

QUESTION COLUMN.

Ques. A Brother writes to heartily endorse our expressions in last issue relative to the Inter. S.S. Lessons, etc., and asks, Can we not have a lesson leaf for children which would rightly present the Scripture teachings to them?

Ans. In our opinion Sunday-schools and all kinds of schools are good and useful in proportion as they teach anything valuable or useful. Let children be taught morality of every sort, and instructed in the first principles of the Gospel, and all they can understand concerning God's character, and of the harmony between God's two revelations – the book of nature and the book of revelation. Thus they will be prepared for useful and honest lives as men and women – loyal and obedient to their Creator and Redeemer.

But we who are in training for the high calling cannot turn aside from the special work of this age – the work of preparing "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." The Bride is to make herself ready; and just at the present moment, when the last touches of adornment are being put on preparatory to the wedding, every member's service is required in this all-important, present work. Soon our exalted position of heavenly power with the Lord, will enable us to render substantial aid to all work, for the blessing and elevating of humanity. The very work for which we are now in preparation is the restoring and blessing of all the families of the earth.

To all saints who have a talent for teaching and explaining, and who see the truth clearly, we suggest that you "cast your net on the other side of the ship" and become fishers of men and women rather than of children; and fish for one class only, viz.: the consecrated in Christ Jesus, and to these do as did Aquilla and Priscilla to Apollos – show unto them "the way of God more perfectly." (Acts 18:26-

28.) It is the eleventh hour, but go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right shall be your reward. It is too late now to expect fruit for this vintage from new slips, but you may be of service to the older fruit-bearing branches by tearing off some of the old withered leaves, and thus letting in the sunlight of grace and truth with power to ripen their fruit.

Ques. Is it possible for a parent to cast all care on Jesus and not be worried about the future condition of grown children, who, though members of the nominal church and free from gross sins, yet manifest much love for the world and have no appetite for spiritual things?

Ans. We think that a proper appreciation of the Lord's character and plans, while it would not lead to carelessness in using every opportunity to reach him that hath an ear to hear, yet would be free entirely from worry. Under all circumstances let us give thanks.

In the first place, probably your sons and daughters, like thousands of others, are not new creatures in Christ – old things have not passed away and all things have not become new to them; hence they would not be heirs of spiritual, heavenly things. For this reason God does not reveal to them things which they cannot have. No such human eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath in reservation for those that love him [the consecrated "new creatures". But God hath revealed these things to the new creatures by his Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9-10.)

Being of the earth earthy, they shall in due time be blessed by being restored to the perfection of the earthly condition, and to a perfect enjoyment of earthly blessings, because redeemed by the precious blood. In their resurrection (or perfecting) they shall come fully to the image of the first man, "very good"; but those who, through consecration, have changed their nature, will be no longer

men, but "new creatures" – spiritual beings – and shall bear the image of the Head of the heavenly house when perfected. As was the earthly one, Adam, such like will they be also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly one, Jesus, such like will they be also that are heavenly.

The difficulty is, that the church, having misconstrued the Gospel's present mission to witness to the world, and to develop a "little flock," came to the conclusion that she must NOW convert the world, hence she has bent her energies in that direction, and almost ignored the deeper work upon the "little flock." The work of converting the world being slow, she naturally concluded that she must not be too particular as to whom she received, else she would seem to make no progress. Accordingly she lowered her standard. Therefore many persons have been told that they are Christians, and invited to join church, who never were converted, and know nothing about entire consecration. Such are not new creatures, and, consequently, cannot sympathize with the rules of self-sacrifice laid down in Scripture for the little flock. As such constitute, probably, three fourths of the membership of the nominal church, it is not surprising that spirituality and spiritual truths are at such a discount in it.

Again, we say, rejoice – rejoice that you may overcome and be of that spiritual seed which shall bless and restore the nations. Rejoice that your children are moral, and do all that you can to supply them a basis for morality in the expression and illustration of God's character in your words and conduct. Rejoice as you think of the blessings to come upon them and all mankind when the kingdom is the Lord's and he is the governor among the nations. Rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks: "For he is good – His mercy endureth forever." "Blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

Ques. Please let us know your opinion of the very distinct physical features of the present day, such as cyclones, sun spots, etc. I know your position concerning political and religious changes as fulfilling the scriptural statements of the shaking of the heavens, earthquakes, etc., but not concerning these physical phenomena?

Ans. We understand that great physical as well as political and religious revolutions are now in progress. Just what these are, may not be very clearly seen, but these are as certain to bring a blessing to earth as the others, though, like them, the change may be attended with distress and temporary confusion.

It seems certain that to make the earth into a paradise like Eden, such as the prophecies picture, and a fit place for the restored race, some great changes of climate, etc., must occur. Looking back, we find that some important changes of climate, etc., took place at the time of the Deluge; a change which at once affected the longevity of humanity, for before that life averaged 500 to 1,000 years, but immediately afterward it was shortened. (See Gen. 6:3; 9:29; 11:32.) Furthermore, we learn that until the flood, there had been no rain on the earth, it being watered by a mist instead. (Gen. 2:5,6.) These changes occurred at the end of the first world or dispensation – at the beginning of "The present evil world," or dispensation – and we think that a proper time to expect another change to a better condition would be at the close of the present evil dispensation, at the threshold of "The world [dispensation] to come," wherein dwelleth righteousness. That these changes will be sudden we do not believe, but think that the all-wise Director of the work has so planned that physical and higher changes run parallel and keep pace with each other.

As we find the forty years, from 1874 to 1914, A.D., prophetically marked out as the time for the change of earth's administration, it would seem not unreasonable to suppose that the

proper physical changes might occur during the same period. "Not that we expect all changes to be completed in the specified forty years, but that by that time the new systems and arrangements will be thoroughly introduced, which will be gradually improving, and will reach absolute perfection at the same time that mankind in general will reach absolute perfection by restitution. Thus the perfect earth and its perfect Lord (man) will both be prepared to enter upon the ceaseless ages of perfection into which shall never enter sin, death, pain or sorrow.

So, then, to us let the physical contortions and quakings and tempests and angry waves, speak of the better condition coming, just as the social revolutions speak of a more blessed time coming to the groaning creation who shall be delivered into the liberty of sons of God. (Rom. 8:21.)

Whirlwinds or cyclones are disturbances occurring in the air or heavens – caused by disorders therein, and which exercise a baneful influence upon the earth. These physical disorders illustrate the origin of much of the world's trouble; it will be caused by disorders in the symbolic heavens or church normal. Notice how this trouble and whirlwind are symbolically mentioned by Jeremiah 25:29-36. Notice how the chief distress is specified as coming upon the nations [governments] and upon the shepherds and principal of the flock – nominal.

Ques. Why was the brazen serpent used as a type of Christ?

Ans. Undoubtedly to teach and develop faith. But we presume you to mean, Why was the serpent used as a symbol of Jesus? We answer, that the serpent represents sin, evil – the curse and brass (copper) represents the human nature. (See Tabernacle Tract.) This was a fitting type of Jesus, because as a man he was made sin (i.e., reckoned and treated as the personification of all the

evil and sin of the race, as their representative or substitute) for us
(He) who knew no sin.
