

A dramatic seascape with a storm brewing over a rocky shore. The sky is filled with heavy, dark clouds, and a bright light source, likely the sun, is breaking through on the right side, creating a strong glow and illuminating the water. The sea is turbulent, with large, white-capped waves crashing against dark, jagged rocks in the foreground. The overall mood is one of intense natural power and struggle.

*A
Ray of
Hope
on a
Troubled
Sea*

RAY OF HOPE ON A TROUBLED SEA

Refrain Thy Voice From Weeping And Thine Eyes From Tears

THE LORD through the Prophet Jeremiah sends a message of consolation for the heart of every bereaved parent trusting in him. We read, “A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children because they were not. Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.”-Jeremiah 31:15-17

Five items in our text fasten our attention:

First. Sorrow for the dead, which is universal; as the Apostle declares, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.”

Second. The nature of the comfort described-the hope of a resurrection, the hope of the recovery of the dead-”They shall come again,” they shall be restored to life.

Third. That in death our dear ones are in “the land of the enemy”, in harmony with the Apostle’s declaration, “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”-1 Cor. 15:26

Fourth. That the labors of the parents in endeavoring to properly rear their children are not lost, “Thy work shall be rewarded.”

Fifth. Last but not least in importance in this text is the declaration that this is the Word of the Lord, which cannot be broken-the Word which is sure of fulfilment, however different it may be from the word of man on this subject.

Tears Not Weakness-”Jesus Wept”

Sorrow for the dead is not a sign of weakness, but rather the reverse-a sign of love and sympathy, of something more than selfishness. If any

demonstration of this thought were necessary it is furnished us in the statement of the shortest verse in the Bible—"Jesus wept." Our Lord's tears were shed on a funeral occasion, too; Lazarus, his friend, the brother of Martha and Mary, was dead. Our Lord entered fully into the spirit of the occasion, with a deeper appreciation of the awful meaning of the word death than could possibly be entertained by those about him. He appreciated more than any of the fallen, dying race the great blessing and privilege of living, and what a terrible affliction was death-destruction.

On the other hand, however, he understood more clearly than any of his hearers the gracious plan of God for the rescue of the race from death. He realized that for this purpose he had come into the world, that he might give his life as the ransom price for Father Adam, and thus incidentally for every member of the Adamic race involved in death through the first transgression in Eden. The Master realized from the standpoint of faith in the Father's plan, and his confident intention to carry out his own part in that plan and to lay down his life as our redemption price that thus resurrection blessings would come to every member of the race.

"Not Dead but Sleeping"

Let us note carefully the nature of the consolation which our Lord tendered to the sorrowing ones about him on this occasion. Let us be assured that "He who spake as never man spake" gave the soundest and best comfort. The consolation which he gave was that "Lazarus is not dead, but sleepeth." He neither spake of him nor thought of him as being dead in the sense of annihilation, because he had full confidence in the divine plan of redemption and in the resurrection blessings resulting. Hence the interim of death he spoke of as sleep-quiet, restful, waiting sleep.

What a wonderful figure is this, so frequently used throughout the Scriptures by all those who trusted in the divine plan of a resurrection morning. In the Old Testament Scriptures we read frequently of sleep. Abraham slept with his fathers, so did Isaac, so did Jacob, so did all the Prophets, so did all Israel. In the New Testament it is the same. Not only did our Lord speak of Lazarus sleeping, but the Apostles frequently used this same figure of sleep to represent their hope in a resurrection-that the dear ones who went down into death were not annihilated, but as our text declares, "Will come again from the land of the enemy"-will awaken in the resurrection morning.

Thus, too, of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, it is written that though stoned to death, he “fell asleep,” sweetly, restfully, trusting in Jesus and the great power which he ultimately would exercise to call forth from the power of death all redeemed by the precious blood. This, too, we remember, was the comfort the Apostle set before the early Church, saying, “Comfort one another with these words”-”They that sleep in Jesus shall God bring from the dead by him”. (1 Thess. 4:14-18) Referring to the matter on one occasion the Apostle remarked, “We shall not all sleep, but we must all be changed.” He referred to those who would be living at the second coming of Christ, whose resurrection “change” will not be preceded by a period of unconsciousness in death.

Let us go back to Jesus and the sorrowing sisters at Bethany, and hearken to the words of comfort extended to the bereaved on that occasion. We cannot improve upon the great Teacher and the lessons which he presented. Let us hearken to his conversation with Martha. He says: “Thy brother shall live again.” He does not say thy brother is living now. He did not say, as some erroneously teach today, thy brother is more alive in death than he was before he died. No! No! The Lord would not thus mock the common sense and reason of his hearer, nor could he thus violate the truth and declare the dead not dead.

Hearken! The Lord admits that a calamity has befallen the household. He says not a word about his friend Lazarus having gone to heaven-not an intimation of the sort. On the contrary, he has tears of sympathy, and holds out as the strongest and only truthful solution of the sorrow, the hope of a resurrection-”Thy brother shall live again.” “I am the resurrection and the life!” The hope of all the dead centers in me. My death will effect the cancellation of the original Adamic condemnation, and I shall have the right then in harmony with the Father’s plan to call forth all the dead from the great prison-house of death, from the tomb. “Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth.”-John 5:28

The Resurrection Morning

At the close of his conversation with Martha, explaining that her hope must center in a resurrection of the dead and that he was the center of that resurrection hope, our Lord asked for the tomb, intent upon giving an illustration of the power which by and by in the resurrection morn-

ing will be exercised toward the whole world of mankind. Standing at the door of the tomb our Lord cried in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" and the dead came forth-he had been dead, he was quickened by our Lord's power and authority. This, like other miracles performed by our dear Redeemer at his first advent, we are particularly told, was a fore-manifestation of his coming glory and power, an advance exhibit of what he will do at his second advent, only that the work at the second advent will be universal, higher, deeper, broader every way, "All the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped;" all that are in their graves shall come forth, not merely to relapse again into blindness and death, but a permanent recovery-not only recovery from the loss of natural sight and hearing, but the eyes and ears of their understanding will be opened also; not merely aroused from a sleep of death to a few years more under present conditions, but aroused to the intent that by obedience of the Divine arrangement of the Millennial Age all the awakened ones may attain to all the glorious perfections, mental, moral and physical, lost by Adam's disobedience. "Times of Refreshing Shall Come" Glorious hope of a glorious time. What wonder that the Apostle speaks of it as "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord when he shall send Jesus Christ." What wonder that he speaks of those years of the Millennial Age as "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."-Acts 3:19-21

Lazarus died again, Jairus' daughter died again, the son of the widow of Nain died again. Their awakening from the tomb was merely a temporary matter, merely an illustration of the Lord's power; as it is written, "These things did Jesus and manifested forth his glory." These were merely foregleams of the coming power and glory and blessed work of the gracious Prophet, Priest and King whom God has appointed not only to redeem the world, but in due time to grant to all the opportunities secured by that redemption sacrifice.

We cannot here go into details, but our full thought on this subject is presented in the Studies in the Scriptures, in which we endeavor to show amongst other things that the great blessing which will ultimately be for the world of mankind, as well as for the church, centers in the coming of our Lord and Master, our Redeemer and King, and that the great blessings centering in him are not merely temporary, but designed of God to be everlasting and eternal to those who accept Divine favors in the right spirit, reverently, thankfully, obediently.

Death “The Land of the Enemy”

Why should death be called “The land of the enemy”? Why should it be written, “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death”? All because, disguise the facts as we may, death is an enemy. The suggestion that it is a friend comes not from the Word of God, but from heathen philosophies. The suggestion that it is unreal comes not from the Scriptures, but from heathendom. The suggestion that the dead are more alive than they were before they died is totally out of harmony with the Scriptural declaration-”The dead know not anything; their sons come to honor and they know it not, and to dishonor and they perceive it not of them,” because “there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave whither thou goest.” (Job 14:21; Eccl. 9:10) The suggestion that we deceive ourselves and imagine without reason that the moment of death is the moment of greater life, is of the Adversary, who contradicted the Lord’s statement in Eden to our first parents, and when the Lord had declared, “Ye shall surely die” for your sin, declared in contradiction, “Ye shall not surely die.”-Gen. 3:2-4

The Adversary has kept up this false teaching for 6,000 years, and at last not only heathendom is deceived by his misrepresentation of facts, but very very many of Christendom likewise trust to the word of Satan, “Ye shall not surely die,” and believe that the dead are not dead, and reject the testimony of God’s Word that “the wages of sin is death,” that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die,” that “death has passed upon all men because all are sinners,” and that the hope of the Church as well as the hope for the world lies in the fact that Christ died for our sins and redeemed us from the death sentence, and in the Father’s due time is to effect a resurrection of the dead.

The Key of Death’s Prison

Let us comfort our hearts with the true comfort, the substantial comfort of the Word of God-there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth. The thousands of millions who have gone down into the great prison-house of death shall be released, because the Great Redeemer has the key, the power, the authority, to bid the prisoners come forth, even as the Scriptures declare.

What a glorious resurrection morning that will be! What a glorious reunion! We understand the Scriptural teaching to be that the awakening processes will continue throughout a considerable portion of the Millennial Age, the thousand-year day of resurrection and restitution. First will come the resurrection of the Church, the “Bride,” the “Lamb’s Wife,” the “Body of Christ.” These, as the Scriptures declare, will constitute the First Resurrection-not only first in order of time, but first in the sense of chief. In that company will be none except the saints; as it is written, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:6) Nevertheless that will be but a little flock, as the Scriptures declare, including “not many wise, not many great, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom.”-1 Cor. 1:26,27; Jas. 2:5

Not long after the First Resurrection (the glorification of the Church), will come the resurrection of the Ancient Worthies-the overcomers of olden times prior to the Gospel Age. The assurance is that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the holy prophets-yes, all who were approved to God by their faith and their efforts to obedience-will come forth from the tomb to human conditions, glorious, grand, earthly illustrations of the heavenly Creator, to constitute the earthly representatives of the Kingdom, the instructors of mankind. The instruction of the world will forthwith proceed. We are assured that “the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep”-to such an extent that “they shall teach no more every man his neighbor 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.” We cannot stop to describe that glorious time and the grand opportunities it will give to every creature to know the Lord, to obey him, to attain to resurrection in its full significance-a raising up to mental, moral and physical perfection.

The Last First, the First Last

After the Kingdom of God shall have been fully established in the earth, and Satan shall have been bound, after the darkness shall have rolled away and the true light shall have lightened every creature, the time will come for the awakening of all the families of the earth-not all at once, but gradually, “they shall come again from the land of the enemy.” The Scriptures do not go into details on this subject, they leave much to faith; but give us a firm foundation for that faith, nevertheless, in the positive

promise of the Lord's Word. To our understanding those who have fallen asleep last, will be among the first to be called back from the land of the enemy, to be awakened, and thus the work of awakening the sleeping ones will progress backward, as we might express it; the living ones will prepare for their brothers and sisters and parents, and they in turn for their brothers and sisters and parents, and so on all the way back, until finally father Adam and mother Eve shall come forth to see the world filled with their progeny, in accord with the Lord's original commission that they multiply and fill the earth.

They will behold with astonishment the showers of blessing that have come upon the race from the Heavenly Father and through the Heavenly Saviour, they will see what havoc was wrought by their disobedience, but that God in his wisdom and power was both able and willing to overrule the matter and to bring order out of confusion and resurrection out of death. They and all will realize something of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Love of God. The grand plan of salvation shall loom up before them; they will see how Abel, their son, who suffered for righteousness, was a type and picture of the great Son of God who suffered for righteousness and for our deliverance, and they will see how his blood speaks peace for all for whom it is shed, speaks forgiveness and renewed harmony with God.

The Tragedy of Sin and Death

They will learn, too, of the terrible degradation which came upon their race subsequently to their death; they will read with appalled hearts and bated breath of the terrible famines and pestilences which came upon the race as a part of the original sentence or death curse; they will learn about the mental aberrations which afflicted the world, so that men thought they were doing God service in persecuting one another because of religious differences of opinion, and how others, more or less consumed with selfishness, land hunger, etc., warred and fought and devised engines of destruction against each other, and killed one another by the thousands in battle. They will wonder at the patience of God in so long permitting the evil. Then truly they will see what God has wrought: First, his justice, which provided the great redemption price and would not otherwise clear the guilty. Second, his love, manifested in the same connection in the giving of his Son. Third, they will come to understand how that during this Gospel Age God has been selecting his Church to be the Bride of Christ and joint-heir with him in the Kingdom. Fourth, they will

perceive that when this election was complete and the members of the glorified company had all been tried and polished and tested and glorified, then the blessing of the world through the glorified Christ, Head and Body, came upon all mankind in the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.-Acts 3:20

O, how they and all of their posterity would naturally be prompted to say, glory, honor, dominion, majesty, power and might be unto Him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever.

O, how glad they will be to see the glorious outcome which the power of God will thus have wrought! How glad they will be that the divine plan is that ultimately all imperfection shall be eradicated and that all of the race that will may live eternally under divine favor and blessing, while those otherwise minded will be destroyed from among the people in the Second Death. They will surely cry, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty! Who shall not come and worship before Thee. Thy righteous acts are made manifest?-Revelation 15:3

“Thy Work Shall Be Rewarded”

Finally, consider the Lord’s Word to us all as a race, and particularly his word to parents, “Thy work shall be rewarded.” What a blessing and comfort! What a consolation and encouragement are in these words to those parents who, seeking to train up their children in the way they should go, are sadly wounded and discouraged when the arrow of death smites down the dear ones they had so loved and cherished. They are disposed at first to say, Ah, my love, my counsel, my motherly care, my fatherly provision, were wasted. But not so, saith the Lord; thy works shall be rewarded.

How Rewarded?

You shall see the fruit of your labor in the future; we shall know as we are known by and by. Our dear ones will be with us, and to whatever extent time and effort will have been expended upon them to mold and fashion them along the lines of righteousness and truth, uprightness and godliness, these surely have not been spent in vain. The child shall come forth that much more advanced in its mental and moral development; to that much more easy attainment of the grand heights which the Lord will then open up before it.

On the other hand, the parent who has been careless of his children, neglectful of his privileges and obligations as a parent, will undoubtedly have his negligence rewarded in the future as he shall see what he might have done for his children but did not.

And more than this. By a Divine law of reaction, every parent who is faithful in the discharge of his parental duties shall have his work rewarded in himself, and likewise every parent neglectful of his duties shall have his work rewarded in himself. For who does not realize that there is no greater privilege or opportunity for self-development than comes to the parent in his endeavor to train up his children in the way they should go, in the reverence and admonition of the Lord.

Character Building is Included

Undoubtedly it is true, too, that every effort to do good unto others, especially to your own children, has its compensating blessings upon your own hearts. May this blessing deepen as the years go on. In conclusion I say to you, not only for to-day, but for the future days, “Comfort one another with these words” of our Lord to the effect that your little ones shall come again from “the land of the enemy,” and that their return shall even be much more blessed, under much more favorable conditions than at present. Then, the great King reigning, all evil will be in subjection, all evil doers will be under restraint, all the influences of righteousness will be let loose, and the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep. Blessed prospects are these before us, and to him who loved us and bought us, and to the Heavenly Father, who designed the great plan, we give everlasting thanks and praises, and show this by our daily lives!

The Divine Plan For Human Salvation WHY EVIL WAS PERMITTED

Showing the Harmonious Co-operation of the Creator’s Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power An Epitomized Statement of The Divine Plan Of The Ages

THE careful and reverent student of the sacred scriptures will find, in the light now due to the household of faith, that the Word of God presents a complete and systematic plan for the salvation and development of

the human race, which for ages has been in operation, which, up to the present time, has been a success in its gradual development, and which in due time will be gloriously completed. The past six thousand years of human history have been necessary to work out that plan to its present degree of development, and one thousand years more will witness its full consummation in the restitution of every willing member of the race to the original likeness of God, and their establishment in righteousness, with the eternal ages of glory and blessing before them.

Such is the scope of God's plan which he formed before the foundation of the world, to be wrought out in Christ, who is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last of Jehovah's direct creation-his only begotten Son. (Rev. 1:8, 10; John 1:14,18; Col. 1:13) "By him were all things made, and without him was not anything made that was made." "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature. By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (John 1:3; Col. 1:15, 17) In him also "we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."-Col. 1:14.

God having thus honored his Son by making him his instrument or agent for the accomplishment of all his grand designs, declared to men: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." He "hath exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour," and "would have all men honor the Son (as the Father's agent and representative) even as they honor the Father." (Matt. 17:5; Acts 5:31; John 5:23) Nor does the Son claim higher honor than to be the Father's agent and messenger, "the messenger of the (Jehovah's) covenant" (Mal. 3:1); for he says, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me," and "My Father is greater than I." (John 6:38; 5:30; 4:34; 14:28) To us, as to the apostle, "there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things; and we by him."-1 Cor. 8:6

After the creation of angels came the creation of man, a being adapted to live on the earth and to be its lord and king. Man, as well as the angels, was created in the divine image-that is, with faculties of reason, conscience, etc., capable of discerning right and wrong. Man, as king of earth and perfect, as created, was only "a little lower than the angels" (Heb. 2:7,9), and that little consisted in his being limited by his nature to

the earth, while the angelic nature, being spiritual, has a wider range for observation and hence a broader plane for reasoning. To be an image of God implies freedom of choice or will with respect to one's own conduct. With such freedom man was originally endowed by his Creator, and the alternatives of good and evil were placed before him as a necessity to his trial for lasting life, though not without warning on God's part as to the blessed results of righteousness and the baneful results of evil. On account of man's inexperience, implicit obedience to God's will was required of him for his safety and protection, as well as for a test of his loyalty to his rightful Lord and Sovereign. Nevertheless, God, by divine intuition, foresaw the course that Adam would take and the fall of the whole race with him into death, and also the lessons which that experience with sin and death might be overruled to teach them when, in due time, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice, he would grant them remission of sins upon their repentance and turn to righteousness. He therefore determined to let man take his chosen course, and to inflict on him its just penalty, and then in due time to deliver him from it with a great salvation.

God foresaw that, even with good intentions, man's limited knowledge and experience would continually offer temptations to doubt the wisdom of divine arrangements, if not to disobey them; he therefore embraced this opportunity to convey to all of his creatures, as well as to man, a fuller conception of himself, in order that they might the more fully and heartily worship and obey him. As a revelation and illustration of his attributes-Justice, Wisdom, Power and Love-God placed his human son in his own image-perfect though inexperienced, and but slightly informed respecting his Creator's attributes-on trial, in order that he might gain a valuable experience, yet foreknowing that, although in every respect fairly tried, he would, in the use of his own free will, fall into sin. But God did not purpose to abandon his disobedient and death-deserving creature to eternal ruin, but provided a way of redemption whereby he might be just and yet the justifier of the truly penitent and believing (Rom. 3:26), so that the painful experience gained under the reign of sin and death might eventually, under this overruling influence of divine providence, serve the more firmly to establish them in righteousness and willing loyalty to God. The trial in Eden was merely a test of obedience, or loyalty to God. The fruit of the forbidden tree was good (for all the trees of the garden were good) and was desirable to make one wise; and had they proved their loyalty to God by obedience, probably the restriction would in due time have been removed. Knowledge is a blessing only to those who are subject to the divine will. This, God had arranged that man

should acquire by experience, and angels by example. The penalty of man's disobedience was death—"In the day that thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die." The penalty was fulfilled to the letter: the dying began as soon as the penalty was pronounced, when they were cast out of Eden and restrained from eating its life-sustaining fruits; and it was completed within the thousand-year day, as predicted. (2 Pet. 3:8) The penalty, death, being gradually and not suddenly inflicted left the condemned pair free to propagate their species, yet subject to the weakness and all the penalty under which they themselves groaned.

Thus by one man's disobedience, sin entered into the world, and death by (as a result of) sin; and thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners and imperfect by heredity.-Rom. 5:12

Sin, and death its penalty, by thus gaining control of Adam, controlled the world, and reigned from Adam to Moses-with but few divine promises, even, to illuminate the dark way. Then "the law came by Moses," offering lasting life to any one who would observe it in every particular. But in their fallen condition none of the condemned race was able to obey it, and by it to gain the reward of life. As God had designed, however, the law did serve a purpose: it served to show the helplessness of man for his own justification; and it served to point out, as from another than the corrupt and condemned seed of Adam, the holy, harmless, undefiled Lamb of God, whose sacrifice, as Adam's substitute or Redeemer, satisfied the claims of justice, bought the world from the slavery of sin and death, and made possible the gospel offer of forgiveness and lasting life, not through our righteousness in keeping God's law (which is impossible by reason of the weakness of the flesh), but by our acceptance of Christ as our Master, and of his ransom-sacrifice as the satisfaction for our sins before God.

It might be supposed that the work of blessing the world should have begun at once when the sacrifice for sin was accepted by the Father, as signified by the giving of the spirit of adoption at Pentecost; but not so. Another feature of the divine plan had first to be accomplished, viz.: the selection and development of the Church to be joint heirs with Christ in his glory and kingdom and work of blessing the world. This was from the beginning a part of the divine plan; and therefore the glorious reign and work of blessing the world could not begin at Christ's resurrection, nor at Pentecost, but had to be delayed until the selection of all its tried and faithful members could be accomplished. Or, to state it otherwise,

the Father's appointed time for blessing the world is during the seventh thousand years, and had it not been for his purpose to select the Church, the "bride" or "body" of Christ, to share with him in the work of blessing the race, there need not have been two advents of our Lord. One would have been sufficient; for he could have come now, in the end of the sixth thousand years, could have redeemed all and at once begun the great work of blessing and restoring mankind. He came to redeem the world eighteen centuries previous to the appointed time of blessing, so as to leave time, before that day, for the selection of his bride from among the redeemed race.

As the occasion of man's fall became God's opportunity for exhibiting to all his creatures his wonderful character from every standpoint-his justice, his wisdom, his power and his love-so it also became an opportunity for the testing in all points of his only begotten Son, preparatory to his yet higher exaltation (Phil. 2:8-10) to the divine nature, with all which that implies of glory, honor and immortality, and of position next to the Father, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. And the same occasion, as pre-arranged of God, also makes possible the calling, selection and trial of the Gospel Church, now soon to be completed and made joint-inheritors, with our Lord and Saviour, of glory, honor and immortality, and like him to be exalted far above men and angels, even to the divine nature.-2 Pet. 1:4 Only the justice of God's character has yet been made manifest to the world, and much of its glory is sadly beclouded by human tradition, which falsely declares the wages of sin to be eternal torment instead of "everlasting destruction." God's love for his creatures, the wisdom of his plan of salvation, and his power to save, are as yet but partially revealed, and even distortedly seen by but few indeed. God's justice has been revealed to all for the past six thousand years of the reign of death, the penalty which he prescribed for sin. God's love began to be revealed two thousand years ago, but not seeing all of the plan, few rightly appreciate the love. Nevertheless, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." (John 4:9) The wisdom of the Lord's plan will not be appreciated until the Millennial Sun of Righteousness has arisen, revealing those features of his plan which then will bring blessings to all the billions which his justice condemned, and which his love redeemed. But the power of God will not be seen in its fullness until well on in that Millennial Day. Although partially revealed in the work of creation, the grandest and fullest exhibition remains to be shown in the resurrection from death of those redeemed

ones, who, accepting of the gracious provisions of his love, bow in glad submission to all his just requirements.

It is a mistake made by many to suppose that Jehovah's justice and his love are ever in conflict with each other. Both are perfect-his love never desires or attempts what his justice does not endorse: his justice and his love must both approve every act for which his power is exercised. With men, because of lack of wisdom and power, love and justice often conflict. Man's love often has gracious designs which he has not the wisdom or power to accomplish except by violating justice. We must gauge our views by the infinite and stay close to the revelation he makes of his plans, not seeking to make plans of our own for God. God's plan, when clearly seen, fully vindicates his justice as well as his love. The plan of redemption devised by divine wisdom is the essence of unfathomable love based upon uncompromising justice, and will be fully accomplished by divine power. The first act of God's love was to provide a ransom for Adam, and thus for all his race, since it was by his transgression that all fell into sin and death. Until the ransom was given nothing was done in the way of saving the world: promises and types of coming salvation were made, but nothing more could be done. God had rendered a just sentence, and the penalty could not be set aside: it had to be met. Before Adam and his family could be released from the death sentence by a resurrection, the life of another man not under the sentence had to be paid as its corresponding price, that God might be just in justifying and accepting back to harmony and life all who believe in Jesus and turn unto God in his name. (Acts 4:12) And having accepted Christ as the ransom of all such, the apostle assures us that now "he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."-1 John 1:9

Thus we see, from God's own declaration, that since Christ died for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, or rather, since he ascended up on high, and there appearing in the presence of God on our behalf presented the price of our redemption and became Lord of all, of both the living and the dead, there is no longer any legal hindrance in the way of the return of all mankind to fellowship with God, and to all the blessings and privileges lost under the penalty of the first transgression. The only difficulties remaining are on man's part. In his fallen condition his mind is sick as well as his body. He inclines to believe falsely and is disinclined to believe in so great a salvation, such "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Besides, he is weak through the fall, and does those things which he often does not at heart approve

and leaves undone much that at heart he really desires to do, and there is no help in himself. Some assistance in overcoming sinward tendencies must reach him or else the cancellation of past sin and the opportunity for reconciliation will be a valueless offer.

This necessity, which we recognize, is fully met in those features of the divine plan which are yet to be fulfilled. He who redeemed all is appointed to be both king and judge of all; for God "hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained," Jesus Christ. (Acts 17:31) That is, he will righteously grant the world a new, individual trial for eternal life, having cancelled the sentence of the first trial by the propitiatory sacrifice of his Son.

And the redeemed, tried and glorified Church, the faithful bride of Christ, is to share with her Lord in this great work, as kings and priests and judges. (Rev. 5:10; 1 Cor. 6:2,3) As kings they will rule the world in righteousness, enforcing and establishing order and justice and truth; as priests they will teach the people, and through the merit of the one sacrifice for sins forgive the penitent, and cleanse and help them out of their weaknesses-mental, moral and physical; as judges they will judge of the measure of the guilt of all in respect to their course in the future as well as in their past lives, judging not by the hearing of the ear, nor by the sight of the eye, but by an infallible judgment for which they will be abundantly qualified by their exaltation to the divine nature.

While the promise of God to the Church is a change of nature from human to divine, to be effected at the second advent of her Lord, as the completion of his resurrection-the first resurrection (2 Peter 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:50-53; Phil. 3:10-11; Rev. 20:6)-the provision of God's plans for the world at large is quite different, viz.: a "restitution" or restoration to all the grand qualities and powers of the human nature (an earthly likeness of the divine), now so sadly blurred and defaced by the six thousand years of slavery to sin and death.

Rightly to appreciate human restitution, it must be remembered that every excellent quality exhibited among men is but an imperfect exhibition of what belongs to each perfect man, whether it be logical acuteness, mathematical precision, aesthetic taste, art, wit, eloquence, poetic imagination, music, or any other intellectual grace or moral refinement; and that these, to a higher degree than we have ever seen them exhibited by any fallen men, will, in the process of restitution, become, as at first

designed by the Creator, the endowments of each obedient member of the human family. With the restitution of perfect mental and moral balance to man, the original king of earth, will come also a blessing through man to all his subjects-the beasts of the field, the fowl of heaven, and the fish of the sea (Psa. 8:6,8); and the ordering of the earth itself is likewise promised.

The “times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:19-21) are, we believe the Scriptures to teach, just at the door. Soon the last members of the body of Christ will have finished their course, and then, with their glorious Head and all the other members of the body, they will shine forth as the sun for the blessing of the entire redeemed race.