

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

WILL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH BE RE-ESTABLISHED?

Question. – If the saints and the Lord are not visible to the world during the Millennium, how will their loved friends, who did not have the same hope of union in Christ, have fellowship with them?

Answer. – In the present life the "saints" themselves do the most of the loving: true, they also are beloved to some extent by some who are not now the Lord's people, and not called to the high calling, but the loving of the latter is usually more of the selfish order of love, and less fervent.

The saints will be as able to love their kindred and the world in general as at present, and, we might say, more able, because of their perfected powers. Now, their chiefest love is for the Lord himself, their secondary love is for the household of faith, and as they love not the world, neither the things of the world, their love for the worldly is more of a benevolent *hope* – a wish for the welfare of mankind in general, and in particular of all to whom they are attached by earthly ties. The Prophet, speaking for these, declares: "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness;" with our perfected powers received in resurrection change we will comprehend the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of the divine provision for our friends and for all men; – secured by God's love and wisdom, through the great sacrifice of atonement finished at Calvary.

As for the worldly: they will have little difficulty generally in assuaging their sorrows. This is evident from the fact that partings caused by death so soon lose their poignancy. The chief cause of much of the grief manifested at the present time is the fear and uncertainty with which the majority of people regard the future of the present life,

and of that which is to come. The latter fear is born of misinterpretations of Scripture, inspired by false human traditions. When they shall come to know that their erstwhile friends, the saints, are forever with the Lord, they will be as satisfied as we now are satisfied to think of our Lord Jesus, our best Friend, as being highly exalted and on a different plane of being from ourselves.

As for the method of communication between the glorified Church and the world undergoing the disciplines of the restitution: we need not suppose that much communication and personal attention and care for our loved ones of earth will be necessary. What would be good for one person would generally be good for all, and our Heavenly Father's plan is so abundant in its provisions for the blessing of *all* that, understanding something of his character and plan, we already realize that he proposes to do for all mankind exceedingly abundantly more than all that we could have thought or asked for those we love most. So when the world has that which divine provision will make *general* during the Millennial age, there will be very little necessity, if any, for special interventions, or special communications by the saints to those for whom they now feel so solicitous.

And yet we can readily suppose that God has made some arrangement by which, eventually, there will be a communication between the (restored) earthly and the heavenly planes of being, as there was in Eden before sin entered, – when God either personally or through a representative talked with our first parents. Just how this communication will be established we are not informed, nor need it specially concern us, since we know that our Father is abundantly wise, and abundantly able, and abundantly loving, to do for his creatures all things needful to the comfort and happiness of those who love and obey him.

ARE GREAT SACRIFICES AND SUFFERINGS NECESSARY TO JOINT-HEIRSHIP?

Question. – What about the majority of Christians who, believing in Christ, are not yet called upon to make any great sacrifices for his sake?

Answer. – For a general answer, we refer to the article in our issue of May 1st, 1895, entitled, "Perfect Through Suffering." Everyone who seeks to walk carefully and honestly before the Lord, in the footsteps of Jesus, will surely find that it will cause something of self-sacrifice – the sacrifice of human aims or plans or preferences.

But this question may be viewed in another light [R2416 : page 13] The questioner may mean to lay stress upon the word "great," and may have in mind the endurance of persecutions such as came upon our Lord, the apostles, and others of the faithful in the past – imprisonments, "cruel mockings and scourgings," and violent deaths. Our answer, from this standpoint, is that it is not for us to supervise the trials and difficulties which may beset us. It is for us to make an unreserved consecration of ourselves to the Lord, and then leave to him the decision of how great shall be our trials and besetments – how great our sacrifices in following his leadings. The Lord may see that some need special trials, more than others, and those things which to some would be great trials and imply great sacrifices, to others, because of greater love to the Lord and his cause, and greater zeal for service, the sacrifice might seem to be, as the Apostle expresses it of his own, "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, and which are working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." If we are doing our part faithfully – if we are faithful to the Lord and to his people, and to his truth, to the best of our knowledge and ability, God will surely oversee our affairs so that we shall have *just* the right experiences to develop us; just the proper opportunities of sacrifice which his wisdom sees to be appropriate and needful to us. He will leave no true son without chastisements, disciplines, neither will he forsake us in our trials, but will stand with us, so that we shall not be tempted above that we are able, having provided a way of escape.

In this enlightened day physical scourgings are not sanctioned by the *world*, nevertheless we may be called on to endure patiently and uncomplainingly "cruel mockings" of the *tongue*; – we may be imprisoned in the sense of being ostracized for the truth's sake; – as our Lord foretold, "They shall cast you out of the synagogue and *separate you from their company*: yea, whosoever shall kill you shall think that he doeth God service." Many to-day are *thus* imprisoned and killed in *influence* for the truth's sake. Thus the Apostle also declared, "I *die* daily." And all who will constitute the elect overcoming Church, must die thus. In the symbolic language of Revelation this is termed *beheading*, and we are assured that all who will share the First Resurrection and the Kingdom will have been thus symbolically *beheaded*. – Rev. 20:4.
