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VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

"Looking back, we praise the way
God has led us, led us day by day."

Throughout the civilized world, despite the prognostications of many, peace prevails to a remarkable degree. While on every hand the two great armies, Capital and Labor, are busily organizing, and the various elements are preparing for the great final struggle and time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, yet peace still prevails. And thus we see before us a fulfilment of God's prediction that the violent winds of war should be checked and holden until the sealing of the saints of God should be accomplished. – Rev. 7:1-3.

Meantime the sealing progresses. Daily and hourly the saints of God are being searched out and sealed "in their foreheads" [intellectually] with a clear appreciation of "the mystery of God" which has been kept secret in part hitherto, but is now made manifest unto the saints, according to the will of God – the mystery of God being about finished. (Rev. 10:7; Rom. 16:25,26.) The "angels" or messengers doing this sealing (Rev. 7:1) are the same messengers referred to by our Lord when he declared that in the harvest or end of this age he would send forth his messengers with the sound of a great trumpet [the seventh trumpet], to gather together his elect from one end of heaven to the other. ¶ Every consecrated child of God who receives the truth realizes at once his duty and privilege of imparting it to others. He hears the commission, "Go ye into the vineyard;" and "He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto eternal life." ¶ These are the Lord's "angels" – messengers or servants. The sealing and the gathering we understand to refer to the same

thing. And the heavens through which these messengers go sealing and gathering is not the heaven of God's throne, but the symbolic heavens so often referred to in the book of Revelation, namely, the nominal church.

This "gathering together" is not a literal assembling in one locality, just as the heavens are not literal. The gathering is into *one condition*, into unity of heart and mind through the knowledge of the divine plan of the ages, and corresponds exactly to the sealing in the forehead; for all the elect are to be sealed with the *same seal*; and all thus sealed are to see eye to eye, and to be one in heart and hope and work.

This sealing is performed only upon the consecrated. And the rapidity with which the work of sealing progresses in each, and which of them will eventually be fully sealed, depend upon the degrees of faithfulness to their consecration vows on the part of the various servants of God in the time of the sealing. His servants should *serve* him; and those who, either from slothfulness or from being overcharged with earthly things, are neglecting *Christ's service*, and burying the talents consecrated to him, will be passed by – will not be fully sealed if at all marked, but will be left to **[R1279 : page 2]** have their portion with the world in the great trouble which will begin just as soon as the faithful are all "gathered" and "sealed."

All this implies great commotion, not only in the "heavens" [nominal church] but also among those being "gathered" and "sealed." It means crucial testing and sifting and close examination by the Lord through his truth and providences; for the Lord himself is the great superintendent of this important work, and is now directing his own servants. Each sealed one becomes a sealer of others as soon as he himself is sealed; and each gathered one becomes a gatherer of others as soon as he

himself comes into oneness of heart and head with the Lord and the present truth.

We must not wonder, then, at the shaking and falling now in progress among those most closely in contact with the work of sealing and gathering. The divisions must come. The Lord's words show us that it will cause much commotion when his order to separate wheat from tares is put into effect – a commotion which he would not permit until the harvest time had come. (Matt. 13:28-30.) And then in some respects a still greater commotion will ensue when these sealed and gathered servants, the "wheat" class, are *examined* after having been brought into some measure of the light and privileges of the present truth – when, as shown in two parables, two classes will be forcibly *cast out* of the light into the outer darkness of the world, thus to pass with the world through the great trouble now impending. The two classes to be thus cast out by the Lord are – first, those who have taken off the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness and who deny the precious blood and the ransom which it alone secures; and secondly, the unfaithful servants who bury their consecrated talents in earthly things instead of using them in the Master's service. No earthly power can keep such from going into the outer darkness of error, for it is the Master's order that they shall be cast out.

Moreover, we can only expect that such will struggle vehemently against any reproofs and against any words of warning, and claim that instead of going into the outer darkness of the world they are following new light. As a reward for your efforts to do them good and to help them, by exposing their delusions, they will hate you and say all manner of evil against you. Be not surprised at this; it is merely incidental to the sifting which *must* go on to the finish. Remember the Master's words further – It is needful that offenses and divisions come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh. (Matt. 18:7; Rom.

16:17; 1 Cor. 11:19.) Let us not by our acts or words or looks drive such from us, except in so far as faithfulness in speaking the truth boldly and in love will do it. Let us not by our acts or words or looks drive such from us, except in so far as faithfulness in speaking the truth boldly and in love will do it. Let the truth make the separation. Speak the truth in love, and stand firmly by it. It is the power of God, not only in the first separating and gathering, but it will be the power also in the second separating and casting out. "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor [manifestor] of the thoughts and intents of the heart." – Heb. 4:12.

Nor will those cast out of the light, as unworthy of it, recognize the agency by which the Lord will cast them out, any more than they recognized his agency in bringing them into the light. Yet he tells us that he will cast them out. They will go out from us because they were not of us, that it may be manifest that they were not all of us. (1 John 2:19.) They go out from us because they lack full consecration and full submission to the will of God. For this cause, thus to cast them out, the Lord will send them strong delusions, delusive errors, that they may believe a lie; that thus all who, when they know the truth, fail to take pleasure in serving it, may be condemned and manifested as unworthy of joint-heirship with Christ, and consequently unworthy of the light which he provides only for such.

THE DOUBLE WORK NOW PROGRESSING.

While the gathering and sealing work naturally took precedence to the sifting and testing [R1280 : page 2] of the gathered and sealed, yet now both are simultaneously progressing; and no sooner is the sealed one rejoiced with the beauty of the Lord's [R1280 : page 3] great plan than he, on being ushered into the company of the sealed, begins to be sifted and

tested. "Who is sufficient for these things?" "Who shall be able to stand?" (2 Cor. 2:16; Mal. 3:2,3; Rev. 6:17.) None but the faithful shall be able to stand, because the Lord purposely will make the test so severe as to sift and shake out all others. (2 Thes. 2:11.) The faithful are those who are trusting in Jesus for all, and whose will is the will of their God, who are so consecrated to his will that they rejoice to serve him with every talent possessed.

Both the gathering work and the sifting work are *increasing*. While the division is great and many are being cast out of the light, the *faithful* are daily becoming more awake to the privilege of being co-workers with the Lord in the present harvest, and the gathering more than keeps pace with the sifting and the falling. Each knows something of the falling, for it is confined to no one locality; but you do not all realize the great work of gathering now in progress, and we want, for your encouragement, to tell you of it briefly.

The monthly circulation of the TOWER averages about ten thousand copies, which we may safely estimate represents fifteen thousand readers. And of those readers, scattered in all parts of the world, we estimate, judging from the letters received, that about four thousand are *fully consecrated* to the Lord and using their talents to praise him to the best of their ability. Such have the Master's assurance that they shall never fall, but that an abundant entrance shall be granted them into the everlasting kingdom and joys of their Lord; for they are faithful, and faithful is he that called them, who also will do all that he has so graciously promised.

This probable 4000 may look to some like a very insignificant number in comparison with the millions of nominal Christians; and yet if there are so many of the consecrated and faithful now living, it is a large proportion of the full number – 144,000 (Rev. 7:4) – to be made up during the 1900 years of the

Gospel age, which would be an average of about 76 persons each year. And if 4000 persons now living are fully consecrated to the Lord and faithful, and have been so developed during the past ten years, this would show an average of 400 persons annually during the past ten years, or more than five times the proportionate annual number. So even this seemingly small estimate of 4000 may be considerably reduced by the trials and siftings now in process, which are designed to prove their worthiness of the prize of the high calling. Like Gideon's band, this 144,000 is to be a picked and choice company.

The others, the many – and the very anticipation causes pain – will probably all fall, according to the words of our Master's testimony, unless they, too, arouse speedily and by a full consecration enter fully into the Master's work as the chief business of life. While some will be falling because of unfaithfulness, losing the crowns apportioned to them when they made their covenant of consecration (Rev. 3:11), others will be "gathered" in and tested until the elect number of the "body" is complete.

Oh! awake beloved, and resolve, each of you, that the Lord's work shall be your chief joy and chief work during the year just begun. The time is short. Labor while it is called to-day, for the night of trouble will soon end all the present, blessed opportunities, and it is he that *reapeth* that receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto everlasting life.

Of the estimated four thousand laborers in the cause of the present truth, engaged as the Lord's messengers in *gathering* and *sealing* his servants in their foreheads, of course the larger number are those who have only one or two talents – who were so hampered by marriage, families, etc., before the truth got hold of them, before their sealing, that their time, influence, means, etc., are more or less mortgaged to these earthly

things, and less is therefore left for the great service of our King which now opens before them. These are using what opportunities or talents they have at their disposal, and are realizing the Lord's promise that he that uses his talents shall have them increased; and daily, in blessing and sealing others with the truth, these are entering into the joys of our Lord and having a foretaste of the new wine (joys) which we shall share with him when the Kingdom is fully **[R1280 : page 4]** established and when the truth shall flow to and bless all the families of the earth.

Another part of the work which has received a great impetus during the past year is that known as the Colporteur work. Brethren and sisters who have five talents – influence, earthly prospects (money, etc.), reputation, strength and time – find that the best way of using all these to bring honor to the Master, to whom these talents by our consecration belong, is in taking the truth from house to house and from city to city, by introducing to others the Father's great plan and the harvest message which has sealed and so richly blessed them. It costs them something indeed thus to forsake earthly things – friends, houses, lands, money prospects and reputation; yet, noble band! they count all these things but loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, whom they serve. Yea, they count not their lives dear unto them, but rejoice thus to be privileged to be Christ's co-workers and ambassadors for the truth in his stead.

The world knoweth these not, even as it knew not the Master; but all who do recognize them should, if they ever have opportunity, set before them the best they have, and should rejoice to do for them as unto the Lord.

Still there is room in this service, which seems to be the one most abundantly owned and blessed of the Lord. All the unencumbered can be given this grand opportunity for preaching the glad tidings. And we are continually in communication with

others who are in various stages of preparation for this work, their full and grateful hearts longing to give every talent to the service of him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood. The unencumbered need no preparation; but those who have families require to put matters in such shape that those dependent on them shall not suffer want (1 Tim. 5:8), while they are spreading the good tidings, else they must content themselves with a lesser service. Truly the work is a marvelous one – not that it would be strange to get so many to engage in any business if they had good salaries guaranteed – that we see every day; but it is unusual to find so many laboring for the mere necessities of life – for the majority barely meet their expenses, and those who can do more often esteem it a privilege to donate of their surplus to the TRACT FUND to help carry on the general work of preaching the truth.

ANOTHER PART OF THE WORK.

Another agency being greatly blessed and used by the Master in finding and sealing his faithful sheep is the OLD THEOLOGY TRACT work. Hundreds of thousands of these little messengers have gone hither and thither carrying the bread and water of life to many. Our readers have procured and distributed many thousands – one Brother subscribing for and circulating three thousand Tracts each quarter, and others less quantities in proportion to their means or opportunities for using them. Others who are too poor to purchase we have supplied gratis, and others who have no means of using the tracts have sent donations to the fund, thus to help on the cause of publishing and circulating the truth.

About a year ago we requested the friends of the cause to send in to us memoranda of the *numbers* of the Post Office boxes in use in their towns. We got responses from many and sent out sample tracts by the hundreds of thousands, until the available

funds, tracts, etc., ran low. We are now preparing for a vigorous campaign for our King and his truth, to set at liberty and to seal his earnest servants. Over twenty millions of pages of Old Theology Tracts are already under way and will soon, we trust, be with the Lord's other servants and agencies seeking and sealing his jewels. We could tell you much, too, of the faithful laborers connected with the TOWER Office, as well as of others of the faithful scattered ones who are *doing what they can* for the Master, whose places of service are less conspicuous than those of the colporteurs; but we forbear. The Lord knoweth his own. If any man will *do* the Father's will, he shall know of the doctrine.

The grace, mercy, peace and blessing of our Lord Jesus be and abide with all who love him and serve him and trust his precious, cleansing blood during the year begun. Amen.
