. Therefore, dear brethren, THE WATCH TOWER is your journal. It is the journal of every one in harmony with the present truth, and its publication is for the benefit of all such. It will continue to publish only that which is in harmony with what "that Servant" has heretofore given to the "household of faith."

Shall we, then, continue to recognize in our class-studies the Berean Bible lessons prepared by Brother Russell? Shall we continue to speak in our class-studies of Brother Russell as the Lord's Servant who brought "meat in due season to the household of faith." Yes, indeed! Why not? If the Lord was pleased to use him for many years to give the "meat in due season," and the church, then it is still "meat in due season," and the Berean lessons are essential for the development of those who shall be made partakers of the kingdom. Should we now disregard the food contained in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and other publications of THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, it would mean that we were repudiating or disregarding that which the Lord has graciously provided for our benefit. We must make the distinction between Brother Russell as a creature and his official capacity as "that servant" of the Master to give out the "meat in due season." To disregard the message would mean to disregard the Lord.

Let us be courageous and faithful, dear brethren. Let us remember that in unity there is strength. The Lord will continue his work until it is finished. He will gather all of his true children into the Garner in due time. Shall we be of those thus gathered? That will depend upon whether or not we hold fast to that which we have; whether or not we remain loyal to the Lord and to his message of the kingdom.

The Lord's "faithful and wise servant" finished his work and left with us his message. His last words to the church, as set forth in his Will and Testament, show how essential it is for every one who would enter the kingdom to continue loyal, and faithfully develop the fruits and graces of the spirit. He said, "I entreat you all that you continue to progress and to grow in grace, in knowledge, and above all in love, the great fruit of the spirit, in its various diversified forms. I exhort to meekness, not only with the world, but with one another; to patience with one another and with all men, to gentleness with all, to brotherly-kindness, to godliness, to purity. I remind you that all these things are necessary for us—necessary that we may attain the promised kingdom; and that the Apostle has assured us that if we do these things we shall never fail, but that 'so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.'"

THE HOLY CITY

[Paragraph 10 of this article was a reprint of article entitled "The Heavenly Jerusalem" published in issue of June 1, 1905. The remainder was a reprint of article entitled "In the Paradise of God" published in issue of June 15, 1901. Please see the articles named.]

"UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN"

[This article was a reprint of that entitled "Immanuel and his Dominion" published in issue of December 15, 1905, which please see.]

CONVENTION AT PITTSBURGH

THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY is arranging for a convention at Pittsburgh, Pa., to be held Saturday and Sunday, January 6th and 7th, 1917. Several of the brethren from the Brooklyn Tabernacle will be present and address the convention. The Saturday sessions will be held in CARNEGIE

HALL in Allegheny, and those on Sunday at the Lyceum Theatre, in Pittsburgh.

Any one desiring to make reservations for accommodation will please address Dr. W. E. Spill, 2509 Perrysville Ave., N. S., Pittsburgh, Pa.

EXAMINATION OF ANSWERS TO V. D. M. QUESTIONS

The Examining Board expects to complete its work before the end of the present month; but if for any reason its work should be delayed a little, we would advise that the election of any to represent your class as either elders or deacons could

be done on the same condition as that of the New York Congregation—subject to a successful examination of the answers to the questions.

MEMOIRS OF PASTOR RUSSELL

The Society is contemplating the publication, in book form, of Memoirs of Brother Russell, together with a number

of his sermons. Further announcement will be made in due time.

April 1, 1919

In the world ye shall have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." Thus we can be tranquil, brave and strong, very courageous, even though a thousand fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand; for only with our eyes shall we behold the reward of the wicked, who say and do not.

THE BASIS OF EVERY SIFTING

We might have personal preferences here and there in the selection of elders among our little ecclesia or among officers and directors in the Society. But recognizing that the will of the Lord as expressed in the voice of the majority decides these matters; we can cast all our care in these, as in all things, on him who careth for us, knowing that all things are open and plain unto him with whom we have to do. He is working all things through Christ according to the counsel of his own will; and as he causes the deeds of evil men to praise him, restraining what would not, so even more assuredly he will overrule for his glory and our good if any error should come in through the earthen vessel of those who serve in his order and arrangement. (Galatians 2:11, 12) Let us take heed

that there never be in any one of us an evil unbelieving heart in departing from the living God, through which we become hardened by a delusion of sin.

Every sifting has rested on attacks upon the agency through which the Lord has sent his message. Not receiving it, but rejecting it and claiming to point to a definite time when the Lord cast it off, these while teaching error themselves are condemning "another man's servant," whom he, the Lord, is able to sustain (Romans 14:4) and to whom he gives evidence of his approval in supplying the proper meat at the proper time.

"For ye have need of patience [patient endurance] that after having done the will of God, ye might receive the promise [to rule with Christ]. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just [my just One] shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition [See John 17:13], but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—Hebrews 10:37-39.

TWO CAUSES OF DISSENSION IN THE CHURCH

A man is merely what his will is and what that will can make out of the body and its circumstances. And so at the very beginning of our discipleship, the first thing is to see that we are dead as respects our will, and alive toward the Lord Jesus Christ. All who do this God calls new creatures. He grants them the Holy Spirit, that the new mind, the new will, may be theirs. In proportion as they obtain the new mind, the new will, in that same proportion will the oneness with one another exist.

That which causes dissension amongst the Lord's people is either a lack of loyalty or a lack of knowledge. If it is a lack of loyalty, the disloyal will gradually drift away. The Lord does not choose to force any of his family. He is choosing such as worship him in spirit and in truth, such as are in every respect loyal. He has set aside for the purpose of selecting this class the entire Gospel age. This great work has been in progress for more than nineteen centuries; and this

company will be a little flock. They will, evidently, be a very select class. They are required to walk by faith, not by sight.

Not many have the loyalty to God and to righteousness to walk that way and to count the world as loss and dross—as nothing, with all its projects. As the disloyal ones leave the ranks, more and more the loyal ones will find themselves drawn together, and more and more of oneness will be found among those who are faithful. This would necessarily be true in every time and in every country. All who are thoroughly loyal would desire to do the Father's will, desire to lay down their lives in the Father's service. And this desire would make them one.

The Lord speaks of his disciples being perfected in one. As each individual member of the church makes progress, he becomes more worthy to fill the place or use the opportunity provided for him. And thus the body of Christ becomes more efficacious.

THE TABLE OF THE GREAT KING

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." —Psalm 23:5.

To serve in the courts of an earthly monarch has ever been considered a great privilege, and to sit at the royal table is an honor enjoyed by but a favored few. With this thought in mind we can especially appreciate the condescension of Jehovah as illustrated in the beautiful words of our text. Why should he come to this sinful, accursed realm and select even a handful of earth's inhabitants to be his sons and to serve them, as members of the divine family? If the Lord, the great King of the universe, has been pleased to prepare a table laden with "meat in due season" for his household and to invite us to partake thereof, it would be a most ungrateful, unworthy guest indeed who would spurn such a blessing and turn away from the food which God himself had set before him.

enjoy the food of the Lord's providing would on any account leave the King's table and household, and return to the emptiness of the world. Nothing has incensed the adversary more than has the seventh course of "meat in due season," which the Lord in his providence has seen fit to spread before us. While it has strengthened and refreshed thousands of the Lord's faithful children, "the seed of promise," it has been as a grievous plague upon the ecclesiastical lords, "the seed of Satan." Numerous are the insidious arguments that have been propagated by our wily foe to draw away the Lord's people from the food—arguments designed either to nauseate or to frighten them. More than ever has it been true, as expressed by our text, that this last feature of present truth was spread before us "in the presence of our enemies."

Our text indicates that to sit at the Lord's table would be to expose ourselves to the envious gaze of enemies, headed by Satan. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Those who have been enlightened by present truth, who have been privileged to feast on the good things which the Lord has spread before his children during the past forty years, can appreciate the significance of this statement. One by one the harvest saints have left the Babylonish "tables of vomit" (Isaiah 28:8) to partake of the meat of present truth. In each instance it has meant persecution, and oftentimes vilification and ostracism which have been very hard to endure; yet in it all our cup of joy at the privilege of feasting upon the truth and of suffering for Christ's sake has literally overflowed.

To those who are familiar with Satan's tactics it should hardly be necessary to suggest an offset to his arguments. Yet in order to strengthen the faith of those whose hearts are right, but whose minds have become temporarily confused, we are pleased to set forth a few positive evidences that none other than our Lord himself has served us with the truth of Ezekiel and Revelation, which at the same time constitute the last plague upon Babylon. Let us not say: "Why should we accept it as present truth?" Rather let us say: "Why should I not accept it as meat in due season from the Lord?"

THE "HAIL" OF PRESENT TRUTH

Did not the Laodicean messenger, "that wise and faithful servant," promise us throughout his ministry and in the hour of his death, that the church should expect and would receive an exposition of these two prophetic books? Have they not now been explained thoroughly and clearly and in accordance with all other features of the divine plan? Did not the same channel or agency which the Lord has been pleased to use in publishing the preceding messages of the harvest period also publish these truths for the comfort and encouragement of the church in its hour of direst need? Is not the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society the one and only channel which the Lord has used in dispensing his truth continually since the beginning of the harvest period? Did not this last published message contain the "hail" of truth which the Scrip

"NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES"

With each publication of harvest truth, gladdening the hearts of the Lord's people, there has been manifested a corresponding hatred on the part of all the enemies of the truth; for indeed these "Helping Hands for Bible Students" have been plagues to ecclesiasticism.—Revelation 15:5-7.

Satan has been increasingly active in his endeavors to distract and to distract the minds of the Lord's people, and to draw them away from the table of truth which has been prepared for them. In some instances he has succeeded. It seems strange that any one who has once been privileged to

presence; and the time prophecies showed them God's purpose of gathering his people into unity. These have not been disturbed in mind by any of these things.

The church, the faithful, joined heart to heart, said: "My times are in thy hand; my God, I wish them there." The church realized God had begun a work, and that he would care for it and them; and they waited for the manifestation of his will. All such were made stronger in faith by reason of the tests which the loving Father permitted to come upon them, or into which he brought them. And this will continue until the end of the way; for it is by such exercise of faith that the faithful are strengthened. The manifestation of God's favor is not seen through ever continuous outward blessings, but in growth of grace, in clarity of understanding, and in strength of character.

During this time of special favor to the church Satan has had favorable opportunities and has mingled among the sons of God. Naturally he has made use of the tests which God has permitted to come upon the church, and has endeavored to turn them into temptations. We regret to say that he has had a certain measure of success. He has succeeded in beclouding the eyes of some and in leading them astray. In some cases he has had so much success as to make his dupes believe that the whole church has gone wrong, and that the Lord was no longer in control. No child of God should allow himself to believe such a thing could be possible or that God would cease to lead his people. It is not a proper nor a reasonable expectation. Such a thing would mean that Satan had become leader of the Lord's hosts; that the church had forgotten the voice of its Master, and was listening to that of a charmer. But Jesus said: "My sheep know my voice, and they follow me." The Lord would not permit Satan to become leader of his people, nor could he afford to do so: they must be sure of their Guide. All who succumb to such temptation either have not understood or have forgotten that God is gathering his people together in order that he may do a great work on earth, and that they may be ready for an entrance into the kingdom.

THE TEST OF LOYALTY

One of the chief temptations to the church has been in respect to loyalty to God's arrangements for it. Since the days when in the providences of God our late beloved leader came into prominence as the chief representative of the Lord's people and stood before them as "that servant" who had charge of his Master's goods, every indication of the Lord's providence has shown that God gave Brother Russell to the church to be as a mouthpiece for him; and those who claim to have learned the truth apart from Brother Russell and his writings have been manifested by the Lord as deceivers, ready to lead the flock of God in their way.

Since Brother Russell's death the evidence of God's favor upon the Society, which was organized by Brother

Russell for the furtherance of the Lord's work, has been manifested as clearly as it was previously upon him. Satan has attempted by many attacks upon this fact to break it down; to cause the Lord's people to believe: (1) that Brother Russell was *not* the only channel by which the Lord would lead his people; and (2) that the Society in its organized capacity could not be a channel for the Lord. If Satan could accomplish his object, he had a great chance of leading a large number of the Lord's people aside from their path, and away from the work of the Lord, which he hates so much since it tells of his own dethronement and the overthrow of his kingdom.

Some have allowed themselves to be tempted astray on the plea of liberty. This is Satan's own cry. Without doubt he was the first who called out for liberty. He has always wanted to make out that God's laws are a restraint of the proper liberty of the subject. The law of love makes no appeal to him, nor does it to any who seek to break away from arrangements made by God. For thirty years this cry has been raised in the church. But those who have accepted the Lord's arrangements feel no bondage; they are the freest, happiest people on earth. Theirs is the liberty of the King's high-road. Those who leave the Lord's work on the plea of bondage, tie themselves up in their own ideas: they become bound hand and foot, having neither work to do nor place wherein to labor.

TESTS THROUGH FALSE LEADERS

Again, because the witness of the church in this day is to the downfall of his empire and the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness, Satan hates both the message and those who deliver it. He seeks to destroy both it and them by every means in his power. He has persuaded some that personal holiness is the end of all desire, and that love for the brethren is the final test.

In England a holiness movement, which became associated with Keswick in Cumberland, led many professing Christians to feel that they had at last obtained the acme of Christian experience; but we do not know of any who were associated with that movement who are not in some measure opponents of the truth. They sought a mystic union with Christ, but would not listen to their Master's voice through his messenger. Some who have been persuaded to this idea have separated themselves from their brethren. Little companies meet together to build up each other in love! Self predominates; the true labor of the church is lost sight of; the unity of fellowship is gone. Such forget the purpose of God, and ignore the fact of the Lord's providences and of Jesus' presence in the harvest field as Chief Reaper. There is no real difference between their position and that of those who lived in the days preceding the presence; and, indeed, the darkness of the dark ages begins to creep over them.

Of late some have been led astray from the Lord's

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ination, and from the four quarters of the earth, as well as from all the ecclesiastical systems, those who really love the Lord. It must be conceded, then, that this work of the Lord is done in an orderly way. He could do it in no other way except in an orderly way. If it is conceded that he began his work in an orderly way, the burden of proof is on the objectors to show that he would afterward change his course and do that work in a disorderly way. The presumption must be indulged that he would continue it in an orderly way, even to a completion.

In connection with his presence and the harvest work, the office of that "faithful and wise servant" is important, and is made so by the Lord himself. The one who fills that office is made ruler over all the Lord's goods during the time of his incumbency in office. The office of that "faithful and wise servant" therefore is a part of the orderly manner in which the Lord carries on his work during his second presence. The office is of far greater importance than the individual who fills the office; for if the officer placed in the office should fail to fill it properly, the office would still exist, and the Lord could easily appoint or assign some one else to fill that office.

We believe that all who are now rejoicing in present truth will concede that Brother Russell faithfully filled the office of special servant of the Lord; and that he was made ruler over all the Lord's goods. Discussing this question of "that servant" himself in THE WATCH TOWER (April 15, 1904), Brother Russell said:

"Who then is the faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? The implication seems to be that when the right time should come for understanding the parable, it would be clearly set forth; that at the time of the parable's fulfillment the Lord would appoint a servant in the household to bring these matters to the attention of all the servants, and that certain responsibilities would rest upon such a one respecting the dispatch of his duties. If faithfully performed, a great blessing would be his reward; and if unfaithful to his charge, severe penalties would be inflicted. The implication would be also that if faithful the servant would be continued in his service, and if unfaithful he would be dismissed and another take the position and its responsibilities.

"... There would be no violation of principle, however, in supposing that the Lord at the time indicated would specially use one member of his church as the channel or instrument through which he would send the appropriate messages, spiritual nourishment appropriate at that time; because at various times in the past the Lord has used individuals in such a manner."—WATCH TOWER REPRINTS, pages 3355, 3356.

If Brother Russell filled that office, then it must be conceded that he did so under the supervision of the Lord. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." (Psalm 37:23) Acting under the supervision of the Lord, Brother Russell organized the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society. In expressing his reason why the Society was organized, he said:

"It seems tolerably certain that some of the saints will

be in the flesh during a great part at least of the 'time of trouble'; and if so, there will be need of printed matter, tracts, etc., as much then, perhaps, as now, and possibly will be more needed; for when the judgments of the Lord are 'in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.' (Isaiah 26:19) Should those at present prominently identified with the work [undoubtedly referring to himself] not be the LAST to be 'changed,' some interruption of the work might result; but this may be obviated by having a legal standing, granted by a State Charter."—WATCH TOWER REPRINTS, page 671.

In modest phrase Brother Russell here clearly indicated that it was his thought that the Society, as organized in an orderly manner, would carry on the work begun by him and finish that which had been committed to him personally. Often when asked by others, Who is that faithful and wise servant?—Brother Russell would reply: "Some say I am; while others say the Society is." Both statements were true; for Brother Russell was in fact the Society in a most absolute sense, in this, that he directed the policy and course of the Society without regard to any other person on earth. He sometimes sought advice of others connected with the Society, listened to their suggestions, and then did according to his own judgment, believing that the Lord would have him thus do.

Since Brother Russell's "change" some who believe that he filled the office of "that servant" have said that the Lord has cast off the Society. Is such a conclusion either reasonable or Scriptural? Brother Russell's own thought was that the Society would continue to do the Lord's work as above indicated. Besides, if the Lord was pleased to have this organization started originally for his purposes, why should he cast it off? Why not continue to direct the servants therein according to his own will or supply other servants? Such is the reasonable conclusion.

Do not the facts prove beyond a doubt that the Lord has been doing some harvest work during the past six years and since the death of Brother Russell? During that time have not many been gathered to the Lord, even out from the world, and have manifested every evidence of acceptance with the Lord? If the Lord, then, has been doing a work and is still doing it, is it reasonable to conclude that he is doing it in an orderly manner? If the Society is not being used to fulfil the office in carrying out the work, then who is? Can any of the murmurers or objectors point to another arrangement the Lord has in which he is carrying out his work? If any of them know of any other arrangement, let them come forward and name it. If there is any such other arrangement that the Lord has, all the saints will want to be in harmony with it and serve in the Lord's way, and not man's way.

WHAT CONSTITUTES THE SOCIETY?

The word Society as used herein is a generic term applied to the body of consecrated, anointed Christians throughout the world engaged in the work of represent-