

Manna July 11

Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not, ... but keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. 1 John 5:18

SO long as the heart (the mind, the will) is holy, in harmony with God and righteousness,--that is to say, so long as the

seed of our begetting, the spirit of holiness, continues in us,--the new mind cannot approve of sin, but must and will be its opponent. Even though many of the battles fought are with the members of our fallen and weak human nature, their appetites and desires, we nevertheless, as "New Crea-

tures," are separate and distinct from the flesh, and the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh are not imputed to the New Creature in Christ Jesus, but are reckoned as covered, hidden under the merits of our Lord's redemptive sacrifice. Z. '99-98 R2440:4

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RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

"Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not."--1 John 5:18

WHEN attempting to explain spiritual things, there is always a difficulty, particularly because we have only human words with which to express ourselves. Therefore, in order to make spiritual things clear, the Scriptures give us various similes and other figures of speech. In this text the Apostle John speaks of those who are begotten of God, those who have experienced a change of nature, who were first begotten according to the flesh, as children of Adam, and who have been begotten again--begotten of God. (1 Peter 1:3.) Since our Lord's resurrection, God has been inviting some to come out from the world and become New Creatures--no longer human beings, but spirit beings.

The first step toward this change of nature is the receiving of a new will. But we can see that it is a mistake to call the new will alone the New Creature; for the new will comes to us before we receive the Holy Spirit. It is the new will that presents our sacrifice. If we did not have the new will, we would not present our bodies a living sacrifice. The next step is that of the Redeemer's becoming a Surety for this sacrifice and for the attainment of the new nature. The third step is the Heavenly Father's acceptance of this sacrifice, of this slaying of the earthly nature by the Redeemer, and His giving of a special sign of His acceptance. That special sign of acceptance is the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

It is very necessary that we keep the new human will separate and distinct from that which we receive at the begetting of the Spirit. We had the new will first; we desired and purposed to do God's will. Then we approached the Father in the way He had arranged--through our Redeemer. It is the new will that makes the sacrifice. The offering being presented, the merit of Jesus is applied, and thus the sacrifice becomes at once acceptable to the Father. Up to this point the will of the individual is still a human will, a *new* human will. The offering is then slain by the High Priest, our Lord Jesus, the acceptance of the Father being marked immediately by the begetting of the Spirit.

Just what God does at this juncture we do not fully understand. We do not understand clearly what a natural begetting is, though we have better means of understanding the natural begetting than of understanding the spiritual begetting. As to the spiritual begetting, we have the Divine expression that it is the starting of a new life. The one receiving it gains a supernatural illumination. Thereafter he is a changed person, a new person, a New Creature. He is now *in Christ Jesus*. He has new hopes, aims and objects, and is more and more enabled to apprehend spiritual things as the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit operate upon his mind.

But all this is something that cannot be explained to those who have not taken the necessary steps by which spiritual things may be understood. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:9-15.) Not until we have received this Heavenly illumination can we discern spiritual things. Nor do we at first discern them in the way of appreciating them fully. Spiritual discernment grows from a small beginning. "Old things have passed away and all things have become new." These old things pass away, not instantly, but gradually; and the starting point is marked by this expression, "begotten of God."

NEW CREATURE DOES NOT PRACTISE SIN

To be begotten of God, then, is to receive the beginning of a new life, a new nature. The Apostle John declares of such, "Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin [doth not practise sin--Diaglott]." (1 John 3:9.) So long as these are under such holy control, inspired by the great and precious promises, and possessing the holy will, they could not sin wilfully--could not practise sin in their lives.

We are to distinguish between a *wilful* sin and being overtaken by a fault. The reference in our text is to wilful sin, the practice of sin. The New Creature cannot sin because it is the Heavenly seed, the seed of the new nature. Every flower, every animal, sprang from a seed of life. However infinitesimal the seed may be, however embryonic, *life* is there. Likewise with the Christian; so long as any of the holy mind of God is present, there is life. But if he sins wilfully, this holy seed is dead. If this seed perish, the individual is dead as a New Creature. Nothing would then await the individual but the Second Death; for he had been lifted out of the first, or Adamic death, and to die again would mean that he had come under the extreme penalty of God's Law a second time. This would be an individual sentence, and would be eternal. Such would be "twice dead," as the Apostle Jude puts it--"plucked up by the roots."--Jude 12.

So we see the Apostle John's meaning--whoever is in the spirit-begotten condition, whoever has this embryo of the new nature, could not sin wilfully, could not take pleasure in sin, could not give himself over to sin. To do so would signify that he had lost this Holy Spirit, and that he had become unholy again. As St. Peter explains, it would be like the sow that was washed returning to her wallowing in the mire. The Apostle John says that one begotten of the Holy Spirit will "keep himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not." He not only will not sin wilfully, but he will keep constantly on guard, watching himself, just as a watchman guards the castle or the city or the house. He watches all the doors, all the avenues of access.

THE NECESSITY FOR VIGILANCE

This thought of setting a watch over ourselves, of keeping ourselves so that the Wicked One cannot touch or injure us, suggests another thought: The Lord Himself is the great Center of righteousness, purity, truth. All who are on the side of righteousness, purity, truth, will shun sin, will have no fellowship with it; for even if we should not really enter into sin in act, if we have any sympathy with it, we would be to that extent out of harmony with the Lord. As in a circle the nearer to the center the greater the safety; so it is with the circle of righteousness, whose Center is Jehovah Himself.

The slightest sympathy with sin would cause the child of God to depart to that extent from the Center of purity. As he widened the distance between himself and the Lord, he would draw nearer to the outer rim of the circle. Think of an island surrounded by water infested with crocodiles. The person who would remain in the center of the island would be perfectly safe from those enemies. But the nearer one approached to the coast line, the greater his danger. So Satan is represented as a wily foe; and to the extent that any of us would not watch himself, he would be getting nearer to the circumference of that circle. Any sympathy with what is not in the fullest harmony with the mind of the Lord, any participation in sin, would carry him closer and closer to the place of danger. The intimation of the Scriptures is that such a one would be in great danger of being touched, caught, by the great Adversary and his demon host, to his injury, perhaps to his ruin.

Presumably every Christian has had something of this experience of drawing near to the place of danger. In proportion as we live near to the Lord, we are under Divine protection. In proportion as we waver in our loyalty, we come nearer to the Adversary. One might thus endanger himself without actually sinning. His heart might still be true to the Lord, yet he might be touched by sin by being involved with others in some way. Therefore the Word of God warns us to watch our actions, to watch our companionship, our conduct, to abide "in the secret place of the Most High," to "make straight paths for our feet," lest that which is weak and lame be turned out of the way. Rather, let it be healed, by keeping very close to our God, as far away as possible from the point of danger.

(Gal 6:7-8 KJV) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. {8} For he that soweth to

his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

R5934 "SOWING TO THE FLESH--THE RESULT DEATH "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth,

that shall he also reap."--Galatians 6:7 .

IN THIS text the Apostle seems to be emphasizing the fact that it is not enough that we make a consecration of ourselves to God, but we need to show by the earnestness of our conduct that we have received a transforming power into our lives. If we say that we are New Creatures and make a change merely in our *profession*, while still sowing to the flesh, the result will be not according to our profession, but according to our *doing*; and we shall reap the reward -- *corruption*. Others may be deceived, and we may be *deceived ourselves*; but God will not be deceived. If we, on the contrary, to the best of our ability to understand the Lord's will, lay down our lives, sowing to the Spirit, then shall we reap everlasting life...

THE BLACKSMITH AND THE DONKEY

If the New Creature gives a free rein to the old creature about what he shall read, or eat, how long he shall sleep, at what time he shall get up, where he shall go and how long he shall stay, etc., the New Creature will have his hands full--will he not? The Spirit of the Lord is to actuate the New Creature in thought, word and action and decide what he is to do, what he shall eat, where he shall go--is to control everything. If we sow to the Spirit, if we walk after the Spirit, we shall be overcomers, we shall reap life-everlasting. We must *not yield* to the old creature. By yielding we are sowing seed to the flesh, and by and by the old creature will say, "You have been in the habit of giving that to me, and you *must* let me have it"; and the result is likely to be disastrous to the New Creature.

The matter reminds us of one of AEsop's fables which many of us have read. On a cold, frosty morning, a donkey pushed his nose in at the door of a blacksmith shop, where it was warm from a glowing fire. The blacksmith said to the donkey, "Get out!" The donkey replied, "You are stingy! I am only getting my nose warm." Presently the blacksmith looked around and perceived that the donkey had his whole head in. The blacksmith said, "Now get out, will you?" But the donkey pleaded that he was only getting a little breath of warm air, that his head surely would not trouble the blacksmith. After awhile the blacksmith looked again and saw that the donkey was half-way into the shop. Then he shouted, "Get out! get out!" But the donkey still insisted that he was only getting a little warm. So the blacksmith yielded. By and by he looked again and saw that the donkey was altogether in the shop. Then he sprang forward shouting excitedly, "Get out!" But the donkey said triumphantly, "Which of us will get out?" And thereupon he turned around and began to kick at the blacksmith. The donkey was in full *control*.

"THE END OF THAT WAY IS DEATH"

So it will be with us if we begin a course of yielding little by little to the desires of the fleshly mind. The end of the way which the flesh craves, the Apostle teaches us, is death. St. Paul does not say that the *beginning* of that way is death; but that the beginning of that way *leads toward* death. If the old creature has gained a leeway, every step that is taken

must be retraced, or the case is hopeless. The New Creature is to say to the old creature, "*You are not to be my master!*" The old creature is to be *made to know* that the *New Creature* is the Master. The New Creature develops at the expense of the old creature, the old nature, which must be put to death...

To the Church of Christ our text is applicable *now* and in the fullest sense. Let those of us now on trial for life or death eternal, watch and pray!

"Thou seest our weakness, Lord!

Our hearts are known to Thee;

O, strengthen Thou the weary hand,

Confirm the feeble knee!

Let us in life--till death--

Thy steadfast Truth declare,

And publish with our latest breath

Thy love and guardian care."

R4252 "THE EVIL ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT" "*We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the Evil One toucheth him not.*" -- *1 John 5: 18...*

"IF POSSIBLE THE VERY ELECT"

From the day of Pentecost until the present time the Lord's dear sheep have been beset by the same great Adversary, and have had fiery trials, and have also had the protection of him that was begotten of God, the Lord Jesus, who is keeping the faithful from the power of the Adversary. But the Scriptures unanimously point us to the end of this age as a time for special trial and testing, not only upon the world but also upon the Church, for "judgment must begin at the house of God." It is respecting this coming time that the Apostle forewarns the Church, saying, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day." He implies that the evil day with which this age shall end will have the severest trials ever known to God's people, and that they will have the greatest need ever known for the armor of truth and righteousness. The same fact is referred to by our Lord in addressing the sixth phase of the Church, the Church of Philadelphia. He says, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which is coming upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth." (Rev. 3:10.) The seventh stage of the Church, the Laodicean, will come into that hour of temptation; and we believe that it is already in part upon us. What we would have all see is that the time ahead of us must be very peculiarly a time of trial and testing, else it would not be so strikingly referred to in the Word of God...

THE WAY OF ESCAPE

If it be conceded that we are down very close to the hour of temptation, when the Evil One will be permitted to bring extraordinary delusions and trials to bear upon the world and the nominal Church, then we are in the time when we ought to be looking about us to see what way of escape the Lord has provided for us. We believe that many of our readers will agree with us that the Lord's special provision for keeping us from the power of the

Evil One is the Present Truth...

The intimation clearly is that "The love of many shall wax cold." (Matt. 24:12.) A cooling of our love toward God will mean a loss of our desire to please him in our own thoughts and words and doings, which will include a cooling of our love for his service in the dissemination of the Gospel message and the gathering and feeding of the household of faith. Various things will conspire to this end--the love of money, the love of pleasure, the love of self, the love of earthly things in general, all of which were consecrated, devoted, before we received the spirit of adoption. If our love grows cold it will determine that we are not such as would be worthy to associate with our Redeemer in his Kingdom glory...

In no way will this loss of the "love divine, all love excelling," be more manifest than in respect to our sentiments and conduct toward the fellow-members of the Body of Christ."

R5651 "THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

A spirit of defiance and rebellion against everything like self-denial or resignation, a spirit of intense bitterness, is daily growing in the hearts of mankind. This general tendency of the civilized world today toward non-endurance, impatience and rebellion against restraint necessarily has its influence upon those who are seeking to walk in the narrow way. Only by Divine grace can this tendency be successfully resisted, and progress be made toward the development of the likeness of Christ."

R1485 "Unless we feel our own insufficiency and look to our Master continually, we shall be liable to depart from humility, to become puffed up with pride and haughtiness, the sure precursors of a fall. And again, if we look merely to our own weaknesses we will become so discouraged as to yield readily to the adversary's assaults. Our only safe position will be to feel humble and to realize our insufficiency, but to trust implicitly and always to him who has promised that he will never leave us, nor forsake us. (If there be any breach between us, if any leaving and forsaking, it will be on our part, not his.) We can safely trust our all to him who assures us that "All things shall work together for good to them that *love God* (with all their hearts)--to those called according to his purpose." We need have no fear of the ultimate results, so long as we find *our wills* fully submitted to our Master's will, and our hands and thoughts filled with his work. We may have full confidence, and may rest in peace upon the promise, "He will not suffer you to be tempted *above that ye are able*, but will, with the temptation, provide also a way of escape."

"Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist [by standing] steadfast in *the faith*, knowing that similar afflictions are being accomplished in your brethren in the world." --¹ Pet. 5:8"

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"YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED"

--MARCH 5.--JOHN 8:12,31-36.--

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."--John 8:36.

OUR Lord's discourses of this lesson are presumed to have been delivered on the day following the eighth or great day of the

Feast of Tabernacles, referred to in our last lesson: this conclusion is based upon the statement of the *first verse of this chapter* and

the *last verse of the seventh chapter*. It appears that, altho the eighth was the last day of the Feast proper, another day was kept to a certain degree, the people being loth to relinquish the joys of the season. Another view is that this was a part of the discourse of the eighth day.

It is said that during this festival there were two great lights near the porch of the Temple, where Jesus discoursed (the Court of the Women--the portion of the Temple structure open to women as well as to men). These lights or candelabra, ornamented and gilded, were about seventy-five feet high, and threw a great light over the city, extraordinary for that period. It is presumed that this may have given Jesus the text for a discourse on the light of the world: but it is possible that our Lord took occasion to make this observation at the time of the performance of a certain ceremony by the Jews, described by Buxdorf as follows:

The ninth day, or day after the expiration of the eighth, which belonged to the "Feast of Tabernacles," is a solemn day likewise, and is called, "The Feast of Joy for the Law;" because on that day the last section of the Law was read, the rest having been read weekly during the course of the preceding Sabbaths. On this ninth day the custom of the Jews was to take all the books of the Law out of the chest, and to put a candle into it, in allusion to Prov. 6:23, and more particularly to Psa. 119:105.--Synag. Jud., c. xxii.

This act, symbolically considered, would imply, first, that the Law was a light, and secondly, that ultimately the Jewish Law would be superseded by the True Light--the Gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Either this last, or the two great lamps, or both of them, were quite a sufficient suggestion and illustration of the lesson which our Lord designed to inculcate. The thought of the one is that the world is in darkness, and needs the Light of Life, and that he who walks in the light will not stumble. The thought or suggestion of the other is equally comprehensible, implying that ultimately the veil of ignorance shall be removed, and the spirit of the truth shall be discerned, and thus Jesus, as the True Light, shall lighten every man that cometh into the world, respecting the divine character and law, and the conditions upon which eternal life may be enjoyed.

Another suggestion is that, as this Feast of Tabernacles represented the period of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, en route to Canaan, the great light to be followed would probably refer to the pillar of fire and cloud, which led Israel during the wilderness journey as a great light, and which was to their enemies who pursued them a cloud of great darkness. This thought is in full accord with the others, for we realize that spiritual Israel is journeying toward the heavenly Canaan, through the wilderness of sin, and that our Lord and his teachings are a light and a guide to his people--to the entire household of faith, but especially to those who are vigilant and attentive to the heavenly counsel.

That relationship to Christ is not a matter which, being put on in the instant of consecration, can never be dissolved, is clearly shown by the statement of vs. 31 and 32. Therein our Lord sets forth that *discipleship* is the thing that is entered into by those who accept him as the Savior and the privileges and blessings obtainable only through him. And *discipleship*, as here shown, does not signify mastery: on the contrary, it signifies that the one who becomes a disciple is, until perfect, a novice, who becomes a disciple in order that under the Master's instructions he may come, morally and intellectually, to the full stature of manhood in Christ. A great mistake is made on this point, not only by worldly people, who expect perfection in all who have named the name of Christ, but also by Christians themselves, who vainly imagine that a fulness of *consecration* to the Lord should produce in them instantaneous perfection: some vainly and sinfully claiming that they are without sin, and thereby give the inference that they have no need of a Savior, a Mediator, and his merit, to cover their blemishes of omission and commission.

The correct thought to get is the one which is clearly set forth in our Lord's Word; *viz.*, that sinners are not called to discipleship, but are called to repentance and faith in the Redeemer for the forgiveness of their sins (justification): but this is all to the intent that as justified persons they may, by a full consecration to the Lord, become his disciples,--*pupils* in the school of Christ.

Why do we enter this school? What lessons are we to learn in it? And for what reasons do we seek to learn these lessons, and consecrate ourselves to their study?

The incentive to enter the school of Christ is the heavenly Father's invitation to *justified believers* who approach his throne of grace by the new and living way--Christ: to such he extends a "high calling," inviting such to become "sons of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so

be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

This school of Christ may be considered a school of self-denial, of self-sacrifice, prompted by love and maintained by devotion. The great Teacher of this school, appointed by the Father to instruct those who shall be accepted as his "brethren," was himself educated in the same school, under the Father's inspection and direction--"He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect [acceptable to the high station to which he was called-- the divine nature] he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."--Heb. 5:8.

It was necessary that the "Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," should be tried in all points like as we are--that his obedience to the Father's will at any cost should be fully proved and demonstrated, as well as his love for his neighbor, humanity, whom by the Father's arrangement he came to redeem and to uplift. Much more, it is necessary that we who belong to this fallen but redeemed race, having been called to joint-heirship with him, should receive instruction and disciplining in this school which the Father has provided for those invited to be his sons, --partakers of the divine nature,--to the intent that we may fully put on the spirit of Christ, which received the Father's unstinted approval. Indeed, we have the plain declaration to the effect that we are all called according to a predestination on God's part that we might become copies of his Son, and thus be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," as joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

From this we see that in joining the Lord, through faith and consecration, we are not proclaiming ourselves graduates and heirs, but are proclaiming ourselves students, disciples, who *desire to be prepared to inherit* "the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him." If this thought be kept in mind, as the divine teaching on this subject, it will help to prevent our discouragement with ourselves when we find that unavoidably we do those things which we ought not to have done, and leave undone those things which we ought to have done, and that in our flesh dwells no perfection.--1 Cor. 2:9; Rom. 7:25.

Moreover, we are to remember that it is not the flesh that has entered the school of Christ, and is under his instructions and preparation for the Kingdom,--for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15:50.) Our acceptance of the divine call to spirit nature meant the renouncement of the earthly nature in every sense of the word, and meant our begetting as new creatures--"sons of God." It is the "new creature," the new mind, the new will, that is in the school of Christ, and that is to be perfected--to be brought into full accord with the divine will--to become a copy or likeness of the Lord. We will never succeed in getting our flesh into absolute harmony with the divine law, because of its imperfections, inherited and otherwise. And he who is looking for perfection of his flesh, and who is resting his faith therein, must of necessity have a poor hope of ever attaining to the likeness of Christ--of ever becoming one of the predestinated class--"a copy of his Son."--Rom. 8:29.

It is unnecessary that we should point out that the new mind, in proportion as it develops in likeness to the mind of Christ, will relax no efforts to keep the body under, with its motions of sin--to keep the will of the flesh dead. Surely, no spirit-begotten son of God could allow sin to *reign* in his mortal body: should sin to any degree control him, it will not be willingly, and hence could be but momentarily--until the new mind, the new creature, seeing the uprising of the flesh, would conquer it, obtaining the promised grace and help in every time of need, from the heavenly store-house of grace,--Christ.

This thought, rightly entertained, will help true disciples to appreciate their own position, and not to be utterly cast down if overtaken in a fault of the flesh, so long as they realize that their *hearts* are not in sympathy with the sin and unrighteousness, but on the contrary in full sympathy with the principles and instructions of our Teacher, and longing to be pleasing and acceptable in his sight. And this correct thought will also help all such to exercise fervency of love amongst themselves, toward the "brethren," who similarly are disciples, pupils in this school,--new creatures, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of their minds. If, therefore, each shall see blemishes in the flesh of the "brethren," disapproved and striven against, each should remember that the evil which he sees is that of his brother's enemy and not the evils of the brother himself, the "new creature;"--if so be that he gives us the assurance that his heart, his will, is in harmony with the Lord and his law of Love; and that he is daily seeking to learn the lessons taught in this school of Christ; and seeking to fight a successful warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh.

This is Scripturally termed walking in the light, and not stumbling about in the darkness--understanding and acting upon and in harmony with the divine arrangement--viewing matters as God

views them, and as he presents them in the Word of his grace. We need not, however, expect the worldly-minded to be willing or able to view the Lord's consecrated people in this light--of love, of charity, of patience, of long suffering, of brotherly kindness. On the contrary our Adversary, "the god of this world," points out to them the hypocrite, who uses the name of Christ and the law of Love as a cloak of maliciousness, selfishness, etc., and this Adversary continually seeks to misrepresent the terms and conditions of the school of Christ, not only to the world and to the hypocritical professors, but also and especially to the true disciples, whom he would fain discourage and turn back from the right way--persuading them, contrary to the Word of the Lord, that they are being judged according to the flesh, and not according to the spirit, the new mind.

"Disciples indeed" are those who will finish their course in this school of Christ and graduate and become joint-heirs with their Lord, and ultimately be associates with him in teaching and blessing all the families of the earth. But joining the school does not bring these results necessarily; as our Lord indicated, it is only by *continuing* in the school, continuing under his direction, under the direction of his Word of truth, faithfully and perseveringly, that the grand object of this school shall be attained. Nevertheless, at each step of the journey it may be our privilege to see that we are making progress--that we are coming to know more and more of the truth, and that it is more and more making us free. We are not to expect an instantaneous knowledge nor an instantaneous freedom.

The general effect of the light of the truth, of which the Word of God is the lamp, is to break the shackles of superstition and to make people independent, but these effects are of questionable profit to those who are not disciples in the school of Christ. To others, freedom and light of knowledge are apt to bring nearly as much bane as blessing, leading often to arrogance, self-conceit, unkindness, boastfulness, combativeness, dissatisfaction and general unhappiness. These evil results come upon those who are made free in some respects only, and left bound in other respects: and this is the general and growing condition of the civilized world to-day, including the majority in the nominal Church.

But ⁽¹⁾the true disciples, heeding the Word of the great Teacher, and continuing in all things to be his pupils, are not only set free from superstitions and ignorance, but also from the service of Sin; and receive instead a correct appreciation of their own natural weaknesses and blemishes, and of the divine mind-- the truth. In consequence, their freedom is one which blesses instead of injuring them; one which brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness; one which brings patience instead of anger; one which brings generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness; one which brings joy and peace instead of discontent and bitterness of spirit. Truly, the Son alone can make us free indeed.

And yet, be it remembered, our freedom is not a freedom of the flesh, but a freedom of the heart, the mind, the will, the new nature. And this freedom is necessarily incomplete so long as we have this treasure in an earthen vessel--so long as the new creature must use the imperfect body of the flesh as its instrument and exponent. These "brethren" of Christ, "sons of the highest," will be free in the absolute sense only when they attain their share in the first resurrection, --"I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

Our Lord points out that those who commit sin are the servants of Sin, and are not free. The Apostle declares, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and yet declares that, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 3:8; 1:8.) How, then, shall we reconcile these opposing statements and understand the Scripture which declares, "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness?"--Rom. 6:18.

We answer that the Scriptures ascribe *no sin* to the new mind, and *no perfection* in righteousness to our fallen flesh: both of these facts must be kept in mind in studying this subject. The "new creature" begotten of God (whose flesh is reckoned dead) and which is represented by the new mind, CANNOT SIN, because in its very essence as the "seed" or germ, implanted by the truth, "the spirit of the truth," it is opposed to sin. (James 1:18.) This new creature is so fully in accord with righteousness, so fully imbued with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, that it delights in holiness, and not in sin; and this must be the case so long as this begotten or holy spirit condition continues. He that is *begotten** of God sinneth not (will-

ingly--does not approve of nor take pleasure in sin), because his *seed* remaineth in him,--the holy seed of the truth, the spirit of the truth, with which he was begotten, and "that wicked one toucheth him not."--1 John 3:9; 5:18.

⁽²⁾So long as the heart (the mind, the will) is holy, in harmony with God and with righteousness,--that is to say, so long as the seed of our begetting, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of holiness, continues in us,--the new mind cannot approve of sin, but must and will be its opponent. Even tho many of the battles fought are with the members of our own fallen and weak human nature, their appetites and desires, we nevertheless, as "new creatures," are separate and distinct from the flesh and the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh are not imputed to the new creature in Christ Jesus, but are reckoned as covered, hidden under the merits of our Lord's redemptive sacrifice.

Thus, altho our flesh, through weaknesses of the fall, and through evil besetments, may never come up to the standard of the divine law, notwithstanding all our efforts to bring it into subjection to the same, nevertheless *we*, as "new creatures," have the Scriptural assurance that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us ["new creatures"] who are walking not after the flesh [but resisting day by day its seductive influences to the best of our ability, and seeking divine aid] but after the spirit [we are walking,--not up to the spirit probably, but following day by day, to the intent that eventually we shall, by the grace and help of our great Teacher, arrive at the glorious condition of character as "new creatures" which even the Heavenly Father can accept as copies of his dear Son]."-- Rom. 8:4.

On the contrary, if any who had thus become "new creatures" should engage in sin *willingly, heartily*, and live according to the flesh, it is a sure sign that the *seed* of truth wherewith he was *begotten* has perished: for so long as this *seed* remaineth in him, he cannot sin willingly.--1 John 3:9.

Those who are slaves of sin, who have not been made free indeed and received into sonship, may sometimes be used for a time, under present conditions, as servants of the divine plan, in the accomplishment of the plan of the ages; as, for instance, God sometimes overrules and uses the wrath of man and Satan's opposition; but God has made no provision for the everlasting continuance of sin and those who are its slaves. Ultimately the only ones who shall be privileged to exist at all will be sons of God. Not to be misunderstood here, let us remember that there are sons of two ages:--

(1) The sons of this Gospel age, begotten of the Father to joint-heirship with Jesus Christ, our Lord, as his "brethren," otherwise called the Bride of the First-begotten, who has inherited all things. "Now are *we* [thus] the sons of God." This house of sons, begotten to the spirit nature, will soon be complete, and never have further additions to its members; but we are to remember that--

(2) Another house of sons is shortly to be started. For the declaration is that our Lord Jesus shall become a Father, a Life-giver, to the world--to whosoever will accept this gift of God under the terms of the New Covenant during the Millennium. Those will be the sons of the after resurrection, while the Church are to be sons of the first resurrection, the first-born ones. The Apostle, referring to these sons of Christ who will be begotten during the Millennial age, and be born to full sonship at its close, declares that they also shall be delivered "from the bondage of corruption [death] into the glorious liberty of the sons of God"--freedom from sin, death, sighing, crying, pain, etc. They will inherit these, the common privileges of all the sons of God, and in addition the earthly heritage, the "purchased possession," secured for mankind by the great sin-offering.--Rom. 8:21-23.

The restitution class of earth will thus be sons of Christ, who *bought* their life and who will give afresh to them that which was lost in Adam and which he redeemed at the cost of his own life. But this will not imply that such will not eventually own Jehovah as their Father also and be owned by him as his sons. On the contrary, the typical custom in Israel on this point makes this all plain. For instance, all Israelites were known as children of Abraham, children of Israel and children of Jacob.

But the central thought we would impress is that all who shall be recognized by God as *sons* at any time must be freed from the incubus of sin by the Only Begotten Son of God, the Mediator,--and such only are free indeed.

⁽¹⁾ July 12 Manna, John 8:36

* *Gennaos* here signifies *begotten*, and refers to the beginning and not the completion of our "change" of nature. -- See also *Revised Ver-*

sion, and the *Emphatic Diaglott*.

⁽²⁾ July 11 Manna, 1 John 5:18