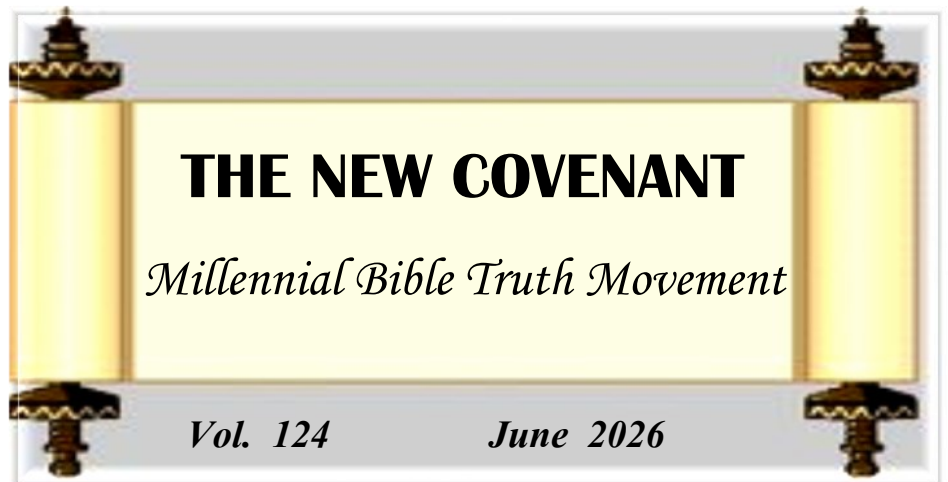




WAITING ON GOD

Faith Foundations – Br. Morton Edgar - pp. 163-174)

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord"
Lamentations 3:26

1. THE Plan of Salvation shall run its appointed course according to times and seasons, which can neither be altered nor hastened. The whole creation awaits God's good pleasure; but those who have an understanding of the Plan of the Ages do not wait in ignorance. The children of God wait because they believe that the Lord's times are best; the children of the world wait because they must (Rom. 8:19-23).

Rewards for Faithful Waiting

2. We recall to mind how the Lord specially rewarded some of the Ancient Worthies who, in the middle of trials and testings, faithfully waited for the fulfilment of His promises. Noah, after building the Ark, waited seven days for the flood (Gen. 7:10). This final period, though short, must have been a time of great trial. Noah endured, and his faithful waiting on God was vindicated when the waters bore up the ark, and he with his household were alone saved.

3. Abraham, after a long 25 years of waiting, had the joy of begetting a "son indeed," in whom centered all the promises. For the fulfilment of these promises he still waits, as do also Isaac and Jacob, his heirs. But so real did the promises appear, that these three patriarchs "died in faith ... having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them" (Heb. 11:13). What grand men they were! There is nothing more wonderful in all the earth than a man who lives in quiet faith in God.

4. Moses waited for forty years in the wilderness for God to appoint him the savior of his brethren. He believed the Lord's promise that His people would be delivered from Egyptian bondage in



the fourth generation (Gen. 15:13-16); and when forty years old he sought to be the champion of the oppressed. But at that time Moses went in his own strength, and failed (Ex. 2:11-15). His experiences during the succeeding forty years of waiting taught him his own nothingness; and when at last the Lord honored him, he was the meekest man in all the earth (Num.

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12:3). His long wait was not in vain—he became a mighty deliverer.

5. David would not kill Saul, although he was anointed king of Israel. In spite of opportunities he would not slay the Lord's anointed, but waited God's time to ascend the throne (1 Sam. 26:23). He recovered the sacred Ark lost many years before at the overthrow of Shiloh. David was a man after God's own heart.

6. Surely with these and many other examples, we should willingly wait for the sure fulfilment of the promises the Lord has so graciously made to us. Nor do we forget the dire calamities that befell such as refused to wait upon God and His arrangements, when they knew they should have waited.

Punishments for not Waiting

7. The Jewish nation refused to wait for the return of the Lawgiver from the mount. "As for this Moses," they said, "the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what is become of him" (Ex. 32:1). They made the golden calf in their impatience, and forsook the Lord. Because of this God threatened to blot them out; only two of all those above 20 years of age at the time of the exodus from Egypt were permitted, 40 years later, to cross the Jordan into the promised land (Num. 14:26-38).

8. King Saul refused to wait for the return of Samuel, and contrary to the Lord's direction offered a sacrifice. In consequence of this his house was not permitted to continue to rule in the kingdom of Israel (1 Sam. 13:8-14).

9. The so-called Church of the Gospel Age refused to wait for Christ's return, and set up a counterfeit Christendom. The result was the formation of the "abomination that makes desolate"; during that dreadful period universally known as the Dark Ages. The Lord described the original Apostate Church as a "harlot"; and the later Protestant denominations as her "daughters."

10. In this we see the importance of waiting; for God Himself waits to be gracious; He is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (Isa. 30:18; 2 Pet. 3:9). Our Lord Yeshua has patiently waited, sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high, until God makes His enemies His footstool. Known to God are all His works from the beginning of the world; and He will not alter any part of His plan, for He is a God of judgment. Blessed are all they who wait on Him (Acts 15:18; Isa. 30:18).

All Things Await God's Due Time

11. The Great Pyramid in Egypt also has waited over 4,000 years to give its wonderful

corroborative evidence. During all of this long period its purpose has been misunderstood. It has been set aside as merely an old tomb; whereas it is really God's "Pillar of Witness" referred to by the Prophet (Isaiah 19:19, 20).

12. The written Word has had to wait until the "living Word" should come to serve up its wonderful truths to His faithful people. Daniel was told to "shut up the words, and seal the book" of his prophecies until the "time of the end," for none would understand their import until knowledge had increased, and many should "run to and fro" (Dan. 12:4, 9). Daniel's writings had to wait for nearly 2,500 years before they could give their testimony. Even the entire Old and New Testaments, the "two Witnesses," had to wait "clothed in sackcloth" (dead languages), till the completion of the 1,260 symbolic days (years), which is the beginning of the period spoken of in Daniel as the "time of the end" (Dan. 8:19; Rev. 11:3). They then came to "life," and were exalted to Heaven. The Bible Societies, which came into existence immediately after 1799, multiplied the Scriptures a million-fold, and gave new life to the witnesses of God.

13. Archaeological remains of ancient times have waited in the dust of the earth (in Babylonia, Egypt, etc.), until their comparatively recent discovery, to add their harmonious testimony to the Truth of the Bible. Before the unearthing of these material evidences, many historical narratives in God's Word had been doubted by scholars. The child of God takes the Lord at His word, and guards against the errors arising from doubt. These archeological witnesses vindicate the faith of God's children.

Jacob's Waiting for Salvation Connected with his Son Dan

14. The founder of the Jewish nation, Jacob, declared that he waited for the salvation of God; and he strangely connected this hope with a prophetic utterance regarding one of his sons, Dan. We know that many of the patriarchs were prophets (Gen. 49:1); and their prophecies have had to wait for further elucidation by God, before their deep meanings could be searched out. This is especially true of the prophecy concerning Dan. In Gen. 49:16-18, we read: "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that bites the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

The Tribe of Dan was Idolatrous

15. To understand this dark saying, we must trace the history of Dan; and we also require to take a broad survey of God's Plan of Salvation. In Judges, chapter 18, we learn that the tribe of Dan apostatized from the worship of Yahveh, and practiced open

idolatry. It is for this reason, undoubtedly, that Dan is omitted when honorable mention is made of the 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel who were sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God (Rev. 7:1-8—Manasseh, Joseph's firstborn, is there substituted for Dan).

16. The whole manner of this tribe's apostasy evidences an unfaithful character from the first. Its people did not conquer their inheritance in the promised land, owing to lack of faith in God; for not in their own strength, but in God's strength, they could have overcome their enemies and possessed their portion of the country. Their enemies proved too strong for them, and compelled them to keep to the hills; and later they deserted their inheritance and migrated north, to a country where the people feared no ill, and they were not learned in the art of war. These, the Danites, were able to overpower them; they burned Laish, and established their own city instead, which they named Dan. The city of Dan then became the most northern of all the cities; and as Beersheba lies in the south, the saying, "From Dan to Beersheba" became the way of denoting the entire length of Palestine (Judges 20:1).

17. Besides failing to conquer their own rightful inheritance in the land, and instead of searching out an inheritance for themselves and conquering a people who hardly knew their right hand from their left, the Danites on their journey northward forcibly possessed themselves of a man's private priest and images and established an idolatrous worship in their city. The Scriptures say that this state of affairs continued until the captivity (Judges 18:29-31).

18. When on the death of Solomon the tribes of Israel divided into two kingdoms, we read that Jeroboam, the king of the ten tribes, in order to prevent his people from going up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord, made two golden calves, one of which he set up in Bethel (a little north of Jerusalem), and the other in Dan. Jeroboam then cried to his subjects: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt" after the example of his unfaithful ancestors in the wilderness at the time of the exodus from Egypt. "And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one, even to Dan" (1 Kings 12:26-30). Jeroboam evidently found Dan to be a very suitable place to set up idol worship.

19. The city which the idolatrous tribe of Dan set up became the recognized center of heathen worship in Israel. The stolen images placed there by the Danites at the first, represented the gods of the heathen (Baalim); and the golden calf erected there by Jeroboam centuries later, stood for Osiris, the god of the Egyptians. The Greeks later worshipped their god Pan in the same place. The name given to the city of Dan in later times by the Greeks was Paneas (pronounced by the Arabs, Baniyas). The Romans called it Caesarea Philippi (after Philip, the tetrarch of the region). It lies

at the source of the Jordan, as can be seen by consulting any Bible map.

20. When we recognized the fact that Pan and Osiris, and all the other heathen gods, had their origin in the apostate Nimrod, the founder of idolatrous worship, and that these gods claimed to be the saviors of the dying world (counterfeit Messiahs), we can appreciate the full and significant force of Yeshua Christ's question to his disciples at this famous seat of the false Messiah. They were in Caesarea Philippi, the ancient city of Dan, and Paneas, when Yeshua put the question: "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Then addressing His disciples directly: "But whom say you that I am?" What joy Yeshua had when he heard Peter reply: "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the Living God"! Yeshua knew that none could perceive His identity except by inspiration. (Matt. 16:13-17). Here, right in the very stronghold of the false Messiah, Yeshua tested the faith and spiritual perception of His followers, to see if they could recognize Him as the true Savior of the death-doomed world! And the answer came spontaneously "Truly, flesh and blood could not have revealed this great truth, but the heavenly Father alone." Great was the rejoicing of Yeshua.

21. Bethel, where the other idol was set up, was in Ephraim's division of the land. From one standpoint it is correct to say that the city of Dan was also in Ephraim, for this tribe was the largest of all, and frequently the entire ten tribes are collectively named Ephraim. And as the particular division of land belonging to the tribe Ephraim is also called Samaria (1 Kings 13:32), then this name Samaria as well as Ephraim, and also Israel, are used interchangeably as the name of the ten tribes (Hosea 7:1). Ephraim or Samaria are often taken to typify the false church of the Gospel Age (Hosea 4:17; 8:5, 6).

Dan—Judas—Satan

22. We know that the Lord overruled all things connected with His typical people of Israel, in order that they might foreshadow the antitypical realities of the Gospel and Millennial Ages. The apostate Danites prefigured a similar unfaithful and treacherous class in the Gospel Age, who, forsaking the Lord, set up idols in their hearts. Of this class Judas Iscariot was the forerunner. Judas, however, was but a tool in the hands of Satan, who is the great Adversary and betrayer of the Lord, the real Danite and "serpent by the way" (See John 13:26, 27; Gen. 49:16, 17). As the tribe of Dan forsook their first inheritance and seized an inheritance in the north, so Satan had said in his heart that he would ascend and sit in the "sides of the north," that he would be "like the Most High" (Isa. 14:13, 14).

23. In the symbols of the Scriptures, the four cardinal points of the compass are associated with certain definite conditions. We read, "For promotion comes neither from the east nor from the west, nor from

the south. But God is the judge; He puts down one and sets up another" (Psa. 75:6, 7). By inference, God and the place of power are understood to reside in the north. Satan's ambition was to sit in the sides of the north and be like the Most High, that he might wield the scepter of power.

24. It is remarkable, too, that during the time of the building of the Great Pyramid (which edifice corroborates the Plan of the Ages), the North Star was Alpha Draconis, the principal star in the "Dragon" constellation, a mythological representation of Satan. This star at that time shone right down the Descending Passage of the Pyramid. When we recall that this downward passage symbolically represents the "present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), and that Satan is Scripturally called the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), we can see an appropriate significance in this arrangement. We do not suppose that such coincidences are haphazard; we believe them expressly supervised by God to strengthen the faith of His people. Satan, that "dragon" and "old serpent" (Rev. 12:9), is the god of a dying world; and this fact is portrayed in the Lord's "Stone Witness" by the Dragon Star shining into the Entrance Passage, which descends at a steep angle down to the subterranean chamber or pit, symbolical of destruction.

Yahveh's Great "Horse" and its "Rider"

25. A "horse," when spoken of in a symbolic sense, represents an orderly plan or arrangement, progressing along an appointed path. The Lord's "horse," of which Yeshua was the "Rider," is the Plan of Salvation (Isa. 31:3), where we read: "Now, the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit"; in other words, the plans, doctrines, and schemes of the world are not of the spirit of God; and woe to them who rely upon such "horses." When Satan, the great Judas and Danite, waylaid and treacherously bit the heel of the Lord's "horse" so that the rider Yeshua fell backward and was killed (Gen. 49:17), he evidently thought he had upset the Plan of God, and had forever slain the Prince of Life.

26. But Jacob declared prophetically in the name of all Israelites indeed: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." (Gen. 49:18). That which Satan considered to be a masterstroke, when he entered into the receptive heart of Judas and caused him to betray the Lord, was in reality his own undoing; for we read that Yeshua became flesh for the suffering of death, that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death—that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:9, 14). The death of Yeshua means the salvation of the world, and the destruction of Satan.

Further Light on the Tribe of Dan

27. Just as the founder of the tribes of Israel, Jacob, foretold what would befall them in the last days,

so the lawgiver of the nation, Moses, uttered additional prophecies in connection with each tribe. The prophecy of Moses regarding Dan gives us further elucidation as to the typical part played by this tribe in the Lord's Plan. Of Dan he said, "Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan" (Deut. 33:22).

28. On glancing at a map of Palestine, it will be seen that Bashan is a mountainous district in the north, on the east side of the Jordan; and the city of Dan was situated on the northwestern edge of this district. Bashan is identified with the idolatrous tribe of Dan. Not only has the Lord caused the nation of Israel, and all the nations round about, to typify and illustrate various features of His glorious Plan of Salvation, but even every mountain and valley in and around the land of Palestine, every sea and river, the plains, deserts, cities, animals, trees, herbs, etc., are used by Him to symbolize or represent some detail in that wonderful Plan.

29. We find that the mountain of Bashan represents the kingdom of Antichrist, the stronghold of the Danite or Judas class. This thought is borne out further in Psa. 68:15, 16. In the Authorized Version this passage reads: "The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; a high hill as the hill of Bashan. Why leap you, you high hills? This is the hill which God desires to dwell in; The Lord will dwell in it forever."

The Hill of Bashan Versus the Hill of Zion

30. Every Bible student knows that the hill in which the Lord, figuratively, desires to dwell, is the hill of Zion (Psa. 132:13, 14). "For Yahveh has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation: This is My resting place for ever; Here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

31. The Psalmist in Ps. 68:15, 16 is contrasting Bashan with Zion. This contrast is more evident in Leeser's translation, or, better still, in the Variorum Bible. We could render the passage: "The hill of God [is it] the hill of Bashan? [No.] A hill of many peaks is the hill of Bashan. Why are ye so envious, ye hill of many peaks? This [small, unpretentious hill of Zion] is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever."

32. During the Gospel Age the great Antichrist system would gladly have called itself the Kingdom of God; and even as the imposing and many-peaked hill of Bashan looked askance at little Mount Zion, and envied its position of favor with the Lord, so the proud Antichrist with which all the high ones (many "peaks") of earth identify themselves, has envied, while despising and persecuting, the little Zion class, the "little flock," to whom it is the Heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

33. Our Lord Yeshua, when encouraging His followers not to fear, for it pleased the Father that the

Kingdom should be theirs, counseled them to be like men that wait for their lord, when he will return (Luke 12:32, 36). The false church refused to wait, and it claims to have already set up Christ's Kingdom, calling the kingdoms of this world "Christendom." Did Dan "leap from Bashan"? Yes, in the person of Judas, he leaped upon our Lord Yeshua as a hungry lion upon its prey; for even at that early time Antichrist had its small beginning (1 John 4:3).

34. Our Lord called Judas the "son of perdition," which is also the name applied by the Apostle Paul to the "man of sin"—i.e., the Antichrist (John 17:12; 2 Thes. 2:3, 7). During the whole of the Gospel Age the Danite or Judas class have been "leaping" from the Bashan system upon the body members of Christ.

The Bulls of Bashan

35. David, prophetically in the name of Yeshua, as well as in the name of Yeshua's footstep followers (in a secondary sense), speaks of this persecuting class as "Bulls of Bashan" (Psa. 22:12, 13): "Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They opened their mouths against me as a ravening and a roaring lion." The mountainous country of Bashan was famous for its breed of cattle (Deut. 32:14); and its bulls are taken as types throughout the Old Testament of cruel and loud-mouthed oppressors (Amos 4:1). During the height of its power in the Papal Millennium (799-1799), the heads of the counterfeit kingdom of Christ oppressed the "little flock" with their "bulls of excommunication."

Waiting and Longing for the Kingdom

36. But "Bashan" was rejected; and "Zion" were waiting for the Kingdom. Doubtless our dear Heavenly Father desires to develop in us during this final period, an earnest longing to see the earthly Kingdom. Such longing may be accentuated by trials. This thought: "As the deer pants for the water-brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, while they continually say to me, where is your God?" (Psa. 42:1-3). To appreciate the Psalmist's thought, we must remember that for a continuous six or seven months of the year rain never falls in Palestine. With very few exceptions the rivers and streams dry up, and then the only water supplies are the springs and wells, and cisterns hewn in the rock (Jer. 2:13).

37. Wherever a good and constant spring exists, a village is generally to be found. Sometimes the water must be conducted from the spring's source to the houses, and in such cases a covered-in aqueduct may be used. Holes are pierced at intervals through the cover of the aqueduct to prevent bursting from the accumulation

of air. There appears good reason to believe that it was an aqueduct like this which the Psalmist referred, and that the text should read: "As the deer pants over the aqueduct." The deer knows that the water is there, for it can both hear and smell it through the air-holes in the cover. The animal pants after the life-giving water, but is unable to quench its thirst. We can well imagine the distress of the poor hunted creature as it stands over the closed-in waterway in the midst of that dry and thirsty land!

38. In a similar manner, those who were in this earthly tabernacle during Gospel Age groaned, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with their house which was from heaven. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of heaven. But now they are like Christ, they now appear before Him and see Him as He is. We have heard of the patience of Job; it was not for his sake so much as for the Church that Job declared: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." (Job 14:14).

39. We have need of patience, that after having done the will of God, we should receive the promise. What joy it will be to hear the poor groaning world shout: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, and we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isa. 25:8, 9).

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THE HOLY SPIRIT: ITS DOMINATING GRACES — PART 3 JUSTICE

PT# 367, July 1949, pp. 98-106

1. THE Third dominating grace of the Holy Spirit is justice. Justice is the good will and its resultant thoughts, words and acts that by right we owe others. Its basis is right; for it is what the law commands and demands of all under it. There can be no justice without right and no right without law; for it flows from obligation, and is acknowledged by that sense of obligation which we call conscience. It is a matter of debt owed to and required by law.

2. But it is more than mere right or duty that the law commands and demands; for that would make it a cold, lifeless thing, and people could respond to the law's commands and demands without any kindly feelings or affections. That justice is more than the sense of right or obligation we recognize when we realize that there is a certain kind of love in it. That kind of love that characterizes justice is duty love, the kind of love that by right we owe.

ELEMENTS OF JUSTICE

3. Accordingly, justice has as one of its leading features duty love. Love is good will; for we can think of no expression of love without good will. We can think of expressions of love without various graces, e.g., the loving parent spanking a willfully disobedient child for its reformation is not gentle, but has good will; the angry reformer rebuking the evil-doers for their betterment is not longsuffering, but has good will; the firm denial of a largess by one who knows that the beggar will be injured thereby is not an expression of generosity, but is one of good will; the indignant refusal to vote for a corrupt candidate does not contain approbateness, but it does contain good will.

4. And thus we could point out many another loving act that lacks this or that grace, but cannot point out an act of love that lacks good will. Therefore, good will not being absent from, but being present in every loving act, it must be the heart of love. Hence it must be that part of the heart of justice which is its love part. Accordingly, justice is duty love, that good will that must be in right to make the latter justice. Hence we see that there is no justice unless good will is combined with duty.

5. Thus we see that justice is primarily a matter of two of our affections, conscientiousness and good will, or love, therefore, not disinterested, but duty good will, or duty love. Accordingly, justice is primarily a motive of two religious affections. But justice is more than these two religious feelings; for, if that were all of it, that would make it merely these two affections, and would reduce it to a matter of feeling. It is true that these are the bases of justice, and as such are its motive power; but it is more than a mere motive; for motives need not pass over into volitions, let alone into resultant thoughts, words and acts; for such motives must press upon the will for responsive actions in the form of volitions, which may or may not arise, along the lines of these motives of conscientiousness and good will.

6. Volitions arising arouse the intellect to think accordingly, i.e., to think justly and not to think unjustly. Moreover, these volitions must set the tongue into operation to avoid saying unjust things and to say just things. And these volitions must make the hands avoid unjust things and do just things. And, finally, these volitions must make the feet avoid the paths of error and unrighteousness and go in the paths of truth and righteousness. Accordingly, the elements or parts of justice are conscientiousness, good will and accordant volitions, thoughts, words and acts.

OBJECTS OF JUSTICE

7. Justice becomes all the clearer to us when we recognize its objects. Its main object is God; its



second object is Yeshua, then the other spirit beings, especially our guardian angels. After these come our fellows in Adam, who include mankind in general, and in particular our husbands, wives, children, parents, relatives, friends and acquaintances, especially such of them as are in need. We have also fellows in Christ, particularly our spiritual parents, husband, children and brethren. We are to make even the beast creation the objects of our justice, even as it is written, The righteous man is merciful to his beast (Prov.12:10).

8. We owe justice to mankind, even in its various organizations: We are to act justly toward the state, especially along the lines respecting, honoring and obeying our government and rulers, paying taxes and offering prayer for all in authority. We are to act justly to the nominal church and to capitalistic and labor organizations. To every one or thing we are to render his or its due.

9. While what is due to everyone and everything varies, amid and according to such varieties, we are to render what is due to him and it. Thus on the ground of justice we owe some more than we do others. We owe God more than we owe anyone else. Next to Him we owe Yeshua more than we do any others. We owe our guardian angels more than we owe others' guardian angels. In Adam we owe our wives and husbands more than we do others. Next to these come our obligations to our parents and children, then our brothers and sisters, then our other relatives, then our friends, as we also owe these more than we owe strangers; and we owe our fellow citizens more than foreigners. We owe, of course, more to our government and rulers than we owe to governments and rulers not our own. In Christ we owe most to our symbolic husband, next to our symbolic parents, next our symbolic children and brethren.

10. The reason for these differences is the varying degrees of our nearness to others. The nearer

we are to them and they to us, the more we owe them, e.g., being nearest of all to God and Christ, we owe Them more than anyone else. The relation of husband and wife being the nearest of all earthly relationships, they owe each other more than they owe anyone else. Parents and children being nearer to one another, they owe one another more than they owe, e.g., friends and acquaintances. Accordingly, we see that justice requires us to feel, will, think, speak and act varyingly to others dependent on the varying degrees of our nearness to them.

DUTY LOVE TO GOD AND CHRIST

11. To God and Christ in justice we are to give duty love with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. To love Them in justice with all the heart means to make every exercise of our artistic, moral and religious affections flow out of our duty good will to Them and support such duty good will. This means as to our religious affections to make our faith, hope, self-control, patience, brotherly (neighbor) love and charity flow out of our love for Them and make them support it.

12. This means as to our selfish moral affections that we make every exercise of our love of self-esteem, approbateness, rest, cautiousness, secretiveness, providence, combativeness, aggressiveness, alimentativeness and vitativeness flow out of our love for Them and make them support it. It means as to our social moral affections that we make every exercise of our sexliness, husbandliness, wifeliness, parentliness, filiality, brethrenliness, friendship, domesticity and patriotism flow from love to Them and make them support it. When out of that love for Them we exercise responsive volitions, thoughts, words and acts, we discharge toward Them our obligations as to duty love to Them with all the heart—affections.

13. We love Them as to justice with all our artistic affections when we make every exercise of our love for the sublime and beautiful in nature and art—music, poetry, painting, sculpture and architecture—in oratory, acting, humor, agreeableness and construction, flow out of our duty love for Them and make it support it; and we complete it when we make our pertinent volitions, thoughts, words and acts flow out of our duty love to Them and make them support it.

14. We love Them with all our minds when we make every exercise of our perceptive, remembering, imaginative and reasoning powers flow out of our love for Them and make them support it, and complete this part of our duty love for Them when we make our volitions, thoughts, words and acts flow out of such love and support it.

15. We love Them with all our souls when we make every faculty of our beings exercise itself out of duty love to Them and make it support it; and we

perfect it when we make every pertinent volition, thought, word and act flow out of such duty love and support it.

16. We love Them as to justice with all our strength when we make every exercise of our will power—self-control and patience, perseverance—flow out of such duty love and support it, which comes to a completion when we make every volition, thought, word and act flow out of such duty love and make them support it. Thus we have briefly expounded the law of justice toward God and Christ.

THE BASIS OF DUTY LOVE TO GOD

17. There is a solid basis and full justification for God in justice to demand such duty love for Himself and Yeshua and its corresponding results in volition, thought, word and act. It is right that He makes this demand because of the good that He has done all mankind in creation and providence. Let us note some of these benefactions. It was kind in Him to let us come into existence at all. He added to this kindness when He allowed us to come into existence on the highest plane of earthly existence, humans gifted with bodies of marvelous organs and powers, with minds capable of perceiving, remembering, imagining and reasoning, with hearts endowed with wonderful moral powers, both along selfish and social lines, with remarkable artistic powers in the sublime and beautiful along the lines of nature and art, and with hearts be graced with religious powers in faith, hope, self-control, patience, piety, brotherly (neighbor) love and charity.

18. It was kind in Him to put us into a beautiful and fruitful earth richly supplied in climate, atmosphere, seasons, fertility, shelter and goods to supply our earthly needs. It was a benefaction in Him to let us come under the most benighted government, laws and spirit on earth, in the enjoyment of the largest means of life, liberty and happiness. It is a blessing from Him that we live in the best civilization, amid educational opportunities, the most prosperous working and business conditions. These are some of His creative blessings.

19. Providentially He has given mankind many benefactions. He provides them suitable clothing, food and shelter; He gives them rain and sunshine, regardless of whether they are good or evil. While mankind under the curse is a race of convicts sentenced to hard labor for life, God treats them much better than any state treat its convicts, providing them with better food, clothes and housing, giving them larger liberties and affording them better opportunities for physical, mental, artistic, moral and religious improvement. He shields the bulk of them from calamities, and builds a hedge about them against their oppressors, and daily loads them with benefits. Such being the benefactions with which He blesses them, they should love Him with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, out of thankful good will for

the good that He does to them.

20. Added to these blessings are religious benefits with which He has done them good. Some of these have been done for all mankind. He emptied heaven of His dearest treasure, and sent His only begotten Son, the Son of His bosom, into the world, in humiliation, from a nature, honor and office next to the Father's, to become a human being for all mankind's sake. And He added to that by giving Him up to a sacrificial death, that He might become the Redeemer of the entire race from alienation in sin, degradation and death into reconciliation for righteousness and life everlasting. On top of this He invites all to repent that they may obtain the blessings secured for them by Christ's sacrifice. Surely these are benefits that add to mankind's obligation to love God and Christ with all the heart, mind, soul and strength.

21. The following blessings are given to those only who respond to them, though offered by God in good faith to by far more than respond to His gracious offers of them. To all who heartily believe His promise for Christ's sake to forgive them their sins, to impute to them Christ's righteousness, to take them into fellowship with Him, and to help them live righteous lives, He graciously gives these four blessings. These blessings add to their obligation to love God and Christ with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, and they give added ability so to do.

22. Through-out the entire call period of the Gospel-Age God invited those who have received these four blessings, summed up in justification by faith, to consecrate themselves to Him to walk in Christ's footsteps of suffering for God's plan and of developing in character like Him; and those then accepting this invitation He blessed by begetting them to the Divine nature, by giving them the opportunities of suffering and arising in life with Christ, with all the helps necessary to undergo these two things, encouraging them therein with the hope of gaining the Divine nature and joint-heirship with Christ; and those who were faithful in such consecration attained to these great rewards, all of which increased their obligation to love God and Christ with all the heart, mind, soul and strength and at the same time increased their ability to keep this obligation.

23. And then He gives such faithful ones victories in all the battles incidental to their warfare against sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, as these are manipulated against them in their conflicts by the devil, the world and the flesh, and, finally, gives them victory in the warfare as a whole, all of which increase their obligation to love God and Christ with all the heart, mind, soul and strength and increase their power so to do.

24. Thus we see that in varying degrees through varying blessings given, dependent on their varying degrees of experiences with God's kindness, all are obligated to love God and Christ with all their

hearts, minds, souls and strengths, because of the good that He has done them. When they so do in motive, volition, thought, word and act, they exercise justice toward God and Christ.

DUTY LOVE TO OUR FELLOWS

25. The next class to whom we owe duty love, justice, is our fellows. And the law of duty love to the neighbor is to love him as self (Mark 12:31). This does not mean that we are to love all equally; for such a thing would ignore the various degrees of neighborly nearness, which limits the degrees of our love to our neighbor. Nor does it mean that we are to do in volition, thought, word and act as much for all as we do for any one particular person; for this again ignores the varying degrees of neighborly nearness, which must always condition the degree of our love, as well as volition, thought, word and act. Self-evidently we should not do in love by way of volition, thought, word and act as much for strangers as we do to the members of our own families. Moreover, by reason of our limitations, we cannot do for all what we in duty love are to do for the members of our families.

26. Yeshua has explained what is meant by loving the neighbor as self in Matt. 7:12. This passage does not mean that we are to do to our neighbor whatsoever he wishes; for he often wishes us to do wrong; and that would imply that we take his will as our rule of action, whereas in consecration we gave up others' wills when we took God's will as our own.

27. Again, this passage does not mean that we are to do to our neighbor what we wish; for at times we, too, wish wrong; and that would be taking our wishes as the rule of our action, whereas in consecration we took God's will as the rule of our actions. What, then, does this rule mean? We reply that when we remember that in Matt. 7:12, as also in the rest of the sermon on the mount, Yeshua was speaking to His disciples, we have the clue to its meaning; for His disciples had taken God's will as their own; hence they would wish for themselves that only which God willed for them to wish for themselves. Hence the rule means that all things whatsoever we willing God's will would have others to do to us we do to them.

WHAT WE SHOULD WISH DONE US

28. But this raises another question, What does God will for us to wish our neighbor to do to us in motive, thought, word and act, if he were in our and we in his place? We reply, in this situation, according to God's will, we wish him to respect, yield to, and protect us in our use of our inalienable rights. Similarly, God wishes us to respect, yield to, and protect him in his use of his inalienable rights.

29. What are these? Certainly, we have no inalienable rights insofar as God is concerned; for by

sin Adam forfeited for himself and us all of his rights Godward. While we have none Godward, we do have certain inalienable rights manward. And these correspond to our physical, mental, artistic, moral and religious powers. All of these we have a right to use as we please, provided that we do so compatibly with others' rights to use their inalienable rights in these powers.

30. Our physical inalienable rights before our fellow men are those connected with the well-being of our bodies, the right to have food, clothes, shelter, health, life, exercise, work, rest, etc., compatibly with others' rights to exercise theirs. Our mental inalienable rights are those connected with the well-being of our intellects, which implies the right to exercise our perceptive, remembering, imaginative and reasoning faculties compatibly with others' rights to do the same. Our artistic inalienable rights are those connected with the well-being of our artistic faculties, which implies our exercising our love for the sublime and beautiful in nature and in art, particularly in the art of poetry, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, oratory, humor, agreeableness and constructiveness, as we please, in harmony with others' exercising their rights.

31. Our inalienable religious rights are those connected with our relations to God and to man in his relations to God, which implies that we use our faith, hope, self-control, piety, brotherly love and charity as we please, provided that we do so in harmony with others' rights. And our inalienable moral rights are those connected with our relation to ourselves and others, which implies that we may do as we please, compatibly with others' rights, with our self-esteem, approbateness, restfulness, safety, secretiveness, providence, combativeness, aggressiveness, alimentativeness, vitativeness, sexliness, husbandliness, wifeliness, parentliness, filiality, brethrenliness, friendship, domesticity and patriotism.

32. To exercise these rights compatibly with one another's rights in the relations of man to man is God's will for man. Hence we know what is God's will for us to wish to be done to us in motive, volition, thought, word and act in our relations to our fellows. Accordingly, we are to do such to our fellows. This is, therefore, what is meant by the words, All things whatsoever ye would that men do unto you do ye also unto them.

33. This is the positive side of the golden rule manward; and it surely will move us to do our neighbor good in motive, volition, thought, word and act. But it has a negative side; and this will restrain us from doing him ill in motive, volition, thought, word and act, since we do not desire him to do us ill in motive, volition, thought, word and act.

34. Hence, if we are parents, this will prevent our doing ill in these ways to our children, e.g., keep us from tyrannizing over them, despising or disliking them, or neglecting their provision and training

physically, mentally, artistically, morally or religiously. If we are children, this will prevent our distrusting, dishonoring, disliking and disobeying our parents, or neglecting to provide for them in their declining years.

35. If we are husbands, this will prevent our tyrannizing over our wives, distrusting, dishonoring, disrespecting, despising or disliking them or neglecting their provision physically, mentally, artistically, morally or religiously, or being unfaithful to our marriage vows. If we are wives, this will prevent our nagging at, distrusting, dishonoring, disrespecting, despising, disliking, neglecting our husbands physically, mentally, artistically, morally or religiously, or being unfaithful to our marriage vows.

36. To our fellow this would mean that we are in no wise to do him injury physically, mentally, artistically, morally or religiously, that we in no wise seek to seduce another's husband or wife to be unfaithful to his or her marriage vows. It would mean that we do him no injury in his person or property. It would mean that we do not cherish evil surmises against him, that we do not evilly construe his motives, volition, thoughts, words and acts, that we use not our words, looks, gestures and acts to undermine his reputation, that we abstain from all slander and gossip against him, that we do not use our influence in any way to his injury, that we do not evilly desire anything that is his in family, business and society. What worlds of evil will the negative use of the golden rule manward prevent! And what worlds of evil does its neglect inflict, all of which would disappear in the face of its practice!

THE SPHERE OF THE GOLDEN RULE

37. Certainly, the golden rule Godward and manward is a most wholesome thing! It regulates along the lines of justice every motive, volition, thought, word and act in our relations Godward and manward. Its invention is a sure proof of omniscience in its Inventor; for in its extreme brevity it covers ethically as to justice every possible motive, volition, thought, word and act of man in his relation to God, Christ, the angels, his fellows and his beasts and fowls; It is impossible to think of a free moral agent in any circumstance or state in any of his relations to these that does not come under the covering of this golden rule.

38. Man to govern man's mere external relations with his fellows has made laws to cover these relations, whose mere statement fills thousands of large volumes, and is constantly adding to them to meet the ever growing complexities of these relations, and is not even then able satisfactorily to cover them in harmony with man's inalienable rights; but God in the brief statements, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," has given two laws that cover along the lines of justice everyone's motives,

volitions, thoughts, words and acts toward all rational beings, as well as his and others' animals.

39. The second rule governs man's relations also to angels. It is true that we are not to commune with the angels now, God having forbidden this in order to shield us from the deceptions of fallen angels, who pretend that they are good angels, in order to arouse our confidence in them, all the easier to mislead us. But we are to have good will toward the angels, and to this extent are to act out the golden rule toward them that we put no hindrances in their way, but put helps in favor of their ministries. This applies especially to the guardian angels, whose work for us is often impeded and increased by our failing to do to them in such work as we would be done by, if our and their places were reversed.

40. The second part of the golden rule applies to us in our relation also to the animal creation; and we are to do to them what we would have done to us, if we were in their place and they in ours. Hence we would be merciful and kind to them, as we would have mercy and kindness manifested to us, if the places were reversed. And the animals in our service would respond to such mercy and kindness, by becoming tame and gentle toward us, as many know from their dealings with dogs, horses, cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, etc.

41. The sphere of the application of the golden rule is the realms of spirit, men, reptile, fish, fowl and beast. Hence with all of these, especially with the first and second of these spheres, we have to do along the lines of justice. This includes God and Christ in all Their relations to us and ours to Them,—in creation, providence, redemption, enlightenment, justification, sanctification and deliverance—we are to see that we fulfill the first part of the golden rule. Toward the angels it is limited to the sphere of their providential care of us, and that only as indicated above. With our fellows it operates in all human relations, especially in the home, state, church, school, business, finance, labor, insurance and secular and religious society.

ENEMIES AND ABUSE OF JUSTICE

42. It has some of the same enemies who seek to thwart, hinder, pervert and misrepresent it, as wisdom, power and love have, i.e., sin and error, as these are manipulated by the devil, the world and the flesh. It is intended to regulate along the lines of justice our relations to God, Yeshua, angels, men and our and others' animals. Justice is abused by sins of commission and by sins of omission. Then it is also often abused by a too strict enforcement of its letter to the violation of its spirit, e.g., when one insists on "his pound of flesh," to the utter disregard of mercy, which is also a demand of justice as to our dealings with our fellows amid the evil conditions of the curse (Mic. 6:8).

43. The consecrated sometimes fall into an abuse through an unbalanced zeal to sacrifice in

disregard to the rights of others, e.g., the husband or father who neglects his duty toward wife and children that he may study and serve the truth more, the wife or mother who neglects her duty toward husband and children that she may study and serve the Truth more, the children who neglect their duty toward parents that they may study and serve the Truth more, the employee who neglects his duty toward his employer that he may study and spread the Truth more, and the citizen who neglects his duty toward the state, e.g., by giving so liberally to the spread of the Truth that he cannot pay his taxes and becomes a public charge. Such are sacrificing others' rights, hence are acting unjustly, bringing robbery for a burnt offering, and that greatly to the Divine displeasure (Is. 61:8). Let us beware of all such abuses as highly detrimental.

REASONABLENESS OF JUSTICE

44. We ought to say a few words on the reasonableness of our cultivating and practicing justice. Certainly, the first part of justice, loving God and Christ with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, is reasonable; for They, God as Source, Yeshua as Agent, have given us all of good that we are and have, and that we hope to be and have. This we must recognize when we properly consider Their creative, providential, redemptive, instructional, justifying, sanctifying and delivering benefits to us. These acts obligate us to Them for all that we are and have, and that we hope to be and have; hence it is perfectly proper for Them to demand, as of Their right, and for us to yield as our, obligation, love with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, together with the accordant volitions, thoughts, words and acts. This vindicates the propriety of the first part of justice as a reasonable thing for God to demand and for us to give.

45. There are several things that prove the reasonableness of the second part of justice, loving the neighbor as self. First of all, the fact that from us God, our all-out Benefactor and Ruler, requires it, to whom we owe it to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, together with accordant volitions, thoughts, words and acts, makes it a reasonable thing that for His sake we love our neighbor as ourselves.

46. As compelling as this ground for reasonableness for loving the neighbor as ourselves is, God gives us an additional reason for it, i.e., the only way we can secure respect for, and concession of our inalienable rights from our fellows is that we respect and concede to them their inalienable rights; for the situation is this: We come continually into contact with others whose exercise of their inalienable rights constantly more or less clash with our exercise of our inalienable rights, and ours with theirs. Such clashing cannot be permitted, else we would be in constant and interminable strife. Hence the only way that each can have the peaceable, satisfactory and reasonable exercise

of his inalienable rights is to respect and concede to others the same exercise of theirs. And this can be attained only as each loves the other as self, and hence exercises toward others the same volitions, thoughts, words and acts as he desires to be exercised toward himself, if he were in their, and they were in his place.

47. Accordingly, we see from this second reason for practicing the second part of the golden rule that it is not an arbitrary rule imposed upon man-kind in the exercise of an arbitrary sovereignty on God's part, but it is based on the nature of the conditions that prevail among humans. Hence it is a most reasonable rule of conduct as to justice manward. And if this rule were kept, it would at once put an end to the strife, unsatisfactory, sad and wrong conduct of man to man, and at once lead to most peaceable, satisfactory, happy and just conduct of man to man.

CULTIVATION OF JUSTICE

48. Justice, like wisdom, power and love, is a grace that we should cultivate. The best way to cultivate it Godward, Christward and othersward is by a devout and imitative contemplation of their exercise of justice, insofar as their doing justice is concerned. There is a use of justice on God's part as Source and on Yeshua's part as Agent that we are not to imitate, i.e., exacting vengeance. It is right for These to exact justice in punishing wrong, because God is the supreme Lawgiver and also the supreme Judge of the Divine law; and He must, therefore, enforce its penalties; and Yeshua is His Agent therein. Hence it is right for Them to demand justice and punish violations of it.

49. But the Scriptures, while justifying Them in executing justice in ways of punishment, expressly deny us such a prerogative (Rom. 12:17, 19-21). The Little Flock in glory, after uniting with Yeshua act as God's Agents in exacting the penalties of justice; but while in the flesh they also were to abstain therefrom. Hence in doing justice we are to imitate Them in doing it, but not in exacting it in the way of punishing those who wrong us. The above is not to be understood as condemning parents in the family and rulers in the state for exacting punishment, the former as to their children, the latter as to their subjects, for wrong-doing; for these in their respective spheres are God's agents therein (Rom. 13:4; Prov. 13:24; 23:13, 14).

50. Another good way of developing justice Godward and Christward is to meditate gratefully on Their great kindness to us in creation, providence, redemption, instruction, justification, sanctification and deliverance, and to submit to the influence of such meditation. This will gradually fill unto completion heart, mind, soul and strength with love to Them and with accordant volitions, thoughts, words and acts.

51. The first method given in this paragraph, by devout contemplation and imitation of God's and Christ's dealing justly with Their subjects, will give us

the power to love our neighbor. A consideration that it is Their will that we so do, if we love Them with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, will certainly assist us to love the neighbour as ourselves. Then, too, a consideration of, and a subjecting ourselves to the fact that they have the same inalienable rights as we, and desire these to be respected and given to them, as we wish ours respected and yielded, will help us to love them as ourselves.

REPRESSION AND SUPPRESSION OF JUSTICE

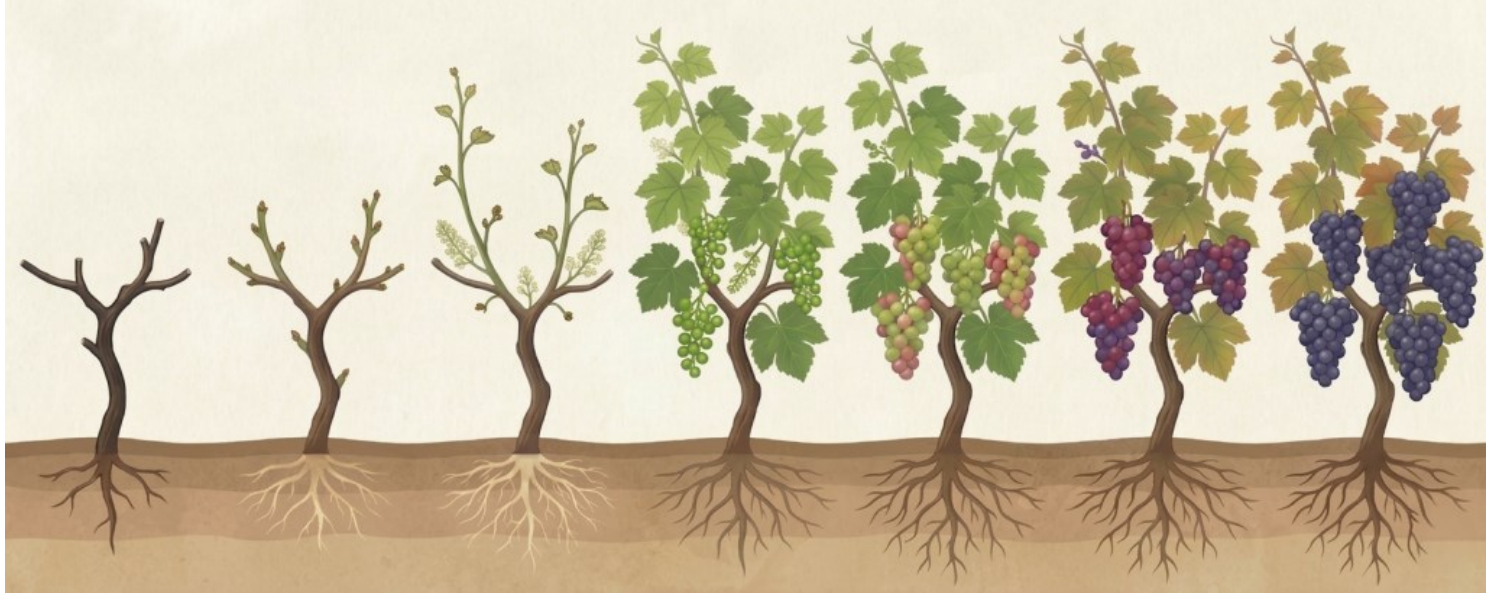
52. Justice Godward, Christward and manward can be and has been repressed and suppressed. The great repressors of justice are sins of weakness and ignorance and sins of measurable weakness, ignorance and willfulness; for such sins run in the opposite direction from justice and the more they are given way to the more do they repress justice, since they, whether of omission or commission, undermine conscientiousness and love for God and Christ, regardless of whether they are committed directly against them or indirectly against them by being committed against the neighbor. Committed against the neighbor they, whether of omission or commission, undermine conscientiousness and love for the neighbor. Even little sins have this repressive effect on justice. Error of the less gross kind likewise has the effect of dulling the sharp edge of the conscientiousness and goodwill of justice toward God and man.

53. But justice additionally can be suppressed entirely. This is effected by fully willful sin and by gross error, especially in the form of no-ransomism and no-Church-sin-offeringism. These constitute the sin unto death (Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-29; 1 John 5:16). Let us watch and pray against the beginning of small sins and overcome them. Then we will be shielded against suppressing and repressing justice.

GROWTH OF BRANCHES OF THE VINE
PT May-June 1989, p.37-39

[One of the speakers at the Asheville Convention was Bro. Paul S.L. Johnson. We are pleased to publish his discourse delivered at this convention, as it appeared in the 1913 Souvenir Notes (Convention Reports), pages 285-286.]

1. THIS DISCOURSE deals more particularly with the "Growth of the Branches", and treats the subject under three general headings: (1) Conditions of Growth, (2) Nature of Growth, (3) Results of Growth. Each of these can be treated under various subheads, as follows:



CONDITIONS OF GROWTH -

- (1) Climate, rain, sunshine,
- (2) Remaining in the Vine,
- (3) Imbibing the sap,
- (4) Retaining the sap,
- (5) Dead branches broken off,
- (6) Suckers cut off,
- (7) Proper pruning.

NATURE OF GROWTH -

- (1) Branches,
- (2) Leaves,
- (3) Blossoms,
- (4) Fruit.

RESULTS OF GROWTH -

- (1) Glory to God,
- (2) Glory to Christ,
- (3) Blessing to the world.

CONDITIONS OF GROWTH

- (1) Climate, rain, sunshine

2. As the natural vine with its branches cannot grow without rain, so we, the members of the true Vine, must have the rain of God's Holy Spirit. Then in the growth of the natural branches, there is the succession of day and night, so that the branches might unfold and be energized. Thus we, too, need the daylight of God's love, also the night of tribulation. After the heat of the day, which almost withers the branches, God sends His dew at night which refreshes them; so the Lord allows the heat of temptation to nearly wither the branches of the True Vine, and then He gives us the dew of His providence, so that we are refreshed and ready for another experience on the following day. So we find there are a number of climatic conditions.

- (2) Remaining in the Vine

3. None can grow, either in nature or spiritually, if the branches do not remain in the vine; we

must abide in Him. This means that our wills must be dead and His will must be active in us; His spirit should guide our thoughts. We abide in Him as our Justifier, to cover all our imperfections. We are imperfect, so God provided for us our Redeemer. The central thought of abiding in Him is that our wills are dead; we do not take our will, nor the will of the world, but the Lord's will. While we remain in Him, He is our justification, wisdom, sanctification and deliverance. Otherwise we cannot grow the fruit of Christ.

- (3) Imbibing the sap

4. The third condition is that we imbibe the sap; because, in the sap are certain elements derived from the earth that replace depleted elements and go toward producing further growth. Therefore the sap must remain in and flow up through the branches. So with us, we understand the sap to be the Word and Spirit of the Lord which we receive through Christ. At different seasons of the year the natural vine receives different elements from the earth, so far as the degrees of thickness of the sap is concerned. So in our own cases, in the early part of our Christian experiences He gives us that which is like water, and later He gives us stronger sap, and finally the richest kind of sap. He therefore expects us to have increased development, and without the Word of God it is not possible for us to grow. We are also kept healthy by it, and we must imbibe the sap frequently and as largely as possible with humble hearts. We draw from it the strong elements which go to make up the precious qualities of the Spirit which the Lord wants us to have.

- (4) Retaining the sap
Retaining The Spirit And The Word

5. The fourth condition is retaining the sap. It would be impossible for us to grow, no matter how much sap we imbibed, if we did not retain it. Sometimes boys will make a small hole in the vine just at the point where the branch connects, so that they can

get the sap from the vine—but this destroys the connection and the branch withers and may die. So with us, sometimes others try to destroy our connection with the True Vine by making holes, as the boys do with the natural branches. With some it is worldly matters, family cares, business, etc.; in one way or another the great adversary tries to bore holes and destroy our connection to keep us from receiving and retaining the sap. See to it, brethren, that these holes be not allowed.

6. We have a part to do with this that the picture does not suggest in connection with the natural branches. The Vine-dresser, as we co-operate with Him, will see that those holes are plugged up. Let us see to it that we do not allow anything to come into our lives that will permit the Word of the Lord or His Spirit to be taken from us. Sometimes it is a parent, or a relative, or a friend. If we see that our contact with others prevents our receiving and maintaining the Word and Spirit of the Lord, let us see to it that such contact is at once stopped, so that we may grow.

7. Like the natural branches, every now and then effete matter is gathered by the branches and thrown out and becomes bark. If it is allowed to remain in the branches, the branches would die, but the sap must remain in the branch and throw off this effete matter and form bark for its protection. So we, as members of the True Vine, must retain the sap—the Spirit and Word of God—in order that we may grow. We have a great deal of effete matter in us in one form or another: pride, vain-glory, vanity, carelessness, laziness, self-will, the contentious spirit, the destructive spirit, selfishness, lack of self-control, etc. These must all be driven out. It takes the Word and Spirit of the Lord to drive out the evil, and the best way is to place the good in the place of the evil. Then this becomes a sort of bark which is a protection to us against evil conditions by reminding us of their presence, and thereby securing us against further inroads. If we have thrown them off and they are on the surface, they keep us awake to the situation.

8. We also need the sap for the building up into God. Whoever keeps the Word of God in his heart and mind will be enriched and he will become like the Lord. Just as electricity enriches the wire, so that under different conditions it produces heat, light and motion, so God's Word is heavenly electricity and will produce great power in us if we will but let it. We retain the sap by yielding our hearts and minds to the Lord.

(5) Dead branches broken off

9. The fifth condition: dead branches must be cut off. Why? Because as with the dead branches, if the sap was put into the dead branches it would come in contact with poisons in the dead branches, which would then be carried to the good branches, causing death in them. So it is necessary to cut off the symbolic dead branches of the True Vine. These represent those who

have ceased to be vitally connected with the Lord; they have ceased to love the Lord, and cannot further develop the elements of growth, but spread death wherever they go.

10. Our good Husbandman sees to it that these dead branches are all removed. Quite a number of dead branches were cut off a few years ago, some of whom were very near to our hearts. Yes, we knew that it was good for us and for the dead branches, and it was good for the fruitage, and so we willingly submitted to it. Let us see to it that we are not contaminated by any of the sap that has gotten to a dead branch. Our contact with them will be bad for us and will only make them unhappy. It is better that the separation be clean cut. If we remain in contact with them, death elements may come to us so that we cannot develop. They themselves do not bring forth fruit, but prevent the other branches from developing the kind of fruit that would be pleasing to the Heavenly Father. If they were to mingle with us, it would only be an occasion for strife of words and questions that would be unprofitable.

(6) Suckers cut off

11. The sixth condition is that the suckers must be cut off. These suckers are new branches which have started at undesired locations; they similarly imbibe sap, but produce no fruit, yet draw nutrients from the other branches and injure their fruit; therefore the Lord sees to it that they are taken away. They come to the conclusion that they are not fairly treated by the classes; they think that their ideas are something that the rest of the class have not enough intelligence to understand.

(7) Proper pruning

12. This is done on the branches late in the winter or early in the spring. The vine-dresser cuts off the imperfect branches, and then when the last bunch of grapes has appeared at a certain distance on the branch, he cuts off the rest of the branch, to concentrate the sap to the feeding of the fruit. This is what the Heavenly Father does with us.

13. We all have tendencies to go in various directions, and the Father knows that we need curbing, so the pruner goes about with His sharp knife and cuts off some here and some there, first severing us from Babylon and the world in general. This would be likened to the first pruning early in the season. Later on, after the grapes appear, the Heavenly Father sees to it that whatever is not necessary for further fruitage is cut away. We should all desire to get the pruning we need, and as long as we remain in the Vine we will get all that we need, because the Vine-dresser is interested in us. We are not to have too many pokers in the fire, for if our energies go out in several directions, we will not be able to bring forth the right kind of fruitage. We may all feel pretty small after the Vine-dresser gets through

wine for the refreshment of the whole world.

19. In closing, I wish to impress the central thought of the lesson, "Abide in Me," so that we will be His servants in the kingdom.

NATURE OF GROWTH

14.(1) First the branches. We are to grow in knowledge, as Peter says, we are not to be all heart. God wants His people to have knowledge and He wants that knowledge to expand, taking in not only the surface things, but also the deep things.

15.(2) Then the leaves. These have a peculiar development. First they are all shriveled up into a little bundle, then they gradually unfold and an experienced vine-dresser knows what kind of a vine it is. The leaves represent the profession of our faith; at first when we begin to tell forth the Truth, it does not take long to do it. Later on, as we unfold like the leaves, others can tell from our profession what kind of people we are.

16.(3) Next come the blossoms. They are not very beautiful or fragrant at first, but to the vine-dresser they are very beautiful, because they contain that for which he is willing to labor hard for months. Many people look at the graces in us as though they were using an inverted telescope, and they look so small that they are not very pleasing. Our Heavenly Father looks at them through His magnifying glass and He is well pleased.

17.(4) The fruit then comes. The blossoms begin to fade away, but a little something remains in the center. The rains and the sun and the dew come upon it and late in the fall we find the luscious grape, which represents in us the fruit in which the Father is glorified (John 15:8). The roundness of the grape represents the well-roundedness of character, and the lusciousness of the grape represents the fullness of the perfection of this fruit of the Spirit. We are privileged to bring forth the richest kind of fruit. God has been exceeding good to us and we cannot praise or serve Him enough.

RESULTS OF GROWTH

18. In the first place it reflects great credit to the Vine-dresser if we bring forth fruit; He sustains His reputation. We want God to be pleased, to be magnified, that He might have glory. The branch of itself has no value except as it brings forth fruit, and the fruit enhances the value of the Vine. Thus we are glad to bring honor and glory to our Lord and Savior Yeshua Christ. Lastly, we will be a blessing to others. In the next age God's Kingdom will become the blessing, the

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A DAY OF SALVATION

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What is meant by the expression, “a day of salvation,” in Isa. 49:8: “Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages”?

1. There are two great days of salvation—one for the Church, the other for the world. Thus St. John (1 John 2:2) says that Jesus “is the propitiation for our [the Church’s] sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” God has appointed a Thousand-year Judgment Day, “in the which he will judge the world in righteousness” by Jesus Christ (Acts 17:31; 2 Pet. 3:7, 8; Rev. 20:4, 6), during which Satan will be bound “that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled” (Rev. 20:3). Then “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9), and eventually “they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer. 31:34).

2. But Isa. 49:8 refers to a prior day of judgment—the Gospel Age, in the beginning of which St. Peter explained (1 Pet. 4:17): “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.” St. Paul quotes Isa. 49:8 in part in 2 Cor. 6:2 and in vs. 1, 2 shows that it applies to the day of the Church’s trial for life, its judgment day. Since the King James Version mistakenly injects the definite article the in several places in St. Paul’s quotation, we will give here the more correct translation as given in the Emphatic Diaglott (see also Rotherham): “For he says, ‘In a Season acceptable, I listened to thee, and in a Day of Salvation I assisted thee.’ Behold! now is a well-accepted Season; behold! now is a Day of Salvation”—How important to all of God’s people, then, is the exhortation of Heb. 4:7, which applies to the entire Gospel Age: “Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts”! (See also Heb. 3:13.) The Gospel Age is the greater of the two days of salvation, for it offered the heavenly salvation, the “great salvation” (Heb. 2:3), whereas the Millennial Age offers restitution, the earthly salvation for the world of mankind (Acts 3:19-23; Num. 14:21; Prov. 2:21).

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