

June 1889 - Reprint 1112 - "AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT."

Many who have read DAWN VOL. II.-- "The Time is at Hand"--are anxiously inquiring whether they are too late for admittance to the kingdom class: whether the door of opportunity is yet open, or whether it closed when the high calling ceased, in 1881. We answer, Though the "call" has ceased, the "door" is not yet shut. The "call" and the "door" are distinct and separate.

The Scriptures teach that God fore-ordained or predestinated that a fixed, definite number should **be selected** from among men to constitute the Bride of Christ and be his joint-heir in the great work of bestowing the Millennial blessings upon the world in general. And this is perfectly reasonable.

To secure this number, "many are called" or invited to pass an examination in the school of Christ, to prove their worthiness to be of that select and limited number. Only believers in Christ, only such as recognize him as their Redeemer, are "called" or invited to stand this examination under the promise of that great prize of joint-heirship with Christ; and **all such** believers were invited, from the day of Pentecost down to the time when enough had been called to **complete the fixed number**, which God had fore-ordained. Then, of course, the call to that honor and distinction must cease; for God would certainly not mislead any one nor promise "the **great** salvation" to a single individual more than the **predestinated number**. None shall have it to say that God invited him to run the race for the prize of the **high** calling and that after running faithfully he could not receive the reward because too many had been called and the fore-ordained number was more than supplied.

First notice, that the close of the "**call**" is not the close of the **race**. Those who have been called, and who have accepted the conditions of the call and promised to "run" faithfully so as to obtain the prize, must be **tested**. And hence the fact that the general calling of new runners has ended, in no way ends the running of those who were called in time and who had consecrated themselves to the Lord's service before the call ceased.

And the fact that you may only recently have come to a **clear knowledge** of the exceeding great and precious promises of the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him, does not prove that you were not called and accepted as a runner for this great prize long before you understood clearly how great and grand the prize is to be. In fact, not one who accepts the "call" is able at first to comprehend fully either the roughness and narrowness of the way, or the grandeur of the prize to be attained at its farther end. The clearness of our comprehension of the promises comes to us as the **power** of God working in us to strengthen us and enable us to overcome present obstacles, difficulties and trials. The exceeding great and precious promises are unfolded to us gradually, as we prove faithful and **go on**, in order that by these --by the strength and courage which they infuse--we might be enabled to so run as to obtain the promised prize.--` 2 Pet. 1:4`.

The class to receive the prize is not only called and chosen (accepted), but also **faithful**. And though the general "call" has ceased, it is evident that the testing of the **faithfulness** of the called ones is not yet finished. The faithful are being marked,

sealed, and separated from those who are unfaithful to their covenant of self-sacrifice; the wise virgins are being separated from the foolish ones, whose folly consists in supposing that they can run for and win the world's prizes of honor, wealth, etc., and at the same time run faithfully the race for the great prize, of glory, honor and immortality,--the very conditions of which render such a course impossible.

When all the faithful "wise" virgins have been proved so, and have entered in to the joys of the Lord, the **"door" of opportunity** to become of that class will close, and no more will enter. When all the "wise" have entered in, the **number** predestinated will be complete; and then the Master will rise up and shut the door. (`Luke 13:24,25` ; `Matt. 25:10`.) Our Lord himself tells us that **then** many will begin to see matters differently--to see what privileges and opportunities for sacrifice they once enjoyed and missed. But when they shall seek and knock, the Master will tell them, I do not recognize you as my Bride--she is complete and I have but one. But thank God, other Scriptures show that the foolish virgins, though thus rejected from the high calling for which their conduct, when on trial, will have proved them unworthy, will nevertheless be granted a lesser favor and will be known in a humbler capacity in the Lord's household.

Before the door shuts, therefore, before the full number of the faithful is finished, let each strive to make his calling and selection sure; and to this end let us permit the Lord, by these precious promises and these explanatory and illustrative parables, to work in us to **will** and to **do** his good pleasure.

But some will say, I am certain that I am not one of those called before the general "call" ceased in 1881, because I then was not only wholly ignorant of the deep things of God's promises, but more, I was wholly a stranger to God, and even an enemy of his, far from any covenant with him to do him service, and far from any such desires. But recently I came to know God at all, recently I took Christ's yoke upon me to learn of him, and still more recently I learned of the privilege of suffering with Christ now, in self-denial in his service, and that such joint-sacrificers are by and by to be made joint-inheritors with him in the glorious work of the Millennium. And now, after seeing these glories, and after admiring those precious things, and after setting myself to run this race for this wonderful prize, must I conclude that it is not open to me, because enough to fill the number had already been called? I would not think to change the divine arrangement, or to ask that another be added, beyond the limit determined by divine wisdom, but I shall feel keenly my misfortune.

To such we answer (briefly here, more fully in DAWN Vol. III. now in preparation): Run on, dear brothers and sisters, your case is not so dark as it seems to you. Remember that if **all** who had accepted the call when it closed should prove faithful to their covenant, there would be none too many, but just enough. Remember, too, that your observation, as well as the Scriptures, indicates that of the "many" who accept the call "few" will be chosen, because but few prove faithful to their covenant when on trial. As one after another some of the "called" ones prove unfaithful, their **places** of labor and their crowns of reward are transferred to others. One of these places of labor and one of these crowns of reward may be transferred to you, and your name may be written on the scroll of life as a probationary member of the

Bride of Christ, instead of one blotted out therefrom as unworthy.--See, `Rev. 3:5`; `Heb. 12:23`.

It is already "the eleventh hour," the time for labor and sacrifice in the Lord's service is nearly ended, "the night cometh wherein no man can work," so if you see a "door" of opportunity, to labor for and serve the Lord and his truth, open before you, consider that the Master is saying to you, as in the parable, "Go ye also into my vineyard, and whatever is **right** I will give you." Remember that the reward is paid only to such as render service, and remember that while, as in the parable, the Lord does not promise the prize (the penny) as he did at the beginning, yet the parable shows that some thus admitted to the harvest work just at its close, just before the night when work will be impossible, will get the same reward as others --taking places and opportunities of labor left vacant by others.

And what a lesson is here for such as have covenanted with the Lord to serve him first and chiefly, and who are neglecting his work to strive with time and thought and means for the transient joys and prizes which the world offers. These the Lord urges saying, "Be thou **faithful** unto death and I will give thee a crown of life;" "He that **overcometh** [who conquers in himself the spirit of the world] the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his holy servants." But, our Lord says also: "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."--`Rev. 2:10`; `3:5,11`.

August 1900 – Reprint 2675 - IS THE RESTITUTION CALL NOW OPEN?

A DEAR BROTHER in the truth seems to think that the teachings of DAWN, VOL. V., differ from those of DAWN, VOL. III., on the question heading this article. He sees clearly that in DAWN, VOL. V., the view we present is that the restitution call cannot begin until the last member of the Gospel Church has been changed, glorified, but he thinks that the third volume teaches that the restitution call will be in progress simultaneously with the closing work of this Gospel age. This clearer statement of the subject in DAWN V., is the result of our having learned that some had gotten the wrong impression from VOL. III. In proof of his point, the Brother refers us to VOL. III., p.218, where it is stated that "the stopping of the favor or call here, in 1881, is followed, or rather lapped upon, by the general call of the whole world to the Millennial blessings and favors on condition of faith and obedience." Also pp.365 and 367: "Further, where the special favor of the general Gospel call ceased, October, 1881, the blessings upon the world would seem to be due to have a beginning." "It (1881) was the date of the closing of the high calling, and hence the date for the beginning of the restitution call for mankind in general."

On questions of so much intricacy it is sometimes difficult to use language sufficiently exact; especially if at the time of writing objections or criticisms are not fully anticipated. Were we to express the above points again we would try still harder, as in DAWN V., to guard our statements, and thus to prevent any misunderstanding. Our thought is, that the close of the high calling in the year 1881

was a marked date, and that from that time onward we should expect manifestations along the line of restitution --evidences that restitution blessings were in process of development. We had no intention of conveying the thought that restitution, physical, mental and moral, should be expected in 1881, and onward. As a matter of fact, we see no such process of general physical restitution in operation, nor ought we to expect it until the Day of Atonement sacrifices (of this Gospel age--Christ and the Church, his body) are complete.

We have already pointed this out in the pamphlet, "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices," published in 1881. We there show that the high priest does not put on the glorious garments, representing the dignity and authority of rulership and blessing, until the "Lord's goat" has been killed, its body burned without the camp, its fat burned upon the altar, and its blood carried into the "Most Holy" and sprinkled upon the Mercy-Seat. (We there show also that this goat typified the Church, all of whose experiences there typified cannot be accomplished until the last member of the body of Christ has finished his sacrifice completely.) Then it was that the high priest went to the altar, lifted up his hands, and began to bless the people, who meantime lay prostrate in the dust awaiting that very blessing, which typically represents restitution.

In the above statement that "the stopping of the favor or call here, in 1881, is followed, or rather lapped upon, by the general call of the whole world to the Millennial blessings and favors," we hoped that the reader would have in mind our further statement; that altho the call, in its open or full sense, ceased in 1881, it would be prolonged in a special or private sense for a time, just as Israel's national favor ceased five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when he said, "Your house is left unto you desolate," yet in an individual sense of the word, God's favor continued with Israel exclusively for three and a half years following that date; only that instead of being a national favor, it was a private, an individual favor. On p.219 we endeavor to explain this continuation of the Gospel call, in another form, using the following language:

"But tho the general 'call' has ceased, the 'door' is not yet shut. The end of the call, and the shutting of the door are distinct and separate. The 'door' stands open for some to enter the race for the great prize of joint-heirship in the Kingdom after the **general** 'call' has ceased. God has predetermined a fixed number to constitute the Church, 'the body of Christ,' and there can be neither one member superfluous nor one lacking. (See this typically taught in `Lev. 21:17-23`.) It follows that he could not call or invite to that honor more than would complete the number that he had determined, and God's Word shows that this number had been secured [called] in October, 1881. But since some of those who responded under the general call, and made the covenant with him, will fail to keep that covenant, fail to so run as to obtain the prize, the 'door' stands open after the general 'call' has ceased, to permit the entrance to the race, to self-sacrifice in the service of the truth, of some [under the private or individual call] to **take the places of** such as may, during the inspection, cast aside the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness; and also of such others as, having made the covenant of self-sacrifice in the service, love the present evil world, become overcharged with its cares or pleasures, and fail to perform the requirements of their covenant."

Our thought is that this secret **extension** of the privileges of the call, after it has ceased as a **general** offer, must of necessity precede the beginning of the restitution privileges, and hence that only preparatory work in respect to the restitution and the proclamation of it, will be in order until the harvest of this Gospel age has been fully gathered. The knowledge of restitution is granted to the Lord's consecrated people now, to the intent that they should not be in darkness with the world in respect to the divine plan, and especially in view of the approaching great time of trouble, and also in view of the falling of the systems of error, false doctrines, etc. It is necessary that the restitution should be recognized by God's people, in order to keep them from falling in this day of trouble. But the **message** or call to restitution is not **due to the world**, to our understanding, in any sense of the word; hence it is that the efforts being made in connection with the dissemination of present truth are confined, so far as seems reasonable and possible, to the Church --to those, at least, who professedly claim to be the Lord's people, and not to the world.

Our brother's letter suggests several questions, which we here propound and answer, hoping that the answers may be helpful, not only to him but to others.

(1) **Question.**--May it not be, that both the high calling and the restitution call are now open? Or, if only one of them, would it not seem the more probable that the restitution call alone is open now? I fail to see the force of your claim that the "door" stands open after the "call" ceases.

Answer.--We believe that we have shown, foregoing that the restitution call could not begin until the sacrifice of the Church is completely finished, and until the High Priest, with every member of his body, is fully clothed with the honors and dignities of his office, represented in the garments of glory and beauty. We doubt if we can make the matter of the open door after the general call has ceased, any plainer than above set forth. We think it beyond question, that the Lord could not call at any time a greater number than the **elect number**, even tho his foreknowledge assured him that many of the called ones would not make their calling and election sure, and therefore would not be amongst the chosen. We hold, therefore, that at such time as the full number of the elect had been called, the general call must of necessity have ceased; and yet, since the Lord clearly foretold that a casting out of some during the inspection of the guests would follow (`Matt. 22:10-14`), and since the elect number must be complete, it follows that there must be some way of bringing in others to take the places of those who would be cast out, after the general call ceased and the work of inspection began. To our understanding this work of inspection of the guests has been progressing for some time-- since the call ceased. As some were found unworthy of their privileges and "cast into outer darkness," similar to that in which the whole world is, others were admitted to the favors of the called, and the attendant testings. And this work must continue until the full quota of elect ones shall have passed divine approval. We can think of no other way that would permit God to be just and reasonable in his dealings, since he will not accept less than the foreordained number, and since he will not call to that number any who, in any sense of the word, might be open to disappointment. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" As pointed out (DAWN, Vol., III., page

222) these additions are illustrated in the parable by those admitted to labor in the vineyard at the eleventh hour,--after the regular calls had ceased.

(2) **Question.**--Did not the restitution call precede the Gospel call? Were not Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all Israel called to restitution? If this be true, then the Gospel call was merely a supplementary one, for the time being, and in that event its closing or cessation would at once put in force again the original call which it had temporarily superseded.

Answer.--No: none of the patriarchs were called to restitution, nor was it possible that either they or others could attain restitution blessings until after the ransom had been paid; until after all the Atonement Day sacrifices had been offered. If restitution had been possible without the ransom, then Christ died in vain, so far as the world of mankind is concerned. But no; all that anyone enjoyed of restitution favors in the past, was what we now enjoy; **viz., a knowledge** of them. A slight knowledge or hint at restitution was given to father Adam and mother Eve. Subsequently a clearer statement of the same was made to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. There is a vast difference between the promise of a thing and the thing itself. Had the restitution call gone forth in the true sense, anyone responding properly would have been **restored** to perfection and everlasting life. True, there was a **kind of offer** of restitution made to Israel under the Law Covenant--an offer that they would be restored to perfection and life **if they would keep their Law Covenant inviolate**. But, as we have seen, the keeping of that Law was impossible; and hence the attainment of restitution under it was equally impossible.

The special merit of the patriarchs consisted in the fact that, living before any call to everlasting life was made, and with merely a hint of God's gracious purposes, they exercised so great faith respecting the same,--enduring much in their endeavors to please God, and because of their confidence in his promises. From the Apostle Paul's account, some of them endured, faithfully, experiences which, had they lived during this Gospel age, would have constituted them overcomers in the highest sense of the word, and joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom. But living before this high calling or any other call had been issued, and suffering and enduring valiantly and faithfully, they are promised a better resurrection, a more favorable resurrection than that of the world,--tho it will not be so wonderful a resurrection as that of the Church. As the Apostle remarks, God has promised some better thing for us (than for them), "that they without us should not be made perfect."--` Heb. 11:40`.

Their resurrection will be better than that of the remainder of mankind, except the consecrated Gospel Church, in that it will be an instantaneous raising to perfection, while the world's resurrection will be a gradual one, accompanied by disciplines and testings, and called by our Lord "the resurrection by judgment" --a gradual raising up of the obedient and willing throughout the Millennial age, step by step, to all that was forfeited and lost in Eden.

(3) **Question.**--Will not the restitution call be a call to faith and to obedience, without sacrifice? If we cannot imagine such a call as being now in process, let me

ask, Why not? Was not this call the one that was open to Cornelius and to everybody else, both before and since his time, as mentioned by the Apostle Peter, "I perceive that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him"?

Answer.--Peter did not mean to be understood that he that feared God and worked righteousness to the best of his ability **had always been** acceptable to God. Peter had just learned that a new dispensation had been ushered in, and that since Christ had redeemed, not the Jew only, but the whole world of mankind, therefore **now** repentance and remission of sins were proper to be preached in Christ's name to every creature, Gentiles as well as Jews; and that whoever sought to do the Lord's will to the best of his ability would be acceptable in the Lord's sight.

The restitution call will be a very different one from any that has ever gone forth as yet. It will not be a call to faith and to reckoned forgiveness of sins, but a call to obedience and to the actual blotting out of sins. During the Millennial age the world of mankind will be dealt with according to the condition of each, and obedience to the extent of ability will be required of each individual. Every obedience will receive its reward, in the way of mental, moral and physical recuperation, restitution; and every disobedience will receive a just chastisement, and thus throughout that age all who will shall have the opportunity of development, mentally, physically, morally, until, at its close, if he has been obedient to the great Teacher, Christ, he will again be in the image and likeness of God, as was Father Adam, but with additional experience gained,--not only during the fall, but especially the experiences gained under the administration of Christ's government, during the Millennial period, while **rising** again; while being restituted out of sin and death conditions, into conditions of righteousness and life.

What is now known to the Church of this Gospel age as "justification by faith" (in like manner also the ancient worthies were justified) will not be in operation during the Millennial age, nor be necessary; because the conditions then will be so different from present conditions. It is because "we walk by faith and not by sight,"--because faith is now so difficult, and therefore so rare, that it is so highly appreciated and rewarded of God. But when the Millennial age will have been ushered in, the age of **faith** will have passed--that will be the age of **knowledge**,--the age of evidences so clear, so unmistakable, that even "the wayfaring man, tho ignorant, shall not err therein, for the **knowledge** of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the face of the great deep." With knowledge thus abundant, so that there shall be no need to say to one's neighbor, "Know the Lord, because all shall know him," it follows that special faith will be impossible, and hence the rewards of special faith will no longer be offered.

We do not mean to say that mankind during the Millennium will not believe; on the contrary, none can do otherwise than believe: we do mean to say, however, that there is a difference between **believing** and exercising **faith**. We now believe various things by faith, which the world in the next age will believe, not by faith but on evidence, by knowledge--it will be impossible for them to doubt them, seeing that the evidences will be so indisputable. For instance, now God tells us to reckon all of our past sins forgiven, and ourselves fully justified in his sight. Nevertheless,

we continually see evidences of our own weaknesses in our minds and bodies. The sins are not blotted out; they are merely reckonedly covered. In the case of the Church's sins: they will not be blotted out until death shall destroy these mortal bodies, and until the Lord, in the first resurrection, shall grant us glorious, spiritual, perfect bodies. In them there will be no trace of sin or weakness or imperfection; all our sins will then be actually blotted out. But now we are required to **believe** in the covering of our sins; to exercise faith in God's declaration. Our next step of faith is in connection with the high calling to sacrifice earthly and temporal interests for the gaining of the heavenly glory, honor and immortality. But the heavenly crown and blessing are seen only with the eye of faith; and whoever runs in the race now set before us in the Gospel, must not only look with the eye of faith unto Jesus, as the author and finisher of our faith, but with the same eye of faith must see the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, has laid up for those who are faithful. Thus ours is preeminently an age of faith, of reckoned conditions, and of trust in the promises: and it shall have its great and precious reward.

Not so will be the conditions of the Millennial age, when ushered in. Knowledge will be there, as we have seen; and each day's experiences will result either in mental, moral and physical development, or in chastisements for failures to make progress. Such experiences will give ample demonstration of what may be expected as the ultimate outcome,--restitution as the reward of obedience, or the Second Death as the punishment of disobedience.

The matter is clearly set before us in the Scriptures, which clearly teach that, during this age, the rule of divine dealing is, "According to thy faith be it unto thee," while the rule of the judgment of the world in the Millennial age is clearly laid down in `Rev. 20:12`: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book of life was opened [the first book of life is called the Lamb's Book of Life, containing the names of the elect Church, his Bride:--this other Book of Life will be the book or record of those who shall pass the restitution trial or judgment satisfactorily], and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books [the Scriptures--`John 12:48`] **according to their works.**"

It would be a mistake to suppose that God will call mankind to sonship during the Millennial age, and not require them to make full consecration of themselves to him, and to that righteousness of which he is the personal representative. None can ever have eternal life upon any other condition than this--absolute obedience, and more--absolute harmony with the very spirit of the divine law, the law of righteousness, the law of love. And all who will be in harmony with the Lord to such an extent as this, would of necessity sacrifice, if there were opposition to the Lord or to righteousness which would make necessary a sacrifice of any kind, rather than deny the Lord and the principles of his holiness.

The reason why there will be no sacrifices required of the world during the Millennial age is, that sin and Satan will no longer be in control--"this present evil world" (dispensation) will have passed away, and in its stead will have been ushered in "the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness"--wherein righteousness will be the rule, wherein the King and all in favor with him and every feature of government will be one of righteousness, truth and love.

To suppose the restitution call already commenced, would be to suppose that God had in some manner authorized some one to announce that henceforth no one would suffer for right doing, but only for wrong doing; and that henceforth whoever sought to do right to the best of his ability, would find himself unopposed therein, and that his every effort would promptly bring mental, moral and physical strength and recuperation, which, going on and on, would by and by reach absolute perfection. Furthermore, it would be to promise that any who accepted this restitution call would never die the Adamic death; but on the contrary, accepting this call heartily, would find that day by day, year by year, the power of death in him was being vanquished and the process of restitution progressing.

When that call shall go forth, and those restitution privileges shall be offered to mankind, it will be as the Prophet has declared, that no man shall thenceforth die for Adam's sin, nor for the sin of his fathers, but only for his own sin. (`Jer. 31:29,30`.) We understand that this time will not be reached until after the time of trouble--not until A.D. 1915. To our understanding, from that date onward, the Kingdom being fully established, the call of the world to restitution privileges will be opened, and whoever shall then die will die for his own sin [Second Death] and not for father Adam's; and whoever will then be obedient to the Lord will experience the blessings of his grace in restitution,--actual, perceptible recovery beginning at once, as the reward to the faithful under the restitution call.

The sense in which Millennial blessings and favors are already lapping upon the Gospel age, to our understanding, is this: First, knowledge, inventions, etc., are bringing to the world of mankind blessings never hitherto enjoyed, and which are really intended for the Millennial age, and are merely being gotten ready or prepared in this "day of God's preparation." (2) Restitution blessings are lapping also, in the sense that these inventions, etc., are gradually leading on to the great time of trouble, in which present institutions, social, financial, political, religious, will all be overthrown--that in their stead God may bring in the better provisions and arrangements of the Millennial Kingdom. (3) Restitution blessings are coming to the Church now, in the sense that she is permitted to foresee these coming blessings upon the world, and to rejoice exceedingly, and to lift up her heart in thankfulness and praise to him who loveth us and who bought us with his own precious blood, and to realize how it is "the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

(4) **Question.**--Suppose some one should say, "I wish to give up this present world and all its honors and pleasures, to obey and follow Christ, no difference what trials and persecutions it may bring; but I have no expectation of salvation on the divine plane, and I am not running for that prize. Salvation on the human plane is better than I deserve, no matter how much it may cost me to follow Christ now, in the opening years of his reign, before Satan is bound. I am glad of an opportunity to show my loyalty under adverse circumstances, which will prove that I am sincere." Who may say that such an one might not come in under the restitution call?

Answer.--The Apostle, on one occasion, said, "The times of this ignorance God winked at"--took no account of. So all the way down through this Gospel age, while this "high calling" has been presented, there doubtless have been some of the Lord's

followers who have not clearly grasped his promises in all their length and strength and beauty,--many who did not clearly understand that the overcomers of this age are to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and partakers of glory, honor and immortality. Their ignorance, however, did not alter the call nor the Lord's engagement. The heavenly Father is, so to speak, dealing with Christ rather than with us, and thus it is written that we are "accepted **in** the Beloved." Whoever, therefore, during this Gospel age, has fully consecrated himself to the Lord as his Master, fully trusting in him also as his Redeemer, and seeking to walk in his footsteps, the same is an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, his Lord, whether he knew it or not; just as it would be in respect to an earthly inheritance.

It might seem strange that a son should not have some knowledge of his father's wealth and of his father's intention to give him a portion, but the son's ignorance would not alter in any degree the father's will, nor hinder him from participating in its provisions. So we should say respecting those of the Lord's faithful ones during this age, who have not been aware of how great things "God hath in reservation for them that love him." And this applies also to such an one as you mention in this question: his ignorance will not alter the divine arrangement; and if he faithfully follow the Lord now, we have every reason to believe that in the regeneration he shall sit in his throne, whether he expects so great a favor or not. Nevertheless, we should expect that now the Lord would graciously reveal to such a faithful sacrificer his goodly heritage. There surely is no Restitution Call at the present time--no offer, yet, of an opportunity to grow out of imperfection and death, into perfection in God's likeness, and into life everlasting.

March 1901 – Reprint 2782 - INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

Question.--I see it is your view that the 144,000 sealed (`Rev. 7`) are Spiritual Israel, "the true Israel of God," foreknown to him from the beginning, the predestinated "Abraham's Seed" which shall in due time bless the world. (`Gal. 3:29` .) I see too that you view it as a literal **number**, claiming that all the **numbers** of Revelation are literal. But let me inquire, Would not such a view overthrow the hopes of those who live today? Could we suppose that the entire Gospel age, with its reputed millions of martyrs, has not secured the 144,000 long ago?

Answer.--It would be a great mistake to suppose that the millions of martyrs, Catholic and Protestant, were all "overcomers,"--"saints" in the Scriptural sense. In a vast majority of cases the principle fought for, and suffered for, was chiefly **liberty**. Politics, too, lay at the foundation of much of the butchery. Note in another column how a bishop became so excited in our own day as to declare himself willing rather to go to hell than see a political opponent elected. Many, too, would go to death from pride;--rather than yield after having taken their stand.

When we think of the fact that a membership in this "royal priesthood" implies a full, living **self-sacrifice** to the Lord and his cause, and the attainment, while sacrificing, of the fruits of the spirit--meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness,--Love, we rather wonder that so many as 144,000 could be found in the past nearly nineteen centuries. And it is of those who cultivate these

graces, and attain them in their **hearts** (even if they cannot always exercise them as fully as they could desire in their **flesh**) that the Apostle declares: "If ye do **these things** ye shall never fall, but so [doing] an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."--` 2 Pet. 1:5-11`.

Our confidence is in God,--that he knew exactly how long this Gospel age should be to gather the "elect" class; and that he will get the exact number of "jewels," the "little flock," within the appointed time, before "the times of the Gentiles" run out.-
-See also our issue of April 1, 1899, page 67.

Question.--We are all making considerable effort, through the Volunteer work and otherwise, to present the truth to others, and through the WATCH TOWER we learn that the numbers of interested ones are continually increasing, and the intimation is that still further increase may be expected. Now, the question is, How does this harmonize with the presentations of MILLENNIAL DAWN to the effect that the general call has ceased since 1881, and that altho the door to the high calling is not yet closed, it could not be entered except by those whom the Lord will admit to take the place of some who have failed to comply with the terms of their covenant--to make their calling and election sure.

Answer.--We understand that in 1881 a considerable number of justified persons had made a consecration to the Lord, but had not yet been proven--how many, of course, we cannot judge. Suppose, for instance, that the number were 50,000, and suppose that only one-half of that number would eventually be of the overcoming class: it would mean that gradually 25,000 would have their names blotted out of the Lamb's Book of Life, and the crowns once apportioned to them no longer counted as theirs. In order to give all of these consecrated ones a full opportunity it might be a number of years before any considerable number of them would be thus rejected, and the admission of others to take their places would be correspondingly gradual. We are to remember, too, that of those who enter to take their places probably not more than one-half would be overcomers--which would make 12,500 more to be admitted, and of these probably not more than one-half would be overcomers, which would mean that more than 6000 additional ones must be brought in; and so on. We think it not unreasonable that a considerable time has been left for many of the consecrated ones to note the tendency of the nominal church and her fallen condition spiritually, and to be tested thereby as respects their love for righteousness and their hatred of iniquity--their devotion to the Lord and to the principles of his Word, and their opposition to injustice, untruth, unrighteousness. Meantime, the truth, under the Lord's providence, has been going hither and thither throughout the civilized world, coming in contact with nearly all the consecrated, we may presume, and becoming more or less of a test to them. Some have gradually accepted it; others consecrated are, no doubt, still weighing the matter. Still others have probably sided against what they know to be the truth, because of love for the world or popularity or other selfish considerations. The testing of these cannot be expected to continue long. The light is growing so strong on the one side, and the darkness so strong on the other, that any who are unable to make up their minds respecting their proper position would thereby be showing themselves to be unworthy to be classed as "overcomers" and joint-heirs with Christ

in the Kingdom. We may reasonably expect, therefore, that quite a good many places in the Lamb's book of Life will be declared vacant and new names be written therein to complete the elect number. To our understanding the ones thus favored of the Lord will be persons fully consecrated to him, and we would esteem it probable that such would early be brought in contact with present truth for their ripening as wheat for the garner, and the hearty acceptance of present truth by such as are fully consecrated to the Lord and to lay down their lives in his service would, we esteem, be in the nature of an evidence of their acceptance to the high calling. We would not understand that a knowledge of the truth without consecration would be an evidence in this direction, believing that many can see much that is reasonable in restitution, etc., who have never made a covenant with the Lord. We would believe, however, that none can appreciate deep things of God except by the holy spirit.-- `1 Cor. 2:9,10,14`.

November 1901 – Reprint 2901 - CONCERNING THE CLOSING OF THE CALL.

A BROTHER wrote us on this question recently, and a portion of our reply may be of interest to others and hence we present it below. We wrote him:--

Respecting restitution: We have held from the first, or at last, since 1881, that we are in "the times of restitution" now; and that the opening features of restitution work will be manifested in the downfall and destruction of the things pertaining to this present order, making ready for the new order of things. We have given the illustration in first and second "Dawns" of how the new order of things might be compared to the beginning of a contract for the substitution of a new building for an old one--that the first evidences of the work would be those of destruction, the pulling down of the old. We still hold this, and hold that this is all that we should expect--that we should not expect personal, physical restitution now. Some years ago we had the impression that **possibly** some signs of physical restitution to humanity would be due in this "harvest" or lapping period; but all question on this subject is dispelled for years past, as we have seen most clearly that the new order of things and its blessing must wait until the entire "body" of the Great Priest has been completed--until the entire work of atonement has been finished--then the High Priest, head and body complete, will lift up his hands and bless the people, in glorious garments,--i.e., clothed in the majesty of divine power and authority as the foretold Prophet, Priest and King in one.

Some years ago we were less careful than now in the use of language respecting the restitution times, in mentioning that coming condition as a "call" to restitution. We should have been more particular, more specific, and should have said that the "Trumpet of the Jubilee" would be blown, announcing the beginning of restitution times. This work is now being done, through the **Watch Tower** literature, etc. The Jubilee Trumpet is not a **call**, in the ordinary sense of the word call, but rather an announcement; the Lord will announce his Kingdom and its blessed regulations, and will expect every one to yield implicit compliance; and those who do not yield compliance will receive "stripes;" and if still persistent will "be destroyed from amongst the people." This thought is very different from the thought of a **call**, as

that term applied during the Gospel age, when the matter was open to each who heard to either accept or reject the high calling and its "narrow way."

Respecting consecration before 1881 being necessary to a share in the high calling: We must admit that all who were consecrated in 1881, when the general call ceased (because the full **number** had accepted which would complete the elect class) would have a precedence over any others: Indeed, that no others could be accepted to the "Bride" position in any sense, except as some of these already consecrated ones should be accounted unworthy, and their places and crowns vacated. (`Rev. 3:5,11`.) But since it requires all of these consecrated ones to complete the elect number, it follows that any who would be accepted to take their places must make their consecration and be accepted of the Lord subsequent to 1881.

We are to remember, moreover, that justified believers are accounted "holy," and their justification is specifically designated in this way in several instances. For instance, the Apostle says, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, **holy**, acceptable to God," etc. And again, "Else were your children unholy; but now are they **holy**"--children one or both of whose parents are the Lord's children. It is from this class of justified ones that we should expect the Lord to accept the number necessary to complete the elect number--to take the places of those who in 1881 were in a consecrated attitude, but who, because of unfaithfulness since, will be rejected from the "Bride" class, to have their portion either with the second company, "saved so as by fire," or with those who sin wilfully and deliberately, and thus incur the "Second Death" penalty. We should, therefore, look for those who would now come into divine favor and joint-heirship with Christ amongst this class--amongst those who were already justified in October, 1881, or amongst the children of such as were justified at that time; though we may not know nor say that others may not have become eligible by a more recent justification.

Since the general "call" ceased October, 1881, although the "door" is not yet shut, but stands ajar for some to pass out who fail to keep their covenant, and for others to pass in to take their places, that the predestinated number may attain the prize, and yet that none shall attain to it except such as are copies of God's dear Son, in heart, in intention--it is impossible for us to make positive promises of joint-heirship in the Kingdom to any who may consecrate their lives to the Lord at the present time. All that we can say to them is that consecration is their reasonable service **in any event**, and that if the Lord shall manifest his acceptance of their sacrifice it would be proper for them to consider this an evidence that they had been accepted of the Lord to all the rights and privileges of such sacrificers as made their consecration before the general call ceased.

As to what would constitute evidences of divine acceptance, we suggest two, the enjoyment of both of which would seem to us a good basis for full assurance of faith on this point. (1) God's acceptance of the sacrifice might be reasonably inferred if the consecrated one finds opportunities for self-sacrifice, self-denials, etc., in the service of the Lord, of the truth and of the brethren--however humble the service or opportunities for "laying down our lives for the brethren." (2) God's acceptance of the sacrifice should in the present time imply not only a begetting of the spirit of

holiness, but also an ability to appreciate clearly the spiritual features of the divine plan, represented by the light of the golden candle-stick in the "Holy," and by the shew-bread, and by the privileges of communion and service represented by the incense at the golden altar.

Whoever has these two evidences has what we think he should consider a satisfactory proof that he is inside the first vail of the Tabernacle, that he is therefore counted for the time being at least as a member of the High Priest's body. And such, we believe, should consider themselves as fully eligible to the prize as any upon the race-course, upon condition of faithfulness even unto death. It will be noticed, however, that we distinguish between an appreciation of spiritual things and appreciation of restitution and earthly things merely. We believe that the "natural man," under favorable conditions, may appreciate a great deal of the divine provision for the world, and that it is the spiritual things which God has specially in reservation for the little flock, which can be appreciated only by those begotten of the spirit. This does not mean that the natural man cannot understand what we mean when we discuss spiritual things; but that, as the Apostle declares, though he understands what we say, our words are "foolishness unto him," he cannot grasp them as truth, and as applicable to himself.

January 1902 – Reprint 2940 - "WITH HIM--CALLED AND CHOSEN AND FAITHFUL."

BECAUSE considerable interest is being manifested, by our readers, on the subject of the Gospel Age **call**, and the prospects of those who have consecrated themselves to the Lord since 1881, we take this occasion to present some thoughts supplemental to what we have already presented, in our issue of Nov. 1, 1901, and in **Dawn, Vol. III.**, pages 212-216.

The terms of the gospel are necessarily those of a call or invitation; leaving the matter of acceptance open and optional with the invited ones. Hence we read, "Many are called, but few chosen;" and note that, the invited are advised, not commanded, to make their "calling and their election sure," by compliance with the terms of their call. (`Matt. 20:14` ; `2 Pet. 1:10` .) **Commands** to accept an invitation to joint-heirship with Christ, and penalties for not accepting that invitation, would be as incongruous as to have given a call or invitation to keep the Law Covenant, or, in the Millennium, to invite the keeping of the Laws then to be promulgated. We cannot even suppose that the holy angels are merely invited to obey the divine mandates. We must suppose that they are under a law commanding their obedience. We must assume that they have much of the spirit expressed by our dear Master, who is represented as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart." If this were not their attitude they would surely not be **holy** angels.

The reasonableness of a Creator, through his representative, giving his just and good commands rather than invitations, becomes so apparent upon a little reflection, that we want to scrutinize all the more closely this question:--Why did God, during this age, apparently depart from so reasonable a rule, and, instead, to allure us with a high-calling, **inviting** us to become joint-heirs with his Son in the

Kingdom? Why does he send word to us saying,--"Ye are not under the Law, but under grace"--favor?

The reason is, that divine law can demand no more than even-handed justice; and the Lord's purpose during this Gospel Age is to select a "little flock" along lines of self-denial, sacrifice,--beyond what Justice could demand. Hence of necessity this must be accomplished by a call--an invitation, with exceeding great and precious promises attached as incentives; "that by these we might [be encouraged to faithfulness, and so] become partakers of the divine nature,"--in the Kingdom.--` 2 Pet. 1:4`.

God **foreknew** us; we were "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." "And whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate must be conformed to the image of his Son." He determined in advance that as the Son must pass through severe tests before being accepted to the divine nature, so also, all who would be acceptable to joint-heirship with him must exhibit and demonstrate that they have his spirit; that they are copies of him;--the very image of him, in their hearts. And the object of this Gospel Age is to call, and find, and test this predetermined class.--` I Pet. 1:2`; ` Rom. 8:29`.

The promises made to the seed of Abraham (though appropriated by the twelve tribes of Israel, without divine disapproval) belonged really to anti-typical Israel--spiritual Israel. The natural seed, as natural branches in the olive-tree (representing divine favor) were allowed to grow for a time and be tested, but on failure they were broken off;--new branches coming forward continually, until our Lord's first advent. The branches then in place were specially favored with the offer of the highest spiritual favor--not under the Law, but under Grace.

But few, "a remnant," were in the heart-condition to appreciate and accept this great favor. The majority clung to attempts at self-justification; and like their fathers were broken off. Then the message was broadened; the invitation went to the Gentiles, "wild olive branches" to fill up the places of the broken off natural branches;--to complete the foreordained number of the elect. The total number of branches in the tree is 144,000, springing from twelve main limbs or tribes. Keeping up the Scriptural figure, we may say that as we who were by nature Gentiles, are grafted into the Abrahamic Covenant, we are reckoned as members of the original twelve tribes,--sealed, spiritual Israelites--until the predestined number, 144,000, shall have been completed.

The methods by which the Lord has proceeded to call these "elect" are worthy of careful notice.

(1) Our Lord declares that he called "**sinners**" in Israel "**to repentance**." This call was no part of "our high calling" to a share with Christ in the heavenly Kingdom; but it was a preparatory step: guilty sinners are not invited to, nor desired in the Kingdom. The call to faith and repentance, if heartily accepted by the sinner, brings him **justification from sin**--release from divine condemnation--reconciliation with the Father.

(2) "Being justified by faith [after repentance], we have peace with God [realizing that our sins and imperfections are covered] through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also [additionally] we have access into this grace wherein we stand, [viz.,] rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God,"-- the hope of sharing the Kingdom glories of our Lord Jesus. How did we gain access into this grace, after justification? By another call or another part of the one call--God "**called us** to glory and virtue [excellence]." --` 2 Pet. 1:3` ; ` Rom. 5:1,2` .

In a general way all repentant believers, justified, are called or invited to consecrate themselves to the Lord; because, as each starts out desirous of doing **right**--(with no thought of self-sacrifice), he goes but a short distance until he finds great opposition to right-doing, and even to right-thinking. He finds his opposition coming not only from the world and the devil, as he might have expected, but also from his own flesh, and from nominal Christians. These four opponents harass the newly justified will--whiles in anger, whiles in pity and sympathy--declaring that the **right** way is an impossible one, and that an attempt even to follow it will mean the ruin of every earthly prospect.

THE EFFECTUAL CALLING.

This is a testing time. Will the justified one heed the voices of the world, the flesh and the devil, and choose a downward or, at least, a compromise path? Or will he heed the voice of God, inviting him to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, in the "narrow way" which leads to glory, honor and immortality? If he obeys God's invitation, he is one of the **effectually called**. His acceptance means a full consecration to God;- -a renouncing of all earthly hopes and prospects, to obey God rather than self or others; and to have the blessings God has provided for his faithful: (though at this stage he cannot clearly discern the reward). This is **self-sacrifice**. God's acceptance of the sacrifice (the consecration) is guaranteed by the terms of the general call: further, it is attested by receipt of "the spirit of holiness," "the spirit of the truth": additionally, by an ability to discern spiritual things, and "to comprehend with all saints the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God."--` Eph. 3:18` .

Since our standing is the result of our **acceptance** of God's gracious call, and since the Father seeketh only such as worship and serve him in spirit and in truth, it follows that, in the exercise of our free wills, we may if we choose renounce our consecration, withdraw our sacrifice, and thenceforth walk after the flesh, and not after the spirit. But whoever does so, of course loses the spirit of God, the spirit of his begetting to the new nature,--he is no longer to be classed among those begotten of God;--he is of those who "draw back unto perdition," destruction, Second Death, nonentity. He who is in the begotten condition "sinneth not [willingly, designedly, of preference] because his seed [the holy spirit] remaineth in him:" while it remains he cannot love or willingly serve sin.--` Heb. 10:39` ; ` I Jno. 3:9` .

THE PREDESTINED NUMBER OF THE ELECT.

The more our knowledge and experience expand our judgments, the smaller is apt to be our estimate of the number who ever reach the point of making such a

consecration or self-sacrifice as we have above delineated. And, on the other hand, growing experience is apt to convince us that comparatively few of those who have consecrated themselves, fully and intelligently, ever draw back;--in the sense of **willingly** and heartily renouncing the Lord and their covenant obligations.

The large numbers who profess conversion during "revivals," etc., and soon fall away, are not to be reckoned as of this class. They merely heard a **call to repentance** and reformation; a call which any and all are authorized to make, at any time. The majority never progressed beyond repentance, even to the extent of **justification**;--the chaffy, confused presentations of most of revivalists, and so-called teachers, being quite insufficient knowledge to lead even to justifying faith--much less to sanctifying faith.

Accepting the word "called" as applying only to those who come under the conditions of justification, and subsequent **full** sanctification through a belief of the truth; and admitting that these, in all, have been very few at any period--truly a "little flock"--can we suppose the number so small as 144,000 from Pentecost until now?

Examining our own day, and the views of consecration now prevalent, and the general scarcity of that quality;--remembering that **love** for the truth and the brethren is among the tests of devotion to God;--remembering, too, that a **knowledge** of present truth is to be an indication of those now close to the Lord in favor;--we are inclined to look into the past with far less optimism than in years past. With a clearer eye than formerly, for what constitutes a saint, and a martyr "**beheaded** for the witness of Jesus," we incline to think that but few of the millions of martyrs were really saints,--from the Scriptural standpoint.

For instance, St. Bartholomew's day--and its slaughter of French Huguenots: Have we any sound reason for supposing that the hapless victims were any more saintly or more sinful than the Galileans who suffered death at the hands of Pilate?--or than the eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them?--or than a like number slain today in Paris, or London, or Berlin, or Vienna, or Rome, or St. Petersburg, or Washington? Today, when religious questions have been largely removed from the arena of party strife, it is somewhat difficult for us to realize that, in olden times, all politics turned chiefly on religious questions. Suppose that the Boers were Catholics and the British Protestants, or the Filipinos Protestants and the Americans Catholics, --and then imagine how partizan historians could write up both sides of these wars, and describe their victims as Christian martyrs.

We are not meaning by this to intimate that there were no true saints martyred in olden times, anymore than we are denying that some true saints may have fallen in the South African and Philippine and Cuban and Chinese wars. What we do mean to imply is, that any estimate which would rank all those millions of the past (who, nobly, and ignobly, died for their convictions), as "saints," "overcomers," members of the "little flock,"--would be nearly as gross a mistake as to suppose that all who have fallen for their convictions in modern warfare are such. We must remember that the records of martyrs such as Cranmer and Latimer, and others less notable, who surely gave strong evidences of saintship, and whom we hope to meet in the Kingdom, were exceptions, and by no means the rule.

Our estimate of the past must and should be based considerably upon our findings of the present: and reckoning thus, 144,000 would seem not only ample, but large, as an enumeration of the "copies of God's dear Son." Let us not forget that in the Primitive Church the congregations were small, and usually met in private houses. (`Acts 1:13`; `5:42`; `12:12`; `Rom. 16:5`; `Col. 4:15`; `Philem. 2`.) It was not until the apostles fell asleep in death, and errors came in and attracted the unconsecrated--by false threats and false promises--that the numbers became large, and costly edifices were erected. And yet, the apostles dealt chiefly with Jews, who for centuries had been under the Law Covenant, whose mission was to guide them to Christ. Out of all the millions of Jews in Palestine only a few thousand "received the word;"--so few that Josephus did not even mention them in his histories of that time.

That the result of the Apostle Paul's renowned missionary journeys was only small congregations, as a rule, seems evident from the records;--because he set forth the gospel so clearly, so uncompromisingly; --showing the narrowness of the way, as well as the glories of the reward;--not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God. Yes, it was afterward --after the apostles fell asleep--that the mixed and misrepresenting preaching drew and drove multitudes into an apostate system;--"tares" to choke the "wheat."

And even though the apostles, through faithful preaching of the truth, kept out the "tares" in their day, we find that the congregations which they established were not by any means all saints. St. Paul's epistles generally indicate this; for he sometimes addresses them to "the saints **and** faithful **brethren**" and to those "**called** to be saints." In these epistles, too, he intimates that many are called compared to the number who will make their calling and election sure. He urges them to take heed lest any should seem to come short of the requirements; but to so run as to obtain the prize. Hence we could not count **all** of the "household of faith" then, anymore than now, in the number of the final overcomers,-- 144,000.

If we keep in memory the Apostle's statement, that God's special favors, light, etc., have come upon "the ends of the ages" (`I Cor. 10:11`), and note its correctness,--that special light and favor came at the first end, and now also at the latter end of this Gospel Age,--it will be helpful in this study. We might almost be justified in expecting that the first and last half-centuries of this age have not only enjoyed special light and favor, but possibly may supply a full half of the elect number.

THE GREAT COMPANY WHOSE NUMBER NO MAN KNOWS.

But, another matter is to be considered: The 144,000 are the "called and chosen and faithful;" the "overcomers;" whereas the real converts, the true saints, in the apostles' day and since, include not only the "overcomers" who make their calling and election sure, but also those [probably few] who "draw back" and become subjects of the Second Death (`Heb. 6:6`; `10:39`), and also those who--while not rejecting the Lord, nor turning to love sin--still fail to fulfill their sacrifice with zeal; and, becoming overcharged with the cares of this life, can only be "saved so as by fire," and must "come up out of great tribulation and wash their robes and

make them white in the blood of the Lamb," and take a lower place than that to which they were **called**.-- `Rev. 7:9-14`.

Would it be safe to estimate that this "great company whose number is known to no man" (because, unlike the "little flock," it was **not predestinated**, and consists of such only as fail to reach the standard required) would be twice as numerous as the "little flock"? If so, it would mean that the total number of the truly sanctified and spirit-begotten, during this Gospel Age, has been 432,000. But we are not to forget that no more than the 144,000 could be under invitation at one time; because it is not reasonable to suppose that God would ever invite anyone for whom there would be no place if he proved faithful.

A COMPARATIVE ESTIMATE OF THE ELECTION.

Suppose, for instance, that 45,000 made full consecration during the remainder of the first century, and that one out of three gained the victor's crown; that would represent 15,000 of the "elect;" the result say of 68 years' labor of the Apostles,--garnering the ripe wheat of the Jewish nation and starting the work among such Gentiles as were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him." If for every period of 68 years, from the year 100 to the year 1881, A.D., we estimate the results to have been one fourth what they were under the very favorable Apostolic ministration, it would probably be very liberal, viz., 3,750. We are not to forget that in Israel, as the Master said, the fields were already white for harvesting. In those fields the Apostles needed not to do sowing, but merely to gather in the fruitage of the Law dispensation. After the cream of the Gentiles had also been gathered in, the work would surely go more slowly.

Calculating on this reasonable and liberal basis, the year A.D. 1881, would see 112,500 who had already finished their course with joy as "overcomers," --and a remainder of 31,500 yet needed, to complete the predestinated number. Or, if the perfect fruitage of the Apostolic period were estimated at 12,000, and the remainder on the same basis, the total number garnered up to 1881 would have been 90,000; leaving a balance of 54,000 to be perfected since 1881, A.D.,--up to,--say 1910.

For our estimates, let us take the former figures, as being very conservative;--viz., 31,500, to be developed--during, say 30 years. This would be considerably above the ratio estimated for the Apostolic period; but we are not to forget, on the other hand, that this is the harvest time for Christendom; --many times more numerous than was fleshly Israel. We are not to forget, either, that not only present-day inventions, conveniences, etc., permit each laborer to do more work, but also, that education being much more general now, a more extensive and intensive "harvest" work is possible now, than in the Jewish "harvest." On the whole, we cannot think that these figures can be considered immoderate.

"THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND."--`DAN. 12:10`.

This brings us to another point. We believe that the Lord meant us to understand, that one evidence of faithfulness today, would be a knowledge of **present truth**. This seems to be the only possible deduction from the Parable of the Ten Virgins,

from the Apostle's words in `I Thes. 5:4`, etc. And is it not as reasonable to suppose that the "elect" will all learn of our Lord's **second presence**, as that every Israelite indeed was informed of our Lord's first advent, in that separating of wheat from chaff? We are to remember, however, that some of those who at first were in such darkness that they persecuted the faithful, were subsequently rescued from their blindness, and became zealous brethren and servants of the truth. So here;--our thought is, that none could now be esteemed "overcomers," victors, while ignorant of our Lord's **parousia**, etc.; but we believe that many, if not the majority of the above mentioned 31,500, still in darkness, may yet prove amenable to their consecration and come into the light of present truth.

As is generally understood, we believe the prophetic Scriptures to teach that the general call or invitation ceased in 1881; and on the foregoing calculation this would imply that the conjectured 31,500 consecrated, were written in the Lamb's book of life at that date, as fully sanctified persons, who had presented their all to the Lord in living sacrifice, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

Our hypothesis being correct, these 31,500 have been on trial, for now over twenty years; and, meantime, the only chance for others to come into this elect class has been as the trial time of some of these may have lapsed, without their making their calling and election sure;--their names being blotted out of the Lamb's book of life, and their claims upon crowns of life being forfeited, as our Lord forewarned (`Rev. 2:10`; `3:11`),--they being numbered either among God's enemies (`Heb. 10:26,27`) or among those whom the Son will deliver, "so as by fire," in the "great company" of `Revelation 7:9,13`.

If we are correct in supposing that a knowledge and confession of present truth are essential to overcoming, now, we may give a fair guess at the number thus far faithful from the **Watch Tower** lists and our general knowledge of the friends. A liberal estimate would be 10,000, walking in the light of present truth, and **sanctified** thereby. This would leave 21,500 yet in darkness; and probably most of them in "Babylon." Of the 10,000 whom we will assume that we know, our estimate would be that nearly or quite one half of them were not consecrated in 1881, --not amongst the 31,500. Accepting this as a basis of estimate it would teach us what?

THE WISE VIRGINS GOING IN TO THE WEDDING.

It would teach us that since 1881 about 5,000 had gone on faithfully and been granted the light of present truth, and have good hopes if they stand fast that they will finish their course with joy--in death. It implies, that the 5,000 who have consecrated and received the light of present truth since 1881, took the places of 5,000 whose period of probation ended without proving them so far overcomers as to be worthy of the light. Thus 10,000 of the 31,500 are already disposed of. Now, of the 21,500 yet to be dealt with, what may we expect? (1) That one third, or possibly one half the number, will yet prove themselves "overcomers" (`Rev. 15:2-4`; `20:4`); and (2) that the remainder--10,000 to 14,000--would represent the numbers of those whom we might expect yet to come into divine favor by a full consecration; --to take the places vacated and prospective crowns forfeited by the "overcharged." And more than this: we must reckon that of those consecrating now,

even in the light of present truth, there must be a testing, a sifting; and that if one half of the smaller estimate fail, it would mean 5,000 more to make consecration and stand testing; and if one half of these fail, it would mean 2,500 more, and so on.

We should not forget, however, that those entering the "race" now have many advantages. (1) We may assume, in harmony with reason and our observations, that a considerable number who have consecrated since 1881, have been under the Lord's care and instruction, along the lines of discipline and character-building, with a view to their being accepted to fill the places of those failing to make their calling and election sure,--to joint-heirship in the Kingdom. (2) We may assume that, since the general call has ceased, none of these would be instructed in "the deep things of God," except as they are permitted to take their places in the race. (3) We may expect that those consecrated in 1881 must close their probation for the prize very shortly now. (4) As the "present truth" is now shining very clearly, and is getting more generally shed abroad, and is in a condensed form, easy of quick assimilation, we should expect that characters would form and expand and crystallize, now, much more rapidly than ever before. (5) We see that the cleavage or gulf is growing wider and wider, between "wheat" (true believers, fully consecrated) and "tares" (deceived persons misnaming themselves Christians, because mistaught by Churchianity). As the "tares" more and more openly repudiate faith in the blood of Christ, and more and more boldly declare for "higher criticism" and "evolution," the "wheat" who have been halting and fearful toward the truth and its true servants, will begin to see that they must decide quickly;--and all of the "wheat" class will decide correctly; and some of them promptly enough to be classed with the "elect little flock." (6) We anticipate continued and increasing opposition; so that it will be fair to suppose that those giving adherence to the truth will generally so well count the cost in advance that comparatively few of them will need to be sifted out.

LABOR,--FOR THE NIGHT COMETH.

Those who for some time have inclined to wonder at our sanguine expectations, respecting the progress of the truth, the growing numbers of **Watch Tower** subscribers, etc., now have, in the foregoing, our reply to their queries. We doubt not that the arguments will commend themselves to the majority, if not all of our readers. We trust that it will come to you all as a fresh incentive to energy and zeal in the harvest work. Faith and patience are qualities necessary to every soldier of the cross. Be valiant! Quit you like men! is the Apostolic exhortation, and it is ours also. Go forth in the name of our glorified Head, giving to all true Israelites the "three signs" of the Lord's presence. And if in pouring the water upon the land it turn into blood, even your blood, rejoice and be exceeding glad. Remember that your covenant is, to lay down your life for the brethren,-- even unto death.

Let each go at once to the throne of grace, petitioning the Lord, that in so far as these presentations are the truth, they may be blest to his own heart. Pray also that the Lord will send forth more laborers into his vineyard and inspire yourself and all of his faithful "brethren" (` Heb. 2:11 `) to renewed energy and effectiveness during the year 1902. Among the estimated 21,500 consecrated brethren yet in Babylon, several thousand should be ready for the sanctifying truth this year. Watch and pray

for opportunities to serve them, and for wisdom from on high to rightly use the opportunities as they come to you. May the grace of God abide with us!

August 1902 – Reprint 3062 - A COMPARATIVE ESTIMATE OF THE ELECTION.

Question.--There is a difference of opinion amongst us respecting your meaning in the article "A Comparative Estimate of the Election," page 26, in Jan. 15, 1902 number of the WATCH TOWER, hence I inquire, Is it your thought that the consecrated number includes only those who have come to a knowledge of present truth? If so, are we to understand that for every one who now comes into fellowship in the light of present truth, some other one has gone out of this light into darkness?

Answer.--Quite to the contrary. We understand that consecration to the Lord is necessary in every case before there will be a proper ability to receive the truth in the love of it--the truth respecting the deep things of God. It is our thought that of the suggested 31,500 already consecrated in 1881, scarcely any had any knowledge of what we term "present truth." Our thought is that a knowledge of present truth will be brought to all of these consecrated ones and will constitute a test of their consecration, of their sincerity; just as at the first advent our Lord offered himself not to the Gentiles, the unconsecrated, but to Israel the consecrated, typical people. The offering constituted a test to the Israelites; such as were meek and lowly of heart were the better prepared to receive the Messiah; such as were proud, vain-glorious either of their own persons or of their sects or parties, were thereby blinded and stumbled and hindered from accepting the truth. So it is today; the meek, the humble, the lowly of heart who are following the Lord implicitly have much advantage every way over the majority of God's consecrated people now, beset by worldliness and personal or sectarian pride and ambition. Nevertheless, having made a consecration and having been accepted of the Lord, a reasonable time should properly be granted to such to make their calling and election sure, to learn life's lessons respecting the emptiness of pride and ambition, and the fact that the true peace and joy in the Lord are to be found in humility of heart and closeness to the Master. We believe that in the Lord's providence "present truth" has been presented time and again to many of these consecrated ones and that some were ready and received it the first time, while to others it came two, three, four times before they had learned their lessons properly so as to be able to discern the emptiness of sectarianism and the bitterness and nausea of human creeds and theories in order that they might be able to appreciate the good tidings of the Word and plan of God. Others failing to profit by experiences granted them will, we believe, be rejected from the "overcomers" class.

In all reason we must expect that the period of favor with many of these is expired and that the crowns apportioned to them at the time of their consecration are no longer held for them, but will be granted to others who will take their places; and that their names will no longer be written amongst the victors, but will be blotted out from that glorious place, though not blotted out of God's memory, nor blotted out of existence, but rather that they may be re-entered as members of another

class, the "Great Company," who shall pass through the great tribulation which, peradventure, may work in them blessings which they were not prepared otherwise to receive.

We are not to expect that the Lord would wait until these names began to be stricken from the list before he would begin to prepare others for their places: rather we are to presume that he would have in training a considerable number already consecrated but not accepted to the high calling (because the general call has ceased) and therefore not at once made acquainted with present truth. As vacancies shall occur amongst the accepted, or "elect" class because of failure to fulfil consecration vows, it will open the way for these later consecrated ones to be accepted to the "high calling" and then it will be proper for them to come to an appreciation of present truth, and to discern clearly the prize of our high-calling, the race course leading to it and the requirements of every faithful runner. That this has been the Lord's method since 1881 is evidenced very clearly by the fact that now at the time when we would expect that a good many names would be blotted from the roll as having failed to be victors, there are, we find, a considerable number consecrated since 1881, ready to receive the truth. And so deep is their consecration and earnestness and zeal that once they come into contact with the truth they assimilate it quickly, with understanding and appreciation, and make rapid progress in the race course toward the mark of the prize--perfect love.

Of course we must expect that some, even after receiving the light of present truth, will prove unfaithful to it and go out into the "outer darkness" of the world, where shortly, in the great time of trouble, they will share in the predicted "weeping and gnashing of teeth;" and we must expect that the going out of the race by these will be followed by the letting of others into the race course as well as in case of those who were consecrated prior to 1881, and whose testing largely consists in their coming into contact with the light of present truth. However, those who have come into the light of present truth under consecration made since October, 1881, will be much less likely to be finally rejected than those who were consecrated prior to 1881; because the receiving of the light of present truth constitutes one trial or sifting in every case, and this test is already past by those now being accepted.

June 1911 - Reprint 4842 - THE GRADUAL END OF GOSPEL FAVOR

QUESTION.--Do you understand the Scriptures to teach, either directly or indirectly, through the Parallels of the Jewish Dispensation, that it was necessary that all who would eventually constitute the "little flock" must have been in a **justified** condition previous to October, 1881?

Answer.--No, we do not so understand the matter.

Question.--Was it necessary that all who would be of the "little flock" should have made their **consecration by** or before October, 1881?

Answer.--No, we do not so understand the matter.

The chapter in SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. II, showing the parallels between the Jewish and Christian Dispensations, makes prominent four dates, viz., (1) October, 1874; (2) April, 1878; (3) October, 1881, and (4) October, 1914; these dates being parallel to four in the Jewish harvest, viz., (1) The beginning of our Lord's ministry; the beginning of the trial or harvest time of the Jewish nation, October, 29; (2) The end of our Lord's ministry, His crucifixion, and the rejection of the Jewish nation as a nation, April, 33 (See SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. 2, chapter 7); (3) The close of the "seventy weeks" (`Dan. 9:24-26`) of favor upon the Jewish nation--October, 36--after which the Gospel privileges were open to the Gentiles, Cornelius being the first convert; (4) The full end of trouble and destruction which came upon Israel's polity, October, 69.

It should be clearly noticed that the parallels between the Jewish and Gospel Ages all belong to the **nominal systems then and now**, and if this is borne in mind, it will prevent our applying these parallels either to the gathering out of the Gospel Church or to the gathering of the Lord's people out of Babylon now.

Noting these parallels, we find **1874** as the beginning of this "harvest" and the gathering together of the "elect" from the four winds of heaven; **1878** as the time when Babylon was **formally rejected**, Laodicea spewed out--the time from which it is stated, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen"--fallen from Divine favor. The parallel in **1881** would seem to indicate that **certain favors were still** continued to those in Babylon up to that date, notwithstanding the rejection of the system; and since that date we would understand that that relationship has been in no sense an advantageous one, but has been in many senses of the word a **distinct disadvantage**, from which only with **difficulty** could any free themselves, the Lord's grace and truth assisting. And in harmony with this parallelism, October, **1914**, will witness the full end of Babylon, "as a great millstone cast into the sea," utterly destroyed as a system.

Coming back: We concede it reasonable to infer that the close of the favors upon fleshly Israel represent the close of the **special favor** of this **Gospel Age**, viz., the invitation to the High Calling; accordingly, our understanding is that the **open** or **general** "call" of this Age to Kingdom honors ceased in October, 1881. However, as already shown in SCRIPTURE STUDIES, we make a distinction between the end of the "call" and the closing of the "door"; and believe that the door into the Kingdom class is **not yet closed**; that it **stands ajar** for a time, to permit those who had already accepted the "call" and who **fail** to use its privileges and opportunities in self-sacrifice to be **thrust** out, and to permit **others to enter** to take their crowns, in harmony with `Rev. 3:11`. **The present time**, therefore, from 1881 until the door of opportunity for sacrifice in the Lord's service shall fully close, is a period of **"sifting"** as respects all who are already in Divine favor, in covenant relationship with God.

And since those who have gone into the "Feast" through the "door" represent all who are called (except those who have afterward been rejected and expelled), it follows that the places of those thus expelled must be taken by some who were **not** previously amongst the called, amongst the consecrated. This, we trust, makes plain the answer to your question, proving that some not previously consecrated will, in

the **eleventh hour**, be admitted to the vineyard labors and to the rewards of the faithful, **after the open call ceased**, and before the "door" closes.

Indeed, we are to distinctly remember that in speaking of the gathering to take place **during this harvest time**, our Lord mentions amongst others those who have been **in the field** (in **the world**), apparently referring to a class who **previously had been neither justified nor sanctified** through the Truth. See SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. III, Chap. 6.

1909 – Question book - CONSECRATION---Does Jehovah Accept All?

QUESTION - Can we make a full consecration to the Lord and the Lord not accept the consecration?

ANSWER.--I answer, Yes. To our understanding God had a general call open until a certain period of time, all through the Gospel Age, and as long as that call was open, anybody might make the consecration and God would accept him; but when that call ceased, then matters would be different from that time, then consecration would not necessarily mean that the Lord would accept him. He might and He might not accept his consecration. How would that be? Our thought is that in 1881 the full number of the Lord's choice had been reached, and therefore the call ceased. Just the same as if we had a feast here and places at the table for a certain number of people. Boy, go out and ring the bell and say: Anybody come in until the seats are filled. When the seats were filled then no more would come in. Suppose that some who are here feel like taking off the wedding garment, as in one of the parables, or should say, I do not think I will partake of the feast, but will take some exercise, and should go out. The boy at the door might be informed that whenever one goes out he could let in one who is in waiting. That is the thought we have in respect to the present time, since 1881.

Remember, that the elect class is a Little Flock, and remember also that there is a Great Company also with them. The Little Flock go on and gladly and willingly fulfill the terms of their consecration, while the Great Company class, hold back. They do not develop the spirit of Christ to the extent of being willing sacrifices in the service of God and the truth.

By the way, I remind you of the fact that in 1881, just following the time when Moody, Sankey, Whittle and Bliss had been doing a wonderful work in America and England, stirring up the consecrated people of the world they were talking good, sound sense about consecration, the Lord's Second Coming, etc. I wondered then, but could not understand the reason.

By way of interjection I heard incidentally that while Mr. Moody was near his dying hour, he expressed the thought that he had a great deal of faith in the things written in that book called "Millennial Dawn." I was pleased to hear it and glad that it made his dying hour happy.

I also heard of another man, Bishop McCabe, formerly known as Chaplain McCabe, and said to have been a very noble Christian man. I heard through apparently good sources that he made a similar statement to that of Mr. Moody. I know the books were called to his attention by a friend. But in both cases it evidently was not published in the papers, and those who did not publish it evidently thought they were doing God a service by keeping it out.

Now, as I said, in 1881 Messrs. Moody, Sankey, Whittle and Bliss had been stirring up the whole civilized world on the subject of consecration, and apparently a large number made consecration to the Lord.

Just suppose at that time, for sake of illustration, that there were forty thousand consecrated people. You say, That is a very small number. Well, dear friends, the more I think of the matter the more I wonder where the Lord is going to find the number. I used to think of how small the number is, 144,000, but of late I have been wondering how it will be possible to find the required number. Suppose there were forty thousand living at the time the call ceased in 1881. These would have been given a certain length of time to prove whether they would have the Lord's way or not, whether faithful to their covenant of sacrifice. The majority of that forty thousand would not make willing sacrifices, only a Little Flock. And as with that forty thousand, so with all in the past. What proportion of the forty thousand would prove faithful? Well, for sake of illustration, let us make it liberal and say, ten thousand. Let them represent the Little Flock and the thirty thousand the Great Company. What would that mean? It would mean that as they came to the point of testing and trial, it would leave that number of places to be filled. All who are not of the elect class, copies of God's dear Son, their places would be made vacant. The Lord would not make another call, but merely let others come in to take their places.

Question, If it was down to a place where there was only one place to be filled, which one would get it? I suppose it would be the one in whose heart God saw the most of the Character likeness of Christ. My thought is that it is not a matter between two, but that there are from twenty to thirty thousand places to be filled, and the Lord seems to be opening the doors and hearts to many more than in the past, for now the knowledge of the truth is being spread abroad more than in the past and those who are coming in give evidence of being as loyal to the Lord as those who came in some time ago. So, if some of us came in some time ago and have the evidence of our acceptance by Him, **thank God, take heed** that no man take thy crown, **watch**, for you might lose it. The fact that you were in proves nothing, for **you might be cast out**, which will be done, if you do not develop and continue to be consecrated to the Lord. Let us do with our might what our hands find to do, and apply the truth to our own hearts and lives.

January 1913 - Reprint 5168 - "YET THERE IS ROOM"

"Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."--`Rev. 3:11`.

THE QUESTION is sometimes asked whether it is possible for one to consecrate himself and to be accepted at this late hour in the Gospel Age, unless there is a

crown reserved for such a one. Certainly it would be possible for one to consecrate himself. Consecration is always proper. Long before the Gospel Age began, Abraham and the Prophets made consecration of their lives. St. Paul informs us that these Ancient Worthies showed that their lives were consecrated to God and righteousness; for they suffered--many of them--painful and ignominious deaths for His sake. Thus they demonstrated that the world was unworthy of them. --`Heb. 11:33-38`.

The fact that a person has offered himself in consecration does not, however, obligate the Almighty to accept the offering. While it is true that "God is no respecter of persons" (`Acts 10:34`,) yet His favor was given first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. This favor is the most wonderful ever offered to beings on any plane of existence--that all who will accept the terms may come into the Church, which is the mystical Body of Christ, until a sufficient number shall have been found, until the fore-ordained number shall have made consecration and shall have made their calling and election sure.

While the Scriptures indicate clearly that we are living at the very close of the Gospel Age, yet it is not for us to know when the full number shall have consecrated themselves. It is our belief that in a general way the outward call ceased in 1881, A. D.

Our thought is that in 1878 there were a great many consecrated persons who had not passed their trial in full; and that there were in the nominal churches many thousands who had made full consecration to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. From 1874 to 1881, there was a great number of evangelists preaching both in this country and abroad. Of these, Evangelist Moody was perhaps the best known. He seemed to make a great many converts; and his preaching seemed to be very different from that of the majority of evangelists. He preached forgiveness through the precious blood of Christ, and full consecration to God.

During that revival period, many made a full consecration, had their names tentatively written in Heaven, and filled up the number required. But when the testings came, many were found unworthy of a higher reward than that of the Great Company. Others took the places of the failures and were also tested and sifted. Vacancies occurred; and still others came in for an opportunity. We see evidences that this work has been going on for the past thirty years; and we believe that it is true that some names are now being listed and that there are crowns awaiting such.

OUR REASON FOR THIS THOUGHT

People who have not been interested in religion and who have not heretofore consecrated themselves unto God, have quite recently made full consecration of themselves and have received that evidence which seems to indicate that God has accepted them. Not only have the eyes of their understanding been opened so that they can see the spiritual, or deep things of God, but they are given opportunities to sacrifice. While we make a covenant that we will sacrifice (`Psa. 50:5`), yet it is for the Lord to give us the opportunity to do so. The fact that some of the recently

consecrated are receiving and using opportunities to sacrifice, implies that when they made their consecration there was a place open and that they are filling it.

The fact also that so many have been thus accepted since 1878 seems to imply that there has been a considerable vacancy in the list of the Elect, and that it is gradually filling up. It is not for us to say how much of a vacancy remains, or just when it will be filled. We fully believe, however, that it will be filled before the close of "the Times of the Gentiles," which we think will end with October, 1914.

As for others who have not yet consecrated themselves, we can say with St. Paul, "I beseech you,...brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." (`Rom. 12:1`.) Do your best. It may be that there is an opening and you may get in. Consecrate your time, your talents, all that you have, to the service of God. He is a good Paymaster; whatever reward He may give you will be a prize.

We realize, however, that all who will be accepted as members of the Body of Christ must have trials both of faith and of loyalty before being assigned to a definite place in the Kingdom. Those who become reprobates will constitute the Second Death class. Others may be assigned to the Great Company. All such will be counted out of membership in the Royal Priesthood. As each is put out as unworthy, his former place becomes vacant and his crown released. Such vacancies, we understand, are now being filled from among those who offer themselves.

This condition has obtained since 1881, when, we believe--as before stated--the general call ceased. When a vacancy occurs, it is reasonable to believe that from among those who are in a waiting attitude the one would be chosen who is the most highly developed and most fully in harmony with the Lord.