

## THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

UNDER the reign of Sin and Death there is now a "broad road," in which, under the tendency of the world, the flesh and the devil, almost all mankind are walking in a greater or less degree of selfishness and gratification of the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. Its grade is downward and away from God. Its end is death, in just harmony with the original sentence of sin in Eden. On it none can retrace his steps so as to return to God. He may stop for a time, or even attempt to return, but the grade is too steep, and the influence and pressure of the crowd irresistible; and soon he is on the downward course again – moving slowly or swiftly.

But there is a way of life, into which the pilgrim may turn. Of it our Lord said, "*I am the way*, the truth and the life." There is consequently only one way of return – through acceptance of Christ and obedience testifying thereto. Its gate is Faith, and at present it is a very difficult road to travel, even after it has been found. This gate and way have been open for nearly nineteen centuries. (John 14:6.) Comparatively few of the race have ever seen or known of this path; for we are authoritatively informed that "few there be that *find* it." And the reason for this is given, – "the god of this world [Satan] hath *blinded* the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." – 2 Cor. 4:4.

Here is a marvelous thing! Why does the God of love make the gate to the way of life so obscure that only a small portion of the race have any opportunity of even knowing of it? – and so narrow and rugged that when found many are so discouraged with the prospect that they make but little effort to walk therein, and gradually drift back again into the general current of the broad road?

From the ordinary standpoint – the world's standpoint of ignorance and human speculation – there is no reasonable answer to this question.

But from the standpoint of the divine plan of the ages, as revealed in the Scriptures, there is a very satisfactory answer.

The answer is, that God's purpose of mercy respecting the world (which entered the "broad road" through Adam's transgression and sentence) is to deal with it as a whole; – to let all have an experience with the wages of Sin (death), and then through Christ to end the reign of Sin and Death under Satan, and inaugurate a reign of Righteousness and Life under Christ, – the Kingdom of God. Thus seen, the "narrow way" now open (which only a few see, and in which but a "little flock" walk in faithfully when they do find it), is not meant to be the way of life for the race in general. It is provided only for a special class, called variously in Scripture – "the Church of Christ," "the Bride," "the Temple of the Living God," "the Elect" or Select, "the Body of Christ," the "little flock" to which it is "the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom." The gate of Faith is made obscure to insure that those who enter shall be faith-*full*. The way is rugged and difficult to insure that all who continue in that way faithful to the end shall be "overcomers," – shall be of strong character. The special service for which these are being selected demands that they shall be tried as gold is purified, in the furnace of discipline, that they may be found vessels unto honor and meet for the Master's use, when his time shall come for them, with their **[R1771 : page 43]** Lord and Redeemer, as "the Seed of Abraham" to extend the blessing of God to all the families of the earth (the dead as well as the living) (Gal. 3:16,29) and when they with him shall be the Kings and priests unto God who shall reign on the earth during the Millennial age, to bind Satan's power (Rev. 5:10; 20:1) and to open the eyes of those whom he has so long blinded and deceived. By these God will prepare a favorable way for all. – Isa. 62:10.

### **WHEN CHRIST IS KING – WHAT THEN?**

When our Redeemer shall have taken to himself his great power and established his Kingdom, – after the last member of "the Church which is his body" shall have been perfected and glorified with the

Head upon the throne (Rev. 11:17; 3:21), – after the great "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation" shall have swept away present institutions and humbled the pride of man in the dust and brought the world into a teachable attitude, then the Broad-road to death will be abolished and instead the way to death (Second Death) thereafter will be hedged about and made narrow and difficult, by reason of the speedy and just *retribution* which then will promptly follow every attempted violation of Immanuel's laws. The Narrow way to immortal life will also have terminated, having served its purpose by selecting the "little flock," the "Royal Priesthood," through persecution for godliness and fierce oppositions from the world, the flesh and the devil. Then Satan will be "bound" (restrained from deceiving mankind) and "the world" will be forced to respect at least outwardly the laws and Kingdom of God. The "flesh," the weaknesses men labor under as the result of the fall, will alone stand between men and perfect happiness, – and full arrangements are provided by the Mediator-King for assisting the fallen flesh back to perfection. The way of life will then be a Highway, cleared of every impediment – the Highway of Holiness.

The various arrangements of the Millennial Kingdom will at first make the road to death difficult (to insure that only the wilful shall go by it into the Second Death); and the same Kingdom arrangements will make the way to life easy of access. Its gate of faithful obedience will be clearly seen and easily accessible to all; and its name correspondingly will no longer be the Narrow way, but the King's Highway of Holiness, leading to life everlasting, and open to all who desire righteousness. – John 10:16.

As the Prince of Darkness (Satan) rules now over the Broad Road and its blinded millions whom he leads *downward* to death, so there the Prince of Light (Christ, head and body) will rule over mankind, for whom he will open up the Highway of Holiness, upon which millions will go *upward* to Life eternal. It is as a means to this end that he is selecting his Church, is causing the great trouble to come upon the

world, and will shortly bind Satan for the thousand years of his reign. And, more than this, he will open the blinded eyes that *all may see* the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. – 2 Cor. 4:6.

When Satan no longer has power to deceive men and to put good for evil and evil for good; when the eyes of their understandings have been opened to see and appreciate "the True Light," – until "every man that cometh into the world" has been thus enlightened (John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:6); when the knowledge of the Lord fills the whole earth as the waters cover the depths of the sea (all *covered*, but some more deeply than others); when there shall no longer be necessity to teach, every man his neighbor, saying, "Know the Lord," because *all* shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31:34); when the Lord's Kingdom shall have come and his will is done on earth *as* it is done in heaven – instead of the message of the gospel being limited to a few, all will know the plan of God; and the evidences of its truth will be so clear and convincing that none will have excuse for disbelief; for the conditions will be such that doubt would be more difficult than is belief at present. Nevertheless a personal acceptance of "the way" (Christ) and of the conditions of the New Covenant will be required of each individual thus enlightened.

Not only will men learn unquestionably that Christ died for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; but more, they will *see* and feel the restitution work begun, in themselves and in their fellows. (Acts 3:19-21; Ezek. 16:48-50,53-55,60-63.) They will see Righteousness ruling the world *unto* or toward Life, instead of as now Sin reigning and all of its influences tending *unto* death. They will see great changes in the climate of the earth because "he that hath the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. 2:14), will no longer be "the prince [ruler] of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), and "the wilderness and the solitary place shall rejoice" and "the earth shall yield her *increase*" (Isa. 35; Ezek. 34:27); for the microbes of destruction

and disease shall be restrained and "nothing shall hurt nor destroy" in all God's holy Kingdom. – Isa. 11:9. [R1772 : page 43]

Sickness and pain and all diseases will yield to the power of the Great Physician upon the throne; and he will not permit death to befall any except those who shall intelligently and willfully refuse his offers of full restitution, by rejecting the terms of obedience required under the New Covenant then open to all. And even these shall be liberally dealt with; for our Lord willeth not the death of him that dieth, but would rather that all should turn unto him and live. Accordingly, while all will be forced to "bow," in at least outward recognition of that Kingdom and to "confess" it a blessed improvement upon the reign of Sin unto death (Rom. 5:21; 1 Cor. 15:26), yet their *will* must remain their own and their progress in restitution beyond the common advantages will depend upon their willingness or unwillingness to come into accord with that Kingdom and its righteous arrangements. Concerning these we are expressly told by the Prophet, that if still sinners when a hundred years old they will be cut off (in the Second [R1772 : page 44] Death – *destruction* – from which there is to be no ransom and no resurrection); but that to die at that age then, would be like a death in infancy now; – because the smoking flax he will not quench, nor break the bruised reed; and all who shall then show any evidence of love and consecration to the Lord may continue to enjoy the Kingdom blessings at least until the close of that Millennial age. – Isa. 65:20.

As the Lord now sends seed-time and harvest, sun and rain, upon the just and unjust, so then, to a certain extent (*i.e.*, for one hundred years each), the restitution blessings, that is, the equitable laws and other public arrangements for the education and uplifting of the masses, and the climatic conditions more favorable to health, will be common to all men. But, although plenteous in mercy, the Lord "will not [continue] always [to] chide [correct]; he will not keep [hold back] his anger [his righteous indignation against wilful sin and sinners]

forever." "Every soul which will not hear [obey] that Prophet [Teacher] shall be destroyed from among the people." – Acts 3:23.

But although the condition of things in the Millennial age will differ greatly from present conditions so as to be almost the reverse, yet the laws of God, like himself, change not: it is merely the conditions that will have changed. God's law, when exercised by our Lord Jesus and his Church ("Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" 1 Cor. 6:2), and tempered with mercy (because of man's fallen condition for which as Redeemer our Lord paid the price in his own death) will be the same law in every particular that it always has been. It cannot change, for the same reason that God himself cannot change; – because it is *perfect*, and to change it in any degree would be to make it imperfect.

That law is Love. Full obedience to it means perfect love – controlling every thought, word and deed; partial obedience means a measure of love. At the beginning of that new era the world in general will be loveless as at present – controlled instead by selfishness; for the heart of the natural [fallen] man is enmity against this law of God which represents God's character. When present-day selfishness shall have blossomed and gone to seed in the great time of trouble now impending, it will become apparent to all that, however selfish their hearts may be, their deeds must thereafter conform more closely to the principle of love – doing to others as they would have others do to them. It will thus be with a *practical* lesson that the new King will introduce the Law of his Kingdom. Then loving deeds and words will be made compulsory upon all, though their hearts (wills) may still be tainted with selfishness; for God does not now, and never will, force the wills of his creatures. But those who at end of the hundred years' of trial remain obstinate in heart, and only obedient outwardly, under compulsion, shall be judged hopeless "sinners," and will be cut off from all further trial for life; for the principle will still hold that, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not

the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." – 1 John 3:36.

"In that day" an *intellectual* unbelief in Christ and the offer of salvation will be an impossibility (Isa. 11:9); for "even the devils believe and tremble;" but belief, in the sense of acceptance of Christ as the Lord who *bought* us, and hearty obedience to the letter and spirit of his requirements, will be the condition upon which any may obtain everlasting life – provided and intended only for those who *love* God; which implies a love of his character and his laws. – Isa. 47:14-21.

But perfect love and obedience in letter and spirit will not be realized by the world then on trial, until the close of the Millennial age; for perfection of being is necessary to a perfection of obedience; and that entire age will be necessary to the full restitution or bringing back of such as accept the Son to the perfection and divine fellowship lost six thousand years ago. And as from the first moment of the death-sentence Adam and the race were no longer fully alive, but dying, so, although the reign or Kingdom of Life will continue during the entire age to lift the obedient out of death toward life, yet perfection of life will not be attained until the end of the process of uplifting or restitution;\* and none will get that grand gift of God except such as are *perfected* in love – not only in word and deed, but also in the very deepest thoughts and intents of their hearts. Such as thus believe the Son, accept of his grace and are conformed to his image, and such only, shall see *life*, in the full and absolute sense, and be presented unto the Father perfect and unreprouvable in love, when Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom, having thus accomplished the work begun by him nearly three thousand years before, when he bought the world with his own life, that he might give life unto all them that obey him.

\*Thus it will be seen that the statement of Rev. 20:5, "The rest of the dead [aside from those associated with Christ in the Kingdom at the beginning of the Millennium] *lived not* again until the thousand years are finished," is a true enough statement when *life* is properly

understood to mean their perfection in life and their acceptance to eternal life by the Father at the close of the Millennium. The fact remains, however, that this clause of Rev. 20:5 is not found in any Greek MS. of earlier date than the Fifth Century; – nor is it found in the ancient Syriac.

But while the giving of everlasting life to the worthy ones of the world will be at the close of the Millennial age, and in the nature of a reward of obedience in the school of Christ, in fashioning themselves after the pattern of the Redeemer's character, yet that everlasting life will be *reckoned* to each one who accepts of Christ and comes to any degree of heart-harmony with his requirements, from the moment that he thus accepts the terms of the New Covenant.

The various temperaments and various degrees of degradation of fallen men guarantee that their hearty acceptance of Christ and his regulations for their blessing will differ, as is now the case with those who come to the knowledge of the truth. Some will respond quickly, some [R1772 : page 45] slowly, some not at all. But the Lord's provision, that all shall have at least a hundred years of opportunity under the clear light of "the Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2; Luke 1:78,79), guarantees against the loss of any for whom there could be any hope that they would develop characters fit for an eternity of fellowship with God. Nor will it be merely those who promptly and fully accept the Lord that will be continued beyond the first hundred years of trial, for we are assured that "the bruised reed he will not break, and smoking flax he will not quench." That is, if there is any tendency to hold on, to appreciate and to make use of the divine favors, if there is even a smouldering spark of love toward God and righteousness, the Lord will not break off such a one, but will fan the spark if perchance it might become a blaze of love which would purify the heart and eventually bring every thought into captivity to the will of God. He will pursue this course until "he shall bring forth judgment unto truth." – Isa. 42:3.

Those who most quickly and most fully accept the new conditions will more quickly and more fully taste the joys of salvation and the Lord's favor, and have the peace of God rule in their hearts. Thus the measure of "light" sinned against in the present life determines not only the amount of heart-hardening, but also the time and the amount of difficulty the person will experience in getting his heart softened again.\*

\*See "The Retributive Character of Divine Law," June 1, '94.

Those who will be "cut off" during the Millennium will be such as when given full opportunity to enter upon the King's Highway of Holiness will refuse to "go *up* thereon." Satan's Broad Road of the present time is a downward one, but the King's Highway in the Millennium will have an upward grade. Now, men can go downward to death almost without effort; but to reach the prize of life at the end of the Highway will require effort. That "Highway," however, will require less effort and overcoming than does the "Narrow way" of the present age. It will be less steep, for several centuries may be had for gradually developing character in likeness to the Lord's, whereas now the development must be effected in much less time to constitute the pilgrim an "overcomer" and a worthy associate with the Lord in the throne. Now, there are "stumbling stones" to faith in the "Narrow way," to test the faithful in trust and endurance, and there are "lions" of opposition to threaten, and to turn back discouraged, all except the "peculiar" people whom the Lord is now selecting for the peculiar work of the future, as his Bride; but of the King's Highway it is declared, "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast;" and the stumbling stones shall all be gathered out, and mountains of difficulty shall be leveled, and valleys of despair and discouragement shall be filled up, that the King's Highway may be most favorable; – that all the Redeemed of the Lord (who will accept the gift of life upon the conditions of its offer) may go up thereon to perfection. [R1773 : page 45] – Isa. 35:8-10; 62:10; 40:4,5.

It must not, however, be supposed that progress along that easy "Highway," with everything to aid in the development of character, and with nothing like opposition or temptation to test its strength, would be sufficient evidence of heart loyalty to God and his laws to prove that all who will reach the end of that age, are worthy of everlasting life; even though in the use of its elixirs of life, – its pure air, nutritious foods, inspired skill and conformity to its divine laws and regulations – they shall have attained human perfection, – physical, mental and moral.

The testings of the present "Narrow way" are step by step; but the testings of the King's Highway will be specially two – at the beginning and at the end: first, as to who will start to go *upward* on it and keep on going upward; and finally a test of all who shall have gone up that Highway to its farther end – to the end of the Millennium. Such will then be tested or proved as to their fitness for *everlasting* life. (1) Those who, when all the conditions of knowledge and obedience are so favorable (as God has promised they shall be – so that the conditions in general shall make the road to life a Highway), will make no effort *upward* will be cut off after one hundred years of opportunity and testings and reproof, as unworthy of further testing or further Millennial privileges. (Isa. 65:20.) (2) The object of the test of those who shall have gone up the Highway to its farther end will not be to prove which are sinners, either open or covert; for none of them will be transgressors of God's law, the evil doers having been cut off long before, at the end of a hundred years trial; and no doubt it will surprise many of them when they learn that God has purposed their trial at all. What! Test those who for hundreds of years have been living in harmony with God's law, and constantly blessed by it? Are not those centuries of obedience a sufficient proof of loyalty to God? Can any further test be required? And if so, for what purpose?

We answer that their obedience for centuries had its corresponding reward of blessings and enjoyments experienced during those centuries. They are still God's debtors. God does not *owe* them

everlasting life. Everlasting life is a *gift* of God through Christ: it is one of the things, however, prepared for those who *love* God, and the test at the end of the Millennial age will be a test of love; – to prove the degree of love and consecration that has been developed as a *character* in those who have seen and enjoyed so many of God's favors. Not outward perfection merely, but inward perfection will be the test; and that some who will have reached outward perfection will not have developed the inward perfection of heart or will, even with every favorable opportunity, is evident from the results of the test. (Rev. 20:9.) So, too, Adam was perfect before his trial in Eden, but he had not developed a consecrated will or character fully submitted to the Lord. Satan was perfect as an angel of God, but he developed a character or will antagonistic to God's. And God's purpose is that the trial or judgment both of angels and men shall be so thorough, so complete, that not a single creature who is not in absolute heart-harmony [R1773 : page 46] with God and his laws shall receive everlasting life and pass into the ages of eternity beyond the Millennium. All not possessed of characters (wills) in full, absolute harmony with God's will, must die the Second Death. And yet they will have enjoyed much, and will have much for which to be thankful.

In no other way could the Lord continue his creatures in his own likeness as free moral agents, and yet guarantee that when the Millennial reign of Christ shall have caused the former things of sin to pass away, "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

Praise God for the lengths and breadths of his great and gracious plan of salvation through Christ; – for the Narrow way of the present with its severe trials and temptations and its great prize of life in joint-heirship with our Lord the Redeemer; and praise him too for the great Highway of Holiness which by and by shall be prepared and opened by the Christ to all the redeemed, that whosoever will may not perish, but have the gift of God, eternal life.

The test at the close of the Millennium is *symbolically* represented in Rev. 20:7-10. Satan will be permitted to attempt to deceive *all*, whose number will then be as the sand, but what proportion he will succeed in leading astray is not stated.

The Lord's Word does not indicate the nature of the movement, but we do not suppose that Satan and his followers will go up and surround the beloved city (the capital of the earthly phase of the Kingdom) with any thought of war, or with intent to use physical force. They could not be so foolish, after so long an experience with the power of God's Kingdom. We surmise that they will err in their calculation of when the thousand years of Christ's autocratic Kingdom will end, and when the dominion of earth will be restored to *mankind* in general to be exercised as a Republic – in full harmony with the divine law. Miscalculating the time, they may feel that the rulers of that time (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets) are prolonging their rule unwarrantedly. And the surrounding of the beloved city may signify a "demonstration," or appeal for their rights, such as has often been made by present-day workmen – surrounding Parliament or council chambers with remonstrances against infringements of their claimed rights. Such peaceful remonstrances in the present time against wrongs or oppressions are not sins, but such a demonstration on the part of perfect men after centuries of benefits and blessings at God's hands would indicate that their *hearts* were not fully submitted to the Lord; for the right hearted would say to such an invitation, – No: we may have been mistaken in our understanding of the Lord's word, or in our calculations of the time; – but if God sees best to continue us as "servants" rather than to grant us the full liberties and privileges of "sons" (Rom. 8:21), we will trust the wisdom, love and power which have so abundantly provided for us thus far – even while we were yet sinners – and will not even harbor in our hearts a wish to change any of the Lord's arrangements, much less would we join in any demonstration or protest against the Lord's arrangements.

Only those who under such a test would manifest *heart-harmony* with God are of the class for whom everlasting life has been prepared as a gift of God. Such will be received and blessed after the test; but the others will be cut off in the second death. If it be objected that these committed no great crime, we answer, neither was the transgression of the perfect Adam a gross crime; but the eating of the forbidden fruit was a disobedience; and disobedience and transgression on the part of *perfect* beings is a just cause for a refusal to grant such the great boon of life everlasting.

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