

[R1214 : page 4]

SIFTING THE WHEAT

"Satan hath desired to have you that he might sift you as wheat." – Luke 22:31.

Thus far all had run smoothly and onward; we had been greatly blessed with truth, but not specially tested in our love [R1214 : page 5] and fidelity to it. But with the Summer of 1878, the parallel in time to the Lord's crucifixion and his utterance of the above quoted words, the sifting began, which has continued ever since, and which must, sooner or later, test every one who receives the light of present truth. "Marvel not, therefore, concerning the fiery trial which *shall try you*, as though some strange thing happened unto you;" for this "fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is" – whether he has built his faith flimsily of wood, hay and stubble, instead of with the valuable stones of God's revealed truth, or whether he has built it upon the shifting sands of human theory – evolution, etc. – or upon the solid rock, the *ransom*, the only sure foundation, which God has provided. They who build upon that *rock* shall be safe personally, even though they may have built up an illogical faith which the "fire" and shaking of this day of trial shall overthrow and utterly consume; but they who build upon any other foundation, whether they use good or bad materials, are sure of complete wreck. – See Luke 6:47-49; 1 Cor. 3:11-15.

The object of this sifting, etc., evidently is to select all whose heart-desires are unselfish, who are fully and unreservedly consecrated to the Lord, who are so anxious to have the Lord's will done, and whose confidence in his wisdom and his way and his Word is so great, that they humbly refuse to be led either by the sophistries of others, or by plans and ideas of their own, away from the Lord's Word. These, in the sifting time, will be strengthened

and shall increase their joy in the Lord and their knowledge of his plans, even while their faith is being tested by the falling into error of thousands on every hand. – Psa. 91:7.

The sifting began thus: Regarding Paul's statement (1 Cor. 15:51,52): "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," etc., we still held the idea which Adventists, and indeed all Christians hold, that at some time the living saints would be suddenly and miraculously caught away bodily, thenceforth to be forever with the Lord. And now, our acquaintance with time-prophecy led us to expect this translation of the saints at the point of time in this age parallel to the Lord's resurrection; for many of the parallelisms between the Jewish and Christian dispensations were already seen by us, and formed one of the features of the little book above referred to – *The Three Worlds*.

We did not then see, as we now do, that that date (1878) marked the time for the beginning of the establishment of the Kingdom of God, by the glorification of all who already slept in Christ, and that the "change" which Paul mentions (1 Cor. 15:51) is to occur in the moment of dying, to all the class described, from that date onward through the harvest period until all of the living members ("the feet") of the body of Christ, shall have been changed to spirit beings glorified. But when at that date nothing occurred which we could *see*, a re-examination of the matter showed me that our mistake lay in expecting to see all the living saints changed at once, and without dying – an erroneous view shared in by the whole nominal church, and one which we had not yet discarded or observed. The clear view just stated, and which has been presented through the TOWER, was the result of the examination thus started. I soon saw that in the Apostle's words, "We shall not all *sleep*," the word *sleep* was not synonymous with *die*, though generally so understood; that on the contrary the expression *sleep*, here used, represents *unconsciousness*; and that

the Apostle wished us to understand that *from* a certain time in the Lord's *presence*, his saints, though they would all die like other men (Psa. 82:6,7), would not need to remain for any time unconscious, but in the moment of dying would be *changed* and would receive the spirit body promised. Throughout this Gospel age, dying has been followed by *unconsciousness*, "sleep." This continued true of all saints who "fell asleep in Jesus" up to the time when he took the office of King (Rev. 11:17), which we have shown (in Millennial Dawn, Vol. II., pages 218, 219) was in 1878. Not only did the King at that date "awaken in his likeness" all the members of his body, the church, who slept, but for the same reason (the time for establishing his Kingdom having come) it is no longer necessary that the "feet" or last remaining members should go into "sleep," or unconsciousness. On the contrary, each now, as he finishes his course, faithful unto death, will at once receive the crown of life, and being changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, cannot be said to sleep, or to be unconscious at all. Here, too, Rev. 14:13 is applicable – 1878 – "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord *from henceforth.*"

So this re-examination showed further light upon the pathway and became a good cause for encouragement, as evidencing the Lord's continued leading.

But while I was thus helped to clearer views and brighter hopes, and while I diligently endeavored to help others, the Spring of 1878 proved far from a blessing to Mr. Barbour and to many under his influence. Rejecting the plain, simple solution presented above, Mr. B. seemed to feel that he must of necessity get up something new to divert attention. And alas, how dangerous it is for any man to feel too much responsibility and to attempt to force new light.

To our painful surprise Mr. Barbour soon after wrote an article for the *Herald* denying the doctrine of the atonement – denying

that the death of Christ was the ransom-price of Adam and his race, saying that Christ's death was no more a settlement of the penalty of man's sins than would the sticking of a pin through the body of a fly and causing it suffering and death be considered by an earthly parent as a just settlement for a misdemeanor in his child. I was astonished, supposing that Mr. B. had a clearer understanding of the work of Christ as our sin-offering, our willing Redeemer who gladly, co-operating in the divine plan, gave himself as the *ransom* or *corresponding price* to meet the penalty upon Adam, that Adam and all his posterity might in due time go free from sin and death. A totally different thing indeed was the willing, intelligent, loving offering of our Redeemer, according to the plan devised and revealed by infinite wisdom, from the miserable caricature of it offered in the above illustration. I had either given Mr. B. credit for clearer views than he ever had, or else he was deliberately taking off and casting away the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness. The latter was the only conclusion left; for he afterward stated that he had previously recognized Christ's death as man's *ransom* price.

Immediately I wrote an article for the *Herald* in contradiction of the error, showing the necessity "that one die for all" – "the just for the unjust" – and how Christ fulfilled all this as it had been written, and that *consequently* God could be just and forgive and release the sinner from the very penalty he had justly imposed (Rom. 3:26.) I also wrote to Mr. Paton, calling his attention to the fundamental character of the doctrine assailed, and pointing out how the time and circumstances all corresponded with the parable of the one who took off the wedding garment when just about to partake of the wedding feast. He replied that he had not seen it in so strong a light before, that Mr. B. had a strong, dogmatic way of putting things which had for the time overbalanced him. I urged that, seeing now the importance of the doctrine, he also write an article for the *Herald*, which, in no uncertain tone, would give his witness for the precious blood of Christ, which he did. Those

articles appeared in the issues of the *Herald* from July to December, 1878.

It now became clear to me that the Lord would no longer have me assist financially or to be in any way identified with anything which cast any influence in opposition to the fundamental principle of our holy Christian religion, and I therefore, after a most careful though unavailing effort to reclaim the erring, withdrew entirely from the *Herald of the Morning* and from further fellowship with Mr. B. But a mere withdrawal I felt was not sufficient to show my continued loyalty to our Lord and Redeemer, whose cause had been thus violently assailed by one in a position to lead the sheep astray – and in that position too very largely by my individual assistance and encouragement when I believed him to be in all sincerity true to the Lord. I therefore understood it to be the Lord's will that I should start another journal in which the standard of the cross should be lifted high, the doctrine of the ransom defended, and the good tidings of great joy proclaimed as extensively as possible.

Acting upon this leading of the Lord, I gave up traveling, and in July, 1879, the first number of *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* made its appearance. From the first, it has been a special advocate of the ransom, and by the grace of God we hope it will never be any thing else.

For a time we had a most painful experience: the readers of the *Herald* and of the TOWER were the same, and from the time the latter started and the supply of funds from this quarter for the *Herald* ceased, Mr. B. not only treated all he had in his possession as his own, but poured upon the editor of the TOWER the vilest of personal abuse in order to prevent the TOWER and the doctrine of the ransom from having due influence upon the readers. This of course caused a division, as such things always do. The personal abuse, being regarded by some as true, had its

intended effect of biasing the judgments of many on the subject of the ransom, and many turned from us.

But the Lord continued his favor, which I esteem of more value than the favor of the whole world. It was at this time that Mr. Adams espoused the views of Mr. Barbour and likewise forsook the doctrine of the ransom. And, true to our interpretation of the parable of the wedding garment as given at the time, Mr. Barbour and Mr. Adams, having cast off the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness, went out of the light into the outer darkness of the world on the subjects once so clearly seen – namely, the time and manner of the Lord's presence; and since then for ten years they have been expecting Christ, Spring or Fall, down to the present Spring, which was their latest disappointment.

During this ordeal, or we might truly call it battle, for the cross of Christ, we had the earnest co-operation of Mr. Paton, who, up to the Summer of 1881, was an appreciated co-laborer and defender of the doctrine of coming blessings through Christ based upon the ransom for all given at Calvary. The book *The Three Worlds* having been for some time out of print, it seemed as if either another edition of that, or else a new book covering the same features, should be gotten out. Mr. Paton agreed to get it ready for the press and Mr. Jones offered to pay all the expenses incident to its printing and binding and to give Mr. Paton as many copies of the book as he could sell, as remuneration for his time spent in preparing the matter, * provided I would agree to advertise it liberally and gratuitously in the TOWER – well knowing that there would be a demand for it if I should recommend it, and that his outlay would be sure to return with profit. I not only agreed to this but contributed to Mr. Paton's personal expenses in connection with the publishing, as well as paid part of the printer's bill at his solicitation.

*For this reason Mr. Jones' address, was, properly, the only one mentioned in the advertisement.

In the end I alone was at any financial loss in connection with that book, called *Day Dawn*, the writer and publisher both being gainers financially, while I did all the introducing by repeated advertisements in the TOWER as well as in *Food for Thinking Christians*, of which over a million copies were circulated. We need to give these particulars, because of certain one-sided and only partial statements of facts and misrepresentations, which have recently been published and circulated in tract form by Mr. Paton, who is also now an advocate of that "other gospel" of which the cross of Christ is not the center, and which denies that he "*bought us* with his own precious blood." Mr. P. has gotten out another book, which, though called by the same name as the one we introduced, being on another and a false foundation, I cannot and do not recommend, but which I esteem misleading sophistry, tending to undermine the whole structure of the Christian system: yet retaining a sufficiency of the truths which we once held in common to make it palatable and dangerous to all not rooted and grounded upon the ransom rock.

The false foundation which it presents is the old heathen doctrine of evolution revamped – which not only denies the fall of man, but, as a consequence, all necessity for a redeemer. It claims, on the contrary, that not by redemption and restitution to a lost estate, but by progress of evolution or development, man has progressed and is still to progress from the lower condition in which he was created until he ultimately reaches the divine nature by his own good works. It claims that our blessed Lord was himself a degraded and imperfect man, whose work on earth was to crucify a carnal nature, which, it claims, he possessed, and to *thus* show all men *how* to crucify their carnal propensities or sinful desires.

And here we remark that the darkness and degradation, which came upon the whole world in its fallen, cast-off condition, and which was only intensified by Papacy's priestcraft during the dark ages, when contrasted with the light of intelligence, which God is now letting in upon the world, have gradually led men to esteem present intelligence as merely a part of a progress of evolution. This view, as we have shown (Millennial Dawn, Vol. I., page 156), though quite incorrect, is nevertheless the occasion of the predicted great falling away from the faith of the Bible during the harvest period. (Psa. 91:7.) And few Christian people seem to be well enough grounded in the truth [R1214 : page 6] to be able to withstand this trial of the evil day, in which the many will fall, while only the few will stand. For this cause, we use great plainness of speech.

The little history of the way in which Mr. Paton came to turn from us and the ransom, to oppose that which he once clearly saw and advocated, is important, as it became the occasion of another sifting or testing of the WATCH TOWER readers, by that time a much larger number; because Mr. Paton had been a respected brother and co-worker with us, and because as a traveling representative of the TOWER and its doctrines, his expenses being met in part by TOWER subscriptions and renewals, as well as by money from me, he was *personally* known to a larger number of the readers than was the editor of the TOWER. It came about thus:

—

In the year 1881, Mr. Barbour, still publishing the Herald, and still endeavoring to overthrow the doctrine of the ransom, finding that on a preaching tour I had used a diagram of the Tabernacle to illustrate how Christ's sacrifice was typified in the sacrifices of typical Israel, etc., wrote an article on the atonement, in which he undertook to show that the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement typified almost anything else than what they do typify. I could readily see through the fallacy of his presentation, which made of

the bullock a type of one thing in one verse and another thing in each other verse in which it was mentioned, and so too with the goat. But I well knew that people in general are not close reasoners, and that with the cares of life upon them, they are too apt to accept a seeming interpretation, without a critical examination of the words of Scripture and their context.

I thought the matter all over; I examined the chapter (Lev. 16), but while seeing the inconsistency and error of Mr. Barbour's interpretation, I could only confess that I did not understand it and could not give a connected interpretation which would fit all the details so plainly stated, and all of which must have a particular meaning. What could I do? Those reading the Herald as well as the TOWER would probably be misled, if not helped out of the difficulty; and to merely say that the Herald's interpretation was inconsistent with itself, and therefore a misinterpretation, would be misunderstood. Many would surely think that I opposed that view from a spirit of rivalry. (There are always people with whom every thing resolves itself into personality, rivalry and party spirit, and such cannot understand others who take a higher and nobler view, and who think always and only of the truth, regardless of persons.) I went to the Lord with this as with every trial, told him just how it seemed to me, how anxious I felt for the dear sheep, who, having their appetites sharpened by some truth, were by their very hunger exposed to Satan's deceptions.

I told him that I realized that he was the Shepherd, and not I, but that I knew also that he would be pleased at any interest in the sheep, and my desire to be his mouthpiece to declare the truth, the way and the life to them; that I felt deeply impressed that if the time had come for the permission of a false view to deceive the unworthy, it must also be his due time to have the truth on the same subject made clear, that the worthy ones might be enabled to stand, and not fall from the truth. Believing that the due time had come for the correct understanding of the meaning of the Jewish

sacrifices, which all Christians see were typical of "better sacrifices," and that the Lord would grant the insight as soon as I got into the attitude of heart best fitted to receive the light, I prayed with confidence that if the Lord's due time had come, and if he was willing to use me as his instrument to declare the message to his dear family, that I might be enabled to rid my heart and mind of any prejudice that might stand in the way and be led of his spirit into the proper understanding.

Believing that the prayer would be answered affirmatively, I went into my study next morning prepared to study and write. The forenoon I spent in scrutinizing the text and every other Scripture likely to shed light upon it, especially the epistle to the Hebrews, and in looking to the Lord for wisdom and guidance; but no solution of the difficult passage came. The afternoon and evening were similarly spent, and all of the next day; everything else was neglected, and I wondered why the Lord kept me so long; but on the third day near noon the whole matter came to me clear as the noon-day sun – so clear and convincing and so harmonious with the whole tenor of Scripture, that I could not question its correctness; and no one has ever yet been able to find a flaw in it.

Then I knew why the Lord had led me to it so slowly and cautiously. I needed a special preparation of heart for the full appreciation of all it contained, and I was all the more assured that it was not of my own wisdom; for if of my own why would it not have come at once? I found that the understanding of that subject was bound to have a wide influence upon all our hopes and views of all truths – not in that it overturned old truths or contradicted them, but on the contrary, in that it set them all in order and harmony and straightened out little knots and twists. For instance, the doctrine of justification by *faith* had always been more or less confused in my mind, as it is in every mind, with the doctrine of sanctification which calls for self-sacrifice and *works*. This was all made clear and plain at once; for the types showed that we all, as

sinner, needed first of all Christ's ransom sacrifice, and that we appropriate its merits (justification – forgiveness) to ourselves by *faith*, and that *thus* we are justified (reckoned free from sin) when we by faith accept of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf. The type showed, too, that it was only *after* being thus cleansed in God's sight (by our acceptance of Christ's finished work as our ransom-sacrifice) that God was willing to accept of us as joint *sacrifices* with Christ, and if faithful to the end, following in his footsteps, we should be granted the favor of joint-heirship with him.

Here I first saw that the great privilege of becoming joint-heirs with Christ and partakers with him of the divine nature was confined exclusively to those who should share with him in self-sacrifice in the service of the truth. And here, too, I saw for the first time, that the Lord was the first of these sacrifices, the Sin-Offering; consequently, that none of God's servants, the prophets, who lived and died before Christ, were priests after his order, nor sharers in sacrifice with him, even though some of them were stoned, others sawn asunder and others slain with the sword for the cause of God; that though they would get a good and great reward, they would belong to a separate class and order from those called to sacrifice and joint-heirship with Christ on and since Pentecost. Here, too, I first saw that the acceptable day of the Lord signifies this Gospel age – the time during which he will accept the sacrifice of any who come unto God through Christ, the great Sin Offering, and that when this acceptable day ends, the reward of joint-heirship and change to the divine nature ends; and that when this great day of sacrifice, the Gospel age (the real Day of Atonement), has closed, when all the members of the body of Christ have participated with him in the sacrifice of their lawful rights and privileges as justified men, then the blessing will begin to come to the world – the Millennial blessings purchased for men by their Redeemer according to the grace of God.

This first brought us to a clear recognition of the distinction of natures – of what constitutes human nature, what constitutes angelic nature and what constitutes divine nature, as shown in Millennial Dawn, Vol. I, Chapter x. And whereas we used to use the word RESTITUTION in a general way to mean *some sort of blessed change*, now, under the clearer light, we began to see that the great work of restitution could only mean what the word implies – a restoration of that which was lost (Matt. 18:11) – a restoration to the original condition from which man once fell. Then I saw that God's plan when carried out would not bring all his creatures to the one level of the divine nature, but that he purposed to have an order of creatures called Angels, who, though perfect, would always be of a different order, or nature, from the *divine nature*, and he likewise purposed to have a race of beings of the *human nature*, of whom Adam was a sample or pattern and of whose future earthly home, Paradise, Eden was a sample or pattern. I also saw that God purposed that Christ and his joint-sacrificers and joint-heirs are to be God's instruments for blessing the fallen race and *restoring* them to the condition of perfection enjoyed by Adam in Eden – a condition which God said was "very good," and an image of himself. And these joint-heirs with Christ, I saw, were to be highly exalted to a nature higher than restored and perfect manhood, higher too than the angelic nature – even to be partakers of the divine nature.

When all these things so unexpectedly shone out so brightly and clearly, I did not wonder that the Lord gave me several days of waiting and preparation for the blessing, and to him I rendered praise and thanks. All my faintness of heart and fear of the bad effect of the wrong view fled before this evidence of the Lord's leading in the pathway that shines more and more unto the perfect day. I saw at once that these new developments would probably prove a stumbling block to some, as well as a great blessing to others who were ready for it. Instead, therefore, of publishing it in the next TOWER, I determined to first present the matter privately

to the more prominent brethren; – remembering Paul's course in a similar matter. – Gal. 2:2.

Accordingly I sent invitation and the money necessary for traveling expenses to four of the more prominent brethren, requesting a conference. Mr. Paton from Michigan was one of the four, and the only one who rejected the fresh rays of light. Nor could he find any fault with the exegesis, though urged, as all were, to state anything which might seem inconsistent or to quote any passages of Scripture thought to be in conflict. But there were none, and every question only demonstrated the strength of the position more fully. I therefore urged that what was beyond the criticism of those most familiar with the plan of God must be the truth, and ought to be confessed and taught at any cost, and especially when it arranged and ordered all the other features of truth so beautifully. I pointed out, too, how necessary it was to a logical holding of the *ransom*, to see just what this showed – viz.: the distinctions of nature – that our Lord left a higher nature, and took a lower nature, when he was made flesh, and that the object in that change of nature was, that he might, as a man, a perfect man, give himself a *ransom* for the first perfect man, Adam, and thus redeem Adam, and all lost in him. I also showed how, as a reward for this great work, he was given the *divine nature* in his resurrection – a nature still higher than the glorious one he had left, when he became a man. But either his mental vision or his heart was weak, and he never took the step, and before long, alas! he too, as we had foreseen and forewarned him would be the natural course, forsook the doctrine of the ransom. Yet he still uses the word, ransom, while denying the idea conveyed by the word, nor can he give the word any other definition, or otherwise dispute the correctness of the meaning, which we attach to it – which may be found in any English dictionary and is true to the significance of the Greek word which it translates.

Notwithstanding our best endeavors to save him he drifted farther and farther away, until I was obliged to refuse his articles for the TOWER for the same reason that obliged me to refuse to longer spend the Lord's money entrusted to me to assist Mr. Barbour to spread the same pernicious theory.

It was about this time that Mr. Jones informed me that the copies of the book *Day Dawn* which I had purchased last were all that were left; and announcing it so that no more orders for it might come to the TOWER office, I took occasion to promise MILLENNIAL DAWN, which should present the Plan of the Ages in the clearer, more orderly manner made possible by the new light shed upon every feature of it by the lessons from the Tabernacle. About this time Mr. Paton concluded that he would publish another *Day Dawn*, revised to harmonize with his new views ignoring the ransom, ignoring justification and the need of either, and teaching that all men will be everlastingly saved – not in any sense as the result of any sacrifice for their sin by Christ, but as a result of each one's crucifying sin in himself – the Law under which the poor Jews tried to commend themselves to God, but which justified none.

During this time I was busied by an immense work known to many of you – the issue and circulation of over 1,400,000 copies of the two pamphlets entitled "FOOD FOR THINKING CHRISTIANS" and the "TABERNACLE TEACHINGS," whose united matter was in sum about the same as *Dawn, Vol. I.*; and besides this I was flooded with thousands of joyous and joy-giving letters, from those who had gotten and were reading the pamphlets thus distributed, and asking questions and more reading matter. To add to our throng, financial complications came, and thus for four years I was hindered from fulfilling my promise of MILLENNIAL DAWN. Nor will our promise be fulfilled for several years yet; for though two volumes are now out and a third on the way, I purpose several more, as the Lord shall give grace and strength, in

connection with the other features of his work entrusted to my care. But because, during those four years in which we were struggling through an immense amount of labor and many draw-backs (all *cheerfully* undergone for the sake of the Lord and his saints), when each year we hoped afresh to be able to gather the hours necessary to complete the first volume of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and after the [R1214 : page 7] old edition was exhausted, notified all applicants that *the Day Dawn advertised and recommended by us was out of print and could no longer be supplied*, I have been made the target of innumerable petty misrepresentations too small to notice, and malicious insinuations told in a sly but slanderous manner and circulated in print, which a noble nature would disdain, but which are often successful, as intended, in stirring up bitterness, and injuring the influence of the truth. What do I do about it? I thank the Lord for the privilege of suffering some of the reproaches of Christ and the cross, and for grace sufficient that none of these things move me from the utmost determination to always hold up Christ and him crucified, as the Redeemer, who in due time shall restore whosoever wills to all that was lost in Adam.

Some who have *The Three Worlds* or the old edition of *Day Dawn* would perhaps like to know my present opinion of them – whether I still think them profitable books to loan to truth-seekers. To this I reply, Certainly not; because the very immature views of God's truth therein presented fall far short of what we now see to be God's wonderful plan. Things which are now clear as noonday were then cloudy and mixed. The distinctions between the perfect *human* nature to which the obedient of the world will be *restored* during the Millennium, and the *divine* nature to which the little flock, the sacrificing elect of the Gospel age, are soon to be *exalted* were then unnoticed. All now so clear was then blurred, mixed and indistinct. Neither had we then seen the steps or planes, shown upon the Chart of the Ages, in Millennial Dawn, Vol. I., which have assisted so many to distinguish between justification and sanctification, and to determine their present standing and

relationship to God's plan. And the time reckonings which those books present, lacking point and leaving the reader in doubt as to what the author is attempting to prove by them, tend only to confuse the mind and to give the impression that time prophecies are merely clues and serve no definite purpose or object. Hence, I answer most decidedly, I would not recommend nor use either of those books to-day. Once I was much less careful about what I circulated or commended, but I am learning every day to be more careful as to what sort of food I put before any of the Lord's hungry sheep. The Lord has taught me that it is a responsible matter to be a teacher, even to the extent of circulating a book or a paper.

Another chapter in our experience needs to be told, as it marks another shaking and sifting. Mr. A. D. Jones proposed to start a paper on the same line as the WATCH TOWER, to republish some of the simpler features of God's plan and to be a sort of missionary and primary teacher to draw attention to the TOWER, etc. Knowing him to be clear on the subject of the ransom, we bade him God speed and introduced a sample copy of his paper, *Zion's Day Star* (now for some years discontinued), to our nearly ten thousand readers – only to stumble some of them into rank infidelity and others into the rejection of the ransom. For though the *Day Star* for a few months steered a straight course and maintained the same position as the TOWER with reference to the ransom, and for the same reason refused the no-ransom articles sent for its columns by Mr. Paton, yet within one year it had repudiated Christ's atoning sacrifice, and within another year had gone boldly into infidelity and totally repudiated all the rest of the Bible as well as that which teaches the fall in Adam and the ransom therefor in Christ.

All this meant another strain, another sifting, another cutting loose of friends, who erroneously supposed that our criticism of the false doctrines were prompted by a spirit of rivalry, and who did not see so soon whither the teachings were drifting, nor how

great the importance of holding fast the first principles of the doctrines of Christ – how Christ *died* for our sins and *rose again* for our justification.

This brings the history down close enough perhaps to the present time; but we want to put you all on notice that the shaking and sifting process, so far from being over and past, is bound to progress more and more until all have been tried and tested thoroughly. It is not a question of who may fall, but of "Who shall be able to stand?" as the apostle puts it. And we have need again to remember the admonition, "Let him who thinketh he standeth (who feels very confident, as did Peter when he said, "Lord, though all deny thee yet will not I") take heed lest he fall."

This doctrine of another way of salvation (and salvation for all, too,) than by the cross of Christ is not only the error which is, and has been since 1874, sifting all who come into the light of present truth, but it is the trial that is to come upon the whole Christian world to try them. (Rev. 3:10.) It already is spreading among all classes of Christian people, especially among the ministers, of all denominations. The number who believe that Christ's death paid our sin-penalty is daily getting smaller, and before very long there will be a regular stampede from the doctrine of man's fall in Adam and his ransom from that fall by the man Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 2:5,6.) As David prophetically pictured it, a thousand will fall to one who will stand. – Psa. 91:7.

The time has come for each one to declare himself boldly. He who is not for the cross and the ransom there effected, is against it! He that gathereth not, scattereth abroad! He who is silent on this subject, when it is being assailed by foes on every hand, whether it be the silence of fear, or of shame, or of indifference, is not worthy of the truth, and will surely be one to stumble quickly. He who from any cause sits idly by, while the banner of the cross is assailed, is not a soldier of the cross worthy the name, and will not

be reckoned among the overcomers, who shall inherit all things. And God is permitting these very siftings, in order to sift out all who are not "overcomers," and test and manifest the little flock, who, like Gideon's final army, will, though few, share the victory, and the honors, with their Captain in glory.

Are you prepared for the issue, dear Brethren and Sisters? The armor of truth has been given you for some time past; have you put it on? – have you made it your shield and buckler? – your defence against all the wily arts of the evil one?

Do not be deceived by the agents he often makes use of. In this he will be as cunning as in his presentation of the deceptive misrepresentations of truth, making unwitting use of many a weaker brother, and to some extent of every stumbling and deceived one, to spread the infection of false doctrine farther. And while every child of God should take earnest heed, that he prove not an occasion of stumbling to any, we cannot doubt that every one will, through some instrumentality, be assailed by it.

Aptly indeed did the prophet liken it to a pestilence. (Psa. 91:6.) A pestilence spreads because people are in a physical condition which renders them susceptible to disease. Physicians will tell you that those whose systems are in good, healthy order are in little danger of any disease. So it is with a spiritual pestilence: it will flourish not only because all will be exposed to it who have not a clear intellectual appreciation of the doctrines of Christ, but from another cause also. Out of the heart are the issues of life, and most needful of all to be in right condition is the heart. How is your heart, dear Brother, dear Sister? Is it proud, boastful, independent, self-conscious and self-willed? If so, take care; you will be very liable to this epidemic, no matter how far from it you may seem to be. Make haste to labor and pray for

"A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
The dear Redeemer's throne,

Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone."

With such a heart you are safe. In meekness and lowliness, you will never think of redeeming yourself from the condemnation that you inherited through Adam, by sacrificing present sinful desires, but you will flee to the cross, where God himself opened the fountain for sin and uncleanness, present as well as past.

DOTH THIS OFFEND YOU?

We expect that it will offend some, though it is not designed to offend any. It is written for the defense of the meek, against the sophistries of error. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord [into the kingdom offered]? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart [who is diligently fashioning his life after the principles of holiness]; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity [who cultivates no earthly ambitions or pride, but patiently waits for the glory to follow the course of present self-sacrifice], nor sworn deceitfully [ignoring or despising his covenant with God]: He shall receive the blessing of the Lord, [the kingdom glory and joint-heirship with Christ] and righteousness [perfection – full deliverance from present infirmities, etc.] from the God of his salvation." (Psa. 24:3-5.) "Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be, ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger" [in this "evil day" – this day of snares, and pitfalls, and flying arrows, and destructive pestilences]. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" – that "your minds be not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Let all the meek fully awake to the trial of the hour; and while many are putting stumbling blocks in the way of the "feet" of the body of Christ, let each soldier of the cross be vigilant not only to stand but to assist others – *bearing up* the "feet." – Psa. 91:11,12.