

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." In the recent experiences through which the Church has been passing I have frequently been reminded of these words, and especially in regard to you, as the Adversary's method of attack seems to be to first slander you and then try to produce evidence that you are guilty of denying the Lord.

In this connection I have been thinking of how our Lord and Head was crucified for blasphemy against his Father, whom he had so faithfully served.

Do you not think that we shall find a deeper significance in the statements, "the servant is not above his master," and "we should follow his steps," than we at first appreciated?

Dear Brother, please permit me to express my appreciation of your loyalty to the Lord and his word and your courage in presenting the Truth. Truly the Lord has prepared for us "a table in the presence of our enemies." The DAWNS and TOWERS never seemed more precious than now and, remembering the Apostle's words that "ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils," I have no desire of feeding at these side-tables prepared to draw us away from the Truth.

Assuring you of my continued Christian love and heartfelt sympathy, I am,

Your humble fellow-servant in the Harvest work,

J. F. STEPHENSON, JR.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

I am forever grateful to you for the very precious help you have given to me in my coming "out of darkness into his marvelous light." I am still feasting upon the good things of the Master's table. Your articles on the Covenants are very interesting, and I note, with close attention, the restatement of some of the expressions concerning the great unchangeable truths.

There is one other matter that I think some of the brethren are not quite clear upon, and I therefore ask that you consider the propriety of making a restatement of the facts in such language as will make it impossible longer for any confusion or misunderstanding. It is common to hear a brother speak of "the breath" as "the life." When I question the expression, they tell me that the DAWNS "so teach." I think not. Surely they are mistaken, as I will now show by the following quotations: –

"This spark of life we receive from our fathers." – Vol. V., p. 334.

"Life...is an invisible power...like electricity." – Vol. V., p. 335.

"Jacob received his spark of life...from Isaac." – Vol. V., p. 365.

"And Jacob passed on the life...to his posterity." – Vol. V., p. 365.

"Human resurrection is therefore...a rekindling of animal existence." – Vol. V., p. 365.

"The spark *once started* is *supported* by breathing." – Vol. V., p. 333.

These statements by you are absolutely correct, and they do positively and clearly show a marked difference between the "spark of life," which begins the creature at conception, and "the breath of life," which supports the creature after birth. The above quotations from DAWN are firmly established in truth, as we learn from Job 33:4, "The spirit of God hath made me and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

It was a wonderful intelligence that "fashioned" us, and was altogether superhuman, and, as Job says (33:4), it was "the spirit of God" (invisible influence), and not the "breath of life." We should never lose sight of the fact that breath or *ruach* or *pneuma* means not only wind or air, but also means *like the wind*, which is an *invisible influence*. This double meaning of the word "spirit" is clearly taught in the DAWNS (Vol. V., page 335), but is not always sharply differentiated by the student. The breath, while important to support life, as is also food and water, does not have the needful creative intelligence to "fashion" a man in the womb, where it does not have access. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." (Acts 17:25.) We must believe "Thine hands (power) have made me, and fashioned me together [R4520 : page 350] roundabout; thou hast made me as the clay." (Job 10:8,9.) The "wind" cannot fashion the clay into a created organism, but God's invisible creative power can easily do so.

Trusting that the above suggestion may meet with your approval, I will close by saying, each day my prayers are offered in your behalf, that God may aid and comfort and sustain you in your great work, until you faithfully reach the end; and that the "joy set before," will make you realize that – "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:18.) For myself, I will say that my prayer is to be "faithful unto death," and in being faithful to the Captain of my salvation, I necessarily and joyfully pledge to

be faithful and loyal to his lieutenant, "that servant," as becomes a good soldier of the cross.

With much love, your brother in the Master's service,

W. W. CRANE, M.D.

BELOVED PASTOR, GREETING: –

During all the years in which we have enjoyed Present Truth we have never written to tell you how much we appreciate your labor of love on behalf of the household of faith, and how gladly we recognize you as the Messenger of the Laodicean Church. Daily we remember you at the throne of grace, that you may be kept as the apple of his eye, and [R4520 : page 351] as we read your loving, gentle words relative to those who walk no more with us, we feel that most assuredly Brother Russell is being "hidden in the secret of his presence from the strife of tongues."

May the peace and comfort of our gracious Heavenly Father abide with you to the end of your faithful pilgrimage.

With Christian love,

BRO. AND SR. A. L. RHOADES.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER RHOADES: –

Your very kind letter is much appreciated. I feel myself quite unworthy of so many honors as the Lord and his people continually shower upon me. I can only say that I am thankful for the privilege of the blessed service of the High Priest and his under-priests.

May the Lord's blessing continue richly with you both. In his love and service, your brother and servant.

OUR BELOVED PASTOR: –

Another week of service ended and we come home to find more evidences of the severe trials promised to the true Church near the end of the harvest. Our hearts can only bow in inexpressable gratitude and awe before our Heavenly Father that he has kept *us* and provided grace unto faithfulness for another week past.

By Nov. 1st "Tower" I see more plainly how easily I might permit the wrong spirit to arise; so with greater fear and trembling I am determined by his grace to do those things pleasing in his sight until he can clothe this imperfection with perfection. I give all praise to our Father that I am still one of those whom he calls *Blessed* – "Whosoever shall not be offended in me" – and thank him that my heart is daily increasing in love and gratitude for you, dear Pastor, and your labor of love. Our hearts are enlarged with sympathy and love for the one for whom many lay in wait, seeking to catch something out *of his mouth* that they might accuse him.

We claim the promise for ourselves and all the loyal at heart which the Lord gives us, "Neither shall any man pluck these out of my hand...and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

May you have peace, joy and comfort in the Lord's love amid sorrows, until the sacrifice is entirely consumed and you are with our glorified King for all eternity.

We are "gathering with you" in sincerity and truth.

With much love from us all.

C. WHITE.

IT IS CORRECTLY STATED

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

A statement in the October 15th TOWER does not seem clear to us, and we were wondering if your pen said what you intended it should. The statement is found in the second paragraph of the second column, page 314, and reads: –

"St. Paul refers directly to this New Covenant to be made with Israel at the end of this age (v. 27), saying, 'This is my Covenant unto them (natural Israel), when I shall take away their sins.' (Rom. 11:27.) The taking away of their sins is a necessity for them, before they can receive this New Covenant, because God makes no Covenant with sinners."

We have had the understanding that it was because they were sinners that God will make the Covenant with them, so that they could get back into harmony with God. If their sins are first to be taken away, why will a Covenant then be necessary?

Perhaps we have not caught the thought you have, and would be glad to have a word or two in explanation. Possibly you may think the reply of sufficient importance for the TOWER.

IN REPLY

The statement is quite correct. God makes no covenants with sinners. His Covenant with Abraham, for instance, was made because Abraham had first been justified by faith. Because of his faith, attested by obedience, God dealt with him as though he were released from condemnation of sin. It is the same with believers

in this Gospel Age. We are first justified freely through faith in the blood of Jesus, before we are even invited to present our bodies as living sacrifices, to share with Christ as his members in mediating the New Covenant, under which Israel and the world will be blessed.

The delay in the sealing of the New Covenant and its institution and the blessing of all the people under it has been merely for the purpose of permitting the predestinated number of under-priests to be developed. Each member of this household of faith, typically represented in Aaron's sons and the tribe of Levi, must first be justified by faith in the blood of Jesus – washed, cleansed, and each one must be sanctified or set apart through consecration to share in Christ's death, and must be accepted by the begetting of the holy Spirit and must finish his course, before the great High Priest (Jesus the Head, and the Church his Body) shall present on behalf of the world the merit of our Lord's sacrifice, now being utilized on behalf of the Church to permit us to become *members* of the Priest through joint-sacrifices.

When, as you quote, we said that "the *taking away* of Israel's sins is a necessity for them, before they can receive this New Covenant," we refer to the first part of the taking away of sins, namely, the satisfaction of Justice on their behalf. It should always be remembered that sin has its two parts; first its obliquity and condemnation from the Divine standpoint; and secondly its effect upon the sinner in the way of mental, moral and physical blemishes.

It is the first of these that must be cancelled before blessing and covenants are possible. Then, under the New Covenant arrangements, their sins will be put away gradually during the Millennium by assistance of the Royal Priesthood and all the uplifting influences of the mediatorial Kingdom.

The Great High Priest, who at the beginning of this age appeared in the presence of God "on our behalf," "for us," and who applied the benefit of the ransom-price for our sins – for the sins of the household of faith – will, in association with the members of his Body who are now faithful in sharing his sacrifice, in the end of this age, in the dawning of the Millennium, present the *ransom-price* "on behalf of all the people." He will thus *purchase* the world entire, as he already has "*bought us,*" the Church. Not until after he shall have thus purchased the world by the satisfaction of Justice on their behalf, "on behalf of all the people," will he have the right to open to them the blessed privileges of the New Covenant, which will be to Israel first and through Israel to all the families of the earth.

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL: –

We, the undersigned members of the "Ecclesia" at Cardiff, Wales, deem it a great privilege to register our names as those taking the responsibility, by the Lord's grace, of complying with the conditions of the Vow as presented in "The Watch Tower" of June 15th, 1908. And since we have heard of the uncharitable spirit manifested toward you by some who oppose the Vow we have been led to conclude that you, dear Brother, have been guided by the Lord in its presentation and that the opposition shown to such a simple form of words is an evidence that Satan is very much on the alert in regard to the matter.

We confess that we can see nothing in the "Vow" but what we believe would be helpful to every one of the Lord's consecrated people who is giving diligence to make his calling and election sure. We also think that the main cause of the opposition shown is through that clause of it referring to the precaution suggested when meeting in private with members of the opposite sex. We believe that Satan has scored many victories in the past on similar

lines and are of the opinion that we need more than ever to be on the watch now in this respect, in this time of special testing of the Church. The Lord, we believe, will see that we get all the necessary testings without our making the conditions for ourselves. We believe he will bring about the conditions himself in his own way.

May the Lord guide you still further, beloved Brother, and grant Divine wisdom to Pastor the "flock of God," so that Truth may search us and prove whether or not the carnal mind is dominating us in any sense of the word.

SIGNED BY FIFTEEN.

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