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LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, MARCH 5, 1897.

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Studies in the Book of Hebrews – No.13 (Cont'd) & 14 & 15

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SESSION

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Studies in the Book of Hebrews.—No. 13.

E. J. WAGGONER.

(Continued from page 254.)

man's life the term righteous or unrighteous may be applied; then if a man would be righteous, to how many acts of his life must faith come in as the source?—All of them. Righteousness by faith, then, does not mean that it is something that we will have at some point of our life, the goody goody part, but when we come to business, we want something better.

Faith is not something to be put to one side and sneered at; faith is not imagination; faith is not fancy; faith is not sentimentalism; faith is not guess work; faith is an eternal fact. Therefore if a man be in business, and he would be a righteous man in business, that business, being an act, must be done by faith. Righteousness by faith therefore means, the life of Christ coming in to direct everything that man does, and especially in the cause of God, because as a matter of fact, if we are Christians we do not do anything that is not in the cause of God. As Christians we do not have two parts to our lives; it is all Christian, and if we say we have given ourselves to the cause of God, then we have no business to be in the cause of God a part of the time, and then a little part of the time do something else. Therefore as we are altogether in the cause, in the work, I say righteousness by faith means nothing less than that by faith everything that is done shall be done. It means that the Lord shall

act. It means that we shall trust the Lord so that we shall understand; because, "by faith we understand."

The word of God is true. Man is nothing. When God speaks, we are to take his word. It does not make any difference how it comes, when or by whom it comes, we are to say, That is true. Brethren, God has placed authority in the church. That authority is his word illumed by his Holy Spirit. That is the authority. That is the only authority there is. Christ is the leader of the church. "Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader, and a commander to the people." He is the leader; we will follow him. His word is authority, and it alone is authority. When we take the word of God, it does not make any difference if some man in higher position says, "It does not mean that," or, "We cannot apply it; it would do all right in an ideal state, but God must take us where we are, and it cannot be applied here. It cannot be applied there."

With all respect to that man, I do not believe a word of it. I know that the word of God is not visionary, and fanciful, simply dissolving into blue clouds and then into nothing, but God's word is for us to live upon. Brethren, there is that in that word, in the light which God gives to us,—there is that in that word, which will direct us in every thing which we have to do in this world, no matter in what capacity we act. There is instruction in this word for everything that we should do. Numbers who do not believe the truth do not have one iota of effect upon the truth. If ten thousand men do not believe the truth, that does not make it any less the truth. If somebody else cannot see it, that does not make it any the less true that I can see it.

And so God's blessing is upon us, and God is among us; and things that we ought to have known, every one of us, years ago, and have not known, and have deprived ourselves of, and in consequence have been weak, because of our not

taking God by his Holy Spirit,—if we only get the key, if we only get the root, if we only get the thing for all that it is worth, we will have eternity for here and everywhere. Dependence upon God is everything. Righteousness by faith is the key that will unlock all these things. So God in his infinite mercy will teach us in a little while,—O, how good he is!—that which we have been holding off for years; he will teach us, and we may go forth from this meeting with the power of God to proclaim the truth to the world. So, brethren, let us put our trust in him.

Living by Faith.

E. J. HIBBARD.

(Friday Evening, Feb. 26, 1897.)

As the basis of our study this evening, I have selected this scripture:—

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight :) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. 2 Cor. 5:6-8.

To my mind the key to the situation is found in the seventh verse: "For we walk by faith, not by sight." We know that "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord," and we know it because "we walk by faith, not by sight." The man who walks by sight trusts in himself, and not in the Lord. He trusts in his surroundings, and not in eternal things. Faith, being "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," the man who walks by faith, walks where his faith is, and not where his sight is. His body being where his sight is, and the man walking where his faith is, he must, therefore, be walking in the place where his body is not; and therefore he must "be absent from the body," in order to walk by faith.

In chapter 4 we read: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts." The fourth verse: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Now in the first chapter of John, the fourth verse, it says: "In him was life: and the life was the light of men." Therefore the light of the gospel is the life of Jesus Christ, so

that the gospel which shines into men shines the light of life into them; the light of the life of Jesus Christ. The life of Christ is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of God; and the "Spirit is life, because of righteousness;" so the gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth; for there is the righteousness, there is the life, there is the light of God. But God cannot shine into the hearts of all men, because the god of this world has blinded the minds of a certain class, for fear that the light should shine upon them. Upon what class?—He has blinded the eyes of them that believe not. Therefore the gospel cannot shine, except in the hearts of them that believe.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we were perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

The life of Jesus, therefore, entering into the bodies of men, carries on the work of death to the flesh, the members of the body which are described in Colossians, the third chapter, where Paul says:—

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Verse 5.

For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

What is the outward man? What is the inward man?

Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

The outward man, therefore, seems to be self, the body, and the inward man to be Christ.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Our light afflictions, our trials, our persecu-

THE RELIGIOUS INTERESTS OF THE SCHOOL.

The spiritual condition of the school in many respects is encouraging. The week of prayer was a most excellent time for us. A good work, and we trust a lasting one, was begun at that time. About a dozen of our students shortly after this were baptized. Among the faculty and helpers there has been a good religious and hopeful state during the year thus far. All have felt encouraged to take hold and press forward in the work. There is always much more for us than we have ever received, and eternal vigilance is the price of maintaining even what we have. We trust for a still greater measure of the blessing of God in the future.

Studies in the Book of Hebrews.—No. 14.

E. J. WAGGONER.

(Thursday Afternoon, Feb. 25, 1897.)

JUDGING from some of the testimonies I have heard, we are just now where we can begin to study some of the things which we have been passing over. It would, of course, be very pleasant to me if we could pass along, and in the period of time that is allotted to us, go quite through, or nearly through, the book of Hebrews. But it would not be profitable simply for the sake of going over so much ground, if that were all. It would be a grand thing if we were in the condition to take hold and appropriate the matter as we go along. But what we are here for in this Conference is practical results; not for a show at study, but to get something that will be of practical benefit that we can take away with us. Now, you cannot take anything away with you that you do not take inside of you. You cannot take it in your pocket or anywhere outside, but in you. Because the Word of God is life. Who would undertake to go outdoors and gather up a quantity of sunshine so that we could have it in our rooms to-night? But you might just as well think of doing that, as to think of carrying the light of God to people in any other way than in you.

The text we had yesterday was: "I will put my trust in him." Have we learned that lesson yet? I will put my trust in whom?—In God. These are the words of Christ. He says, "I will put my trust in him." In God and in whom else?

(A voice) In Christ.

Yes, but that is the same thing. But the way it usually goes is, I will put my trust in God and—

(Voices) Self.

In God and somebody else, and usually more in man than in God, because we cannot see the Lord. Do you know that heathenism is the most easy and natural thing in the world, and we are not so far from the heathen. People want to trust in something they can see, and they cannot see the Lord, so they do not know about trusting him. They want to trust in something that they can see; so you hear people talking as though it were the height, the extreme height of trust in the Lord, when we cannot see what he is doing. What wonderful trust! Somebody wants to borrow some money of me, and I let him have it. I trust him with it, but I keep watch of him. He goes down the walk, I follow him. What are you doing?—I am trusting that man. He turns a corner; I follow him. What are you doing?—I am trusting him. He goes into a house; I go as far as I can, and watch the door. What are you doing?—I am trusting that man where I can't see him. That is no trust; it is distrust and suspicion. It is an insult to him; but no one thinks of treating a man in such a way. It is only God whom they feel free to insult, because they cannot see the Lord, and he does not resent their treatment as men would.

I say we have a good deal to learn in that text, "I will put my trust in him." What are the grounds of our putting our trust in the Lord? If you are going to trust your money to any man, you inquire something about his financial standing. You wish to know in regard to his honesty. You must have some grounds for trusting him. Now what ground have we for putting our trust in the Lord?—He is strong, he is wise, he is stronger than we are, and he knows more than we do. He is almighty and all wise. How many believe that the Lord knows more than they do? We tell the Lord that we cannot do anything without him, and then go right on doing things without him. We have taken as an article of our creed, that without the Lord we cannot do anything. We all profess to believe that without the Lord we cannot do anything, and then we go right along and begin figuring and planning without taking the Lord into the account at all. Now, how much sense is there in that?

We have a lesson of trust in the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah. To show who it is that is speaking, so we will have no difficulty on that question, read the sixth verse: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and speaking." Who is speaking?—It is Christ. Now come back to the fourth verse and onward:—

The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.

That tenth verse tells when to trust, and it is the only time when we can trust in the Lord. It is when we cannot see; and how much of the Lord's way, how much of the Lord can we see any time?—Nothing. Clouds and darkness are round about him, but here we have the Lord, and we are to trust in him. The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak the right thing at the right time: "The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." Notice the simple statement in Psalm 40:6-9:—

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest.

Now turn to the book of Luke. The second chapter tells of the birth of Christ, the presentation in the temple, the return to Nazareth, of course after they had been in Egypt. "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom." Or, literally, "becoming filled with

wisdom." The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, becoming filled with wisdom. Now in the remaining part of the chapter we have that wonderful story of the trip to Jerusalem, and of Jesus talking with the doctors in the temple. We see in the pictures always, "Jesus disputing with the doctors," which shows that people who make pictures do not always know the Bible, because we have no record of his disputing, and it would have been most unseemly in a boy of twelve. He was there to improve every opportunity he could to learn something; but, although he was not there as a teacher, yet he could teach the doctors something, and he did that in the questions he asked, and in his answers. Do you suppose, can you suppose, that in the attitude of Jesus there in the temple, when twelve years of age, there was anything out of place, out of keeping with the proper conduct of a child twelve years old to those who were aged? anything immodest, or forward, or assuming, or bold in his character?—No. Just as a little boy he wandered in where the law was being taught, because his tastes led that way. They wondered at the answers he gave them, so clear, so deep, and they wondered that the questions he asked them opened up things even to their minds. But yet there was nothing that was not perfectly in keeping with the actions of a proper child, twelve years old.

W. W. Prescott.—I was very much interested in a statement I recently saw in the "Life of Christ," which is soon to appear; it is that those doctors thought, "What a young man that would be, if we could only instruct him right." What a man we could make of him.

Now the last verse: Jesus increased in wisdom and age, or maturity, and in favor with God and man. Think a little about the wisdom of Jesus. We do not half appreciate it. You remember that he had to meet those same doctors, if not, others fully as wise, all his life. He was forced to meet them, because they put themselves on his track; they were the scribes, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the educated class of the Jews. The Jews as a people were not ignorant. The Jewish people of that day were permeated with Greek literature and philosophy, and all the wisdom of the Greeks. Greek was commonly used among them. Those doctors were the most polished and cultured of the people; they spent their lives in sharpening their wits by considering hard problems and perplexing questions.

These men set themselves to work to entrap this young man who was bold enough to go around teaching the people, without having gone through their curriculum. How many times did they do it? How many times did they catch him?—Not once. They asked him a good many hard questions, and they thought they had cornered him; but did they do it? You and I would give a good deal to be able to act as wisely as Jesus did. Every time he knew the right thing to say, and the right thing to do, and when not to say anything. Was there a person in the world who was as keen of intellect, who knew just how to meet every emergency as did Jesus? You know he was wiser than Solomon. How did he get that wisdom?—It was by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God made him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. But at what time in his life did this wonderful wisdom come to him? Was it as a revelation in a vision that it came to him?—No; the child grew and increased in wisdom. Was there any wisdom in Jesus—who never made a mistake, to whom the most abstruse questions were referred,—was there any wisdom in Jesus that might not be in other people?—No; for he himself is made unto us wisdom. He was always ready. When the time came that called for wisdom, the wisdom was there. Now, how did he get that wisdom, how did it come to him?

(A voice) It was intuition.

Then he was not like us at all. We read that "it behooved him to be made in all things like unto his brethren;" that is, in every particular. We do not want to put the Lord off away from us, but he is one of us. "I have exalted one chosen out of the people." "Behold, I will raise up one from among the brethren." He was one of the people, one of the common people, just an ordinary laboring man. How did he come by his wisdom? Here is the statement given in the thirteenth verse that answers the question, "I will put my trust in him." Now what did he study that gave him this wonderful insight into men, their character, and his knowledge of men's needs, and which enabled him to know how not simply to answer questions, but how to teach the people?—He studied God's Word. "I delight to do thy law, O my God." "Yea, thy law is within my heart." There you have it. He was wholly given to the Lord, knowing that there is no other use for man in this world but to serve the Lord. That is the business of life—to please the Lord.

Hearken as we read in the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah:—

The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

Then he kept learning something day by day. He increased, he studied the Word, and submitted to the Spirit; that was all. Turn to Prov. 1:23: "Turn ye at my reproof." I am thankful to God for the indication of the willingness of this delegation, of this body of delegates, to comply with these words.

(Audience) Amen.

That is good. But, brethren, I am wonderfully afraid that you are not going much further than that. This is only the first part. "Turn ye." I have wondered to-day how much more we know to-day, how much more wisdom we have, than day before yesterday. What did we get yesterday?

(A voice) Something of the Lord's will.

(Another voice) Reproof.

Yes, we received many statements as to what mistakes have been made, and wrong courses that have been taken. That was the principal thing. It was seen that in many things we had been wholly wrong. Now, does a man's acknowledgment that he has made a mistake give him wisdom, so that he will not make a mistake again?—No. That is where we are now. Day before yesterday, night before last, all the committees felt that they had come to a place where they did not know what to do; where they said, "We cannot go on any further." Yesterday we had the Testimonies read that told us about the wrong, in this or in that part of the cause, wrong upon this or that line of working; and we said, "That is so, Lord; that is good." The Lord showed that he responded to that. Now what? We have had the experience, and now we are ready to go on, because we know all about it. The Testimony has told us about it; it has said we have done wrong, and we have acknowledged it, and now we can go on—go on and do what?—The same things over again; that is all. Although you have acknowledged your wrong, what warrant have any of you that you will not do the same thing again? Who in the first place went wrong intentionally?—Nobody intended to do so. Everybody thought he was doing the right thing. If you had known that you were going wrong, would you have done

it?—Certainly not. You have all been honest and sincere, and wanted to do the work of the Lord in the best manner possible. And you do not want to do right now, perhaps, any more than you wanted to do right then. You are just as anxious to do right now as then, and you were just as anxious then as now. But now it is pointed out to you; you made mistakes and went wrong; and you say, "Yes." Now we acknowledge the mistakes, and go ahead, and do what?—Go ahead and make another record of mistakes, and come up again where we will have testimonies, and we will have to say again, "The thing is all wrong," and then go over it all again. What shall we do?

(A voice) Seek God for wisdom.

Well, now, we will say, "We won't do that any more. We see now that we have been following the wrong plan. There are some defects in our organization. We have not managed it all right. That has brought these things about. Now we will divide up a little differently, we will reapportion out districts, so as to avoid putting so much responsibility upon a few men. We will put the responsibility on more men, so we won't do that as before." Now, brethren, I must fear that we are deliberately planning, without intention, of course, to go ahead and make not the same mistakes as before, in the same way, but to make some worse ones in a different way. What warrant have you that you won't do that?

(A voice) Trust in the Lord, and expect that he will guide us.

That is very good, but how often we deceive ourselves. We think we are trusting in the Lord when we bow down and pray to the Lord before our committee meetings, and then get up and try to scheme and guess, to cut and try, and figure; and do not know. The Lord did not do that way. The Lord knew what he was doing. How did he know? He did not make these mistakes; and the Lord has given us these reproofs for a purpose, in order that we may not make any more mistakes. Notice: "Turn ye at my reproof." He has called attention, and everybody has turned. He said, "Halt," and we stopped. That is good. We turned to hear what he had to say. Now what is the next?—"I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." That is the next thing. To accept this which has been given, to receive the reproof of the Lord, to accept it—that is a great deal. But what warrant has any

man, after having accepted that reproof, that he won't go ahead and make the same mistakes in some other way?—No warrant whatever; not in the least.

Question.—Will not God guide us?

Answer.—If we let him; but we won't let him.

Question.—Is not the promise based upon the fact that we turn at his reproof?

Answer.—Yes, but we must allow him to fulfill that promise in us. "I will pour out my Spirit unto you." Have we had that result?—No; we haven't had that yet. We get in such a hurry that we run ahead of the Lord. We play the part of Job's servant. Where is your message?—"O, I haven't any, but let me run." And so we run, and run, in vain. Now the Lord studied the Word, and from the Word of God, Jesus got all the wisdom he ever had. How much more do you and I desire to know than he knew? In what lines was he deficient that we want to perfect ourselves in? In what lines was he deficient that we want to be proficient in? He had at least seventy men under him whose work he had to direct; so he knew something about running a conference. He had more preachers under him than any presidents of conferences that you know of. So he could give instruction in that line. Where did he get it from?—"O, he looked up the Jewish records, and saw how they did the work, and then modeled his plans upon that;"—did he? "He took the Methodist Discipline, and looked at the mission boards of other denominations, and saw how they worked, and then modeled his plans after that." Where did he get his wisdom?—Out of the Word of the Lord, didn't he? from God's Word, and that alone with the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

He was not rebellious, did not turn back; but when the Word came, he did not pick it to pieces to subject it to the trial of his own intellect, but he took it in, and let that enlarge his intellect. That is the way we want to take the Word—instead of subjecting the Word, God's Word, and his Spirit and teaching, to our intellect and reason, we must take it in. What good does it do us then? It will enlarge our capacity and comprehension.

Now somebody will say, "What is your plan of work? What changes shall be made in our organization?—I do not know anything about that. But here is something I do know: *I know where wisdom*

is to be obtained. And now, whatever we may say about school work, or anything of that kind (it all comes to the same thing),—whatever we say about any other kind of work, certainly if we find any wisdom whatever in the Word, it ought to be upon how to carry on the work of the Lord. If you cannot find out how to carry on the work of the Lord, in the Bible, what can you expect to find?

Do n't you suppose we can find in the Bible all we need for carrying on the work of the Lord on earth? But that is about the last place one thinks of looking, isn't it? You say, "I do n't see anything in here about electing a president of a Conference. The Lord leaves that to human agents. The Lord has not gone into details; he has left man to carry out details." The attention of the Lord is not so occupied that he cannot give attention to details. That is one of the things we have been studying—the Lord in creation, in every single thing; the Lord personally caring for every part of his universe. Every detail in the universe has his personal supervision.

(A voice) Do you think that God bothers himself about all these things?

O, no; not a bit of it. God is so great that he can give attention to all these things, and not be bothered at all. That is God.

Now I will put my trust in him. The lesson to be learned, and the whole truth of the third angel's message, the gospel in a nutshell, is simply in this—that *God is everything, and man is nothing.*

As compared with God, we are vanity, nothing, and even less than nothing. Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie. Men of low degree are only vanity, but men of high degree are a lie because they profess to be something when they too are only vanity. Now, if man is nothing but ignorance, and God is everything, all wise, would it be wise to leave God out, and let man take care of the details? If God knows everything, and man does not know anything, it would be wisdom to let God give directions in everything. If he is all wisdom, what is to hinder him from going into details? If he knows it all, what is to hinder him from going to the whole length, and showing man how to do all the work?

But now I imagine that I hear some one remarking that this is discouraging. You are putting us right where we were before.

Well, it did not seem discouraging yesterday, did it? Was anything said yesterday to discourage any body?—No. The Lord does not utter a

discouraging word to a single soul. No, "he shall not fail, nor be discouraged until he have set judgment in the earth." Then what is the use of our being discouraged? He does not talk discouragement to anybody. "But he says some pretty hard things."

Yes; but it is not to discourage us. When the Lord sends reproof, who brings it?

(A voice) The Holy Spirit.

What is his name, who is he?

(A voice) Comforter.

Comforter; then the reproof is the very first step in comfort. When he comes, he will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness. Good! Let us take the whole thing. Let us take whatever the Spirit has to give to us. What does the Spirit give? "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." "O the depths and the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God."

The whole work is saving souls. I am not going to find any fault or criticise a single thing that exists in the work. I am content, perfectly content, that everything, every organization, be just as it is. There are certain things that we have set in operation, presumably for the purpose of assisting in the work of the Lord, in forwarding the message, in the work of saving souls. Now when we look back over what we have done, can we flatter ourselves very much with the progress we have made? Has it been a brilliant success? What we heard yesterday certainly will keep us from boasting very much. Now, having tried to work in our own way, would it not be fair to give at least a just trial to the Lord's way.

Here is a lily growing. That is the standard given for us. "Consider the lily." The lily starts out in the spring. It is going to make a considerable growth this year; but before it can think of growing at all, it will stop and lay plans for the summer's growth, and measure just exactly how much it is going to grow, and what it is going to be. It must devise and measure it all out; have a plan laid out. If it did that, it would never grow. What is the proper size and shape of a tree? How high must a tree be? how great must be its circumference? what its diameter? how high from the ground must the first branch put forth? how far apart must each branch be? how many branches must it have? and how many leaves must each branch bear? O, that depends upon the tree. And for that matter, you cannot

fix it, because it does not stop growing. It keeps growing as long as it lives. Now, the Lord says that his people shall be trees of righteousness, and Christ was one of the model trees. How was it with the model tree? He kept growing and increasing in stature, and learning something, not because that is the way somebody else had done, but because God was in him.

Brethren, we have got only a little glimmer of light. The light that God has for us would dazzle our eyes if he would give it to us now, because we have accustomed ourselves to so much darkness. By and by the light will shine from heaven in such a way that people who have not been used to the light, will run and hide in holes, and who here is going to do that? If we do not get our eyes opened pretty soon, so that we can take the light a little faster than we have been taking it, it may be that some of us who are here will hide in holes when the Lord shines forth.

Question.—Are we to understand that Christ's knowledge was acquired?

Most certainly it was. There was no other way. He was not born with wisdom. But we have in the first chapter of 1 Corinthians this statement: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Where can you find anything more foolish and helpless than a little baby? In the twenty-first Psalm we read that Christ was cast upon the Lord from his mother's womb. There God manifested what he could do. The one thing we want to learn is, "I will put my trust in him." Learn to trust the Lord, for the Lord knows more about anything than we know. Whatever we know about anything in the world, the Lord knows more about it than we do.

The one thing that rests upon my mind is, Are we going to become acquainted with the Lord, and get in touch with him, so that we can know when he speaks, and talk with him day by day, so that we shall know what to do and how to do it? and if we are not, what in the world is going to hinder us from making the mistakes we have been making all these years? It does not make any difference how sorry we are for a thing. That does no good unless we go farther. That is good of itself, the right kind of sorrow that works repentance. The thing for us now to say is, Lord, we accept the reproof. Pour out thy Spirit upon us. Give to us the enlightenment of thy Spirit. I was reading yesterday a statement that

it is for the people of God now to be gathering together, and seeking the Lord for the outpouring and the filling of his Holy Spirit. That is what we need for the work. And when we have the Holy Spirit's enlightenment, then we will know the Lord day by day. He will open our eyes. He will talk with us, and these things that are wrong will drop away. The work of the Lord is to build up. We do not have to set ourselves to tearing anything down, but just let the Lord fill us with the Spirit,—the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, which will make us of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. Then whatever we have that is right, will go right along with us; and whatever we have that is unnecessary and useless, will drop off. There is one thing, brethren, we want to do here, and that is to say, Lord we take these reproofs, and we are waiting to be filled with thy Holy Spirit; and then expect that we shall have his words made known unto us, and we will find that there is light. But then do not think that there is the place to stop. There is no stopping-place. People get a little light, and then the first thing they know they are troubled because they are expected to get some more light. They do not like to be troubled with getting accustomed to more light. They want a rule laid down, so that they will know just the thing that they are to say and teach. Well, the only rule is progression, eternal progression. The path is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And when that perfect day dawns our eyes will be so accustomed to seeing the light of the Lord, that we can see the full and unveiled glory of the Lord, and our eyes will not be dimmed.

Studies in the Book of Hebrews.—No. 15.

E. J. WAGGONER.

(Friday Afternoon, Feb. 26, 1897.)

WE may begin here as though we were leaving off at the close of the hour. If any one has any questions to ask, perhaps it would be better for them to be given now. So if there are any practical questions upon any of these points we have been considering—practical questions, not speculations—we should be glad to consider them.

Elder Lane.—I was asked yesterday if I thought you were teaching that although we lived very

near to God, and had much of his blessing, we would ever come to understand the minds and very motives as Christ did. This was a question which resulted from the statement you made that Christ had no more than we may have. It says in regard to him that he knew what was in man. So if we have enough faith, can we reach that same point?

Twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians. I do not know anything, I have no opinion whatever, except what I read; and all can know what is written just as well as I.

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

But to every one the Spirit is given to profit withal. Therefore when the people of God come to be the people of God indeed,—come to give up their own way, their own devices, their own schemes, for the Lord himself to be their wisdom, God himself to be in them by his Spirit, in his fullness,—then the gifts of the Spirit will be in the church because every living soul will have some gift of the Spirit. The Spirit divides to every man severally as he will. Discerning of spirits is one of these. I know of but one man in the world since the time of Christ, who had all the gifts of the Spirit at one time. That was the apostle Paul; he had the whole series, an apostle, a teacher, an evangelist, a prophet, a discerner of spirits, talking with tongues, interpretation of tongues, the gift of miracles, the gift of healing—all found in that one man. I never read of another man who had such an abundance of gifts. But God takes everybody, every individual, and gives to every one his work. He gives to every man according to his several ability, according to the work God designs he shall do. The fullness of the Spirit in him will make him competent for that work. God will give to every

soul just the gifts that are needed for every occasion.

We do not need to explain as to the operation of the Spirit. The essential thing for us is the acceptance of the Spirit. Then whatever the Spirit is pleased to work in us, we will give God the glory. But we will not choose. We have the statement, "As he is, so are we in this world." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." He has put into us that same word of reconciliation. "So then we are ambassadors for God, as though God did beseech you by us," in his stead. The same work, you see, the very same work is given to us, that was given to Christ: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." To fit him for his work, "in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead." So the inspired prayer of the disciple for us is,—

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

There is no difference; the same things are given to us, that were given to Jesus, for we are joint heirs with him. That is not lowering Christ. It is not depreciating Christ, but it is the Spirit endeavoring to give us a conception of the wonderful height to which God lifts man. The Spirit desires that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe. He wants us to see and know these things. Is there another question?

(A voice) How could Jesus trust in God when he was a very small child, if all the wisdom he had was acquired?

I cannot explain it; it is enough for me to know that he did. Of course the question hinges on that word *if*—*if* all the wisdom he has was acquired.

Elder Fifield.—It seems to me that some of the most perfect trust there is, is that of the child. The Bible says, Except ye be converted, and become as little children.

Of course children trust. But we get the idea that because children are small, and do not bother themselves about things as we do, they do not

trust, when they have a great deal more than we do. Men build up doubt by their vain reasonings and philosophies only to knock it down again; but the child is not so foolish as to build up a great pile of stuff that he has to knock down again.

But to return to that point, as to Jesus' acquiring knowledge. It is a vital one, just as any other. On that depends whether we are going to get all the benefit of Christ, or whether we are going to dig a ditch and make a separation. Now, if he was such a monstrosity that as a child he had enough knowledge to fit out a full-grown man, what likeness is there between him and us? What benefit can we get from his experience? What a big advantage he had over us then. Could I get any benefit from his experience in such a case?—No; it would simply be discouraging. But it says that he was tempted in all points like as we are. "It behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren." There is the benefit, the advantage.

Elder Jones suggests that the words in Ps. 22: 9, 10, make it plain. The Lord kept him as a child, as a youth, and as a man; and he will do the same thing for us, if we put our trust in him.

Now take the case of Solomon, who, according to the Bible, was the wisest man that the world ever saw. There was none like him before or after, and all the world came to see the wisdom of Solomon. How did he get his wisdom?—God gave it to him? Did he go to bed one night, and wake up the next morning a wise man? He himself has told us how he got his wisdom, and how we may get it. It is true that he sought the Lord. The Lord said, What will you have? He said, I will have wisdom. The Lord says to us, What will you have? We desire wisdom, too. We are in continual need of wisdom about something or other. How shall we get it?—"If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." But let him be watchful about one thing. Let him ask in faith. How does faith come?—By hearing. Hearing what?—The Word of God. Let him ask, then, according to the Word of God. If he asks according to the Word of God, there is no doubt about his getting wisdom. Solomon asked for wisdom, and he got it. Turn to the second chapter of Proverbs, and we shall find out how he got it. There is only one way. The old proverb used to be that there is no royal way to knowledge.

But there is. That is the only way there is to learn. Solomon was a king and he has given us the royal way to wisdom. And this is not simply Solomon's opinion. It is the Spirit of God speaking through Solomon, and what the Spirit of God spoke to Solomon, he speaks to us. Let us read it:—

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea every good path.

How did Solomon get his understanding?—He dug for it. He cried for it day and night. That is the way men seek silver and gold. That is the way the millionaires get their money. They put their minds on that one thing to the exclusion of every other thing day and night, because they would rather have money than anything else. Now, we would rather have wisdom than anything else, because the wisdom of God is salvation, and the salvation of God is everything. We have the key to the whole universe then. Solomon studied. He asked the Lord, and then studied, and the Lord gave him light. He studied God's Word, "for the Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh understanding." So Solomon got his wisdom from the Word of God, and he did not have nearly so much of the written word as we have. But there was not another thing that Solomon had to make him the wisest man the world ever saw. Do you believe it? It was just by the study of the Word of the Lord.

Some of you do not believe it, because you have read the Old Testament through, and you did not find very much in it. I have traveled across Nevada and Colorado, and I never saw any silver or gold in either State. Shall I say that I do not believe there is any gold or silver in these States because I never saw any there? But it is there nevertheless.

I was not looking for it when I was there, and did not dig for it. Other men have found lots of it there. Some men may say that they see wis-

dom in the Bible, but only in certain directions; it does not tell a man how he ought to do in a Conference. It does not tell a man how he ought to do in his own affairs. How do you know it does not? You may say you have not found it there. It is one thing to say it is not there, and another to say you have not found it; because it has been found. Solomon found it there. And the Lord found it there, because he was greater than Solomon. Jesus was wiser than Solomon, and we have access to the same source of instruction that Solomon had.

The question will come, How shall we know when we get the truth, that it is the truth? How shall we know we have the right way. I will tell you how you cannot know: if you use your mind to speculate, and try to reason things out. You get hold of some subject, some idea, then take that and try to drive it through the Bible, and use one text here, and another text there, and another text elsewhere, that will fit,—while you may have a pretty good theory, you cannot *know* anything about whether you are right or not. Of course you cannot. You will always be in doubt. The most you will be able to say is that according to your best judgment so and so is the truth. That is not studying the Bible at all. That is studying yourself, and trying to get the Bible to agree with you. It is another thing from studying the Bible. The same doubt will also always be in your minds when you take truth at second hand. The Lord says, Dig, just as you would for treasure. Take the Word, and look at it, and delve into it, until its truths are imprinted in your mind. And let them be turning over and over and over, just keeping them until they are digested and assimilated, and we get the good that there is in them. And then the light comes. It is life and you see it. Now, from my own experience I tell you that is the only way to learn anything of the Bible.

Elder G. F. Watson.—Do you understand that we should not study by subjects?

You cannot study the Bible that way. Nobody ever studies the Bible by subjects. That is not studying the Bible at all. You study the Bible itself, without reference to subjects, and then when a man asks you a question on any subject you are ready, no matter where he strikes you; you fall upon your feet every time. It makes no difference where you start in, it is there, and you see it. Now, when you take a portion of Scripture, read it and reread it, keeping your mind fixed upon it

as though you would see to the bottom of it,—why, it is just wonderful. I can say for myself, that I do not deserve any credit for anything I know, because I have not obtained it by any shrewdness I have in studying things out. I simply take a scripture and look at it, and look at it. I want to know what it says, and that is all, without any speculation; and I will not allow myself to think, even myself by myself, one hair's breadth from what the Bible says. I have not any curiosity to speculate about the Bible; my curiosity is just all in abeyance. The trouble is, we go a little way in the Word, and then start off on a speculation, going on nothing, wondering about this, and building up this theory and that theory; but we have no business to do that. It is not fair to treat ourselves or anybody else that way. I simply keep looking and looking, and it comes. Now, can a man know a thing that he sees? If the window is open here, and we look out, can we tell what we see?

We look out here, and we see the sun shining; and we look out on the other side, and we see the sun itself. Then do we call two or three of the brethren, and say, Now, I want to be sure that I am right on this? I see something there; is that light? or is it not light? I want to be sure. The window is open, and I ask, Is that light? or is that not light? What would you think was the matter with me?—You would think I was blind. We want to be able to know light when we see it. And it certainly ought not to be a difficult thing for one to be able to do that. I would not give a farthing if every one in this house should go with me out into the street, and tell me the sun is shining. That would not help me one bit. You think I am wonderfully conceited, don't you, because I can tell when the sun is shining? Well, I have fairly good eyesight, and what I see I know. Now, when we get acquainted with the Lord, we know the light, and we do not need to have somebody to tell us that it is light. Every one of us has to have that knowledge for himself, so that he can know it for himself; and he does not need to have anybody to tell him about it. We have that statement in 1 John 2:20: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One." Have we? Settle that point. "And know all things." How can that be?—Because just as it is told in the fourteenth chapter of John, "The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things." He will not

teach us anything wrong. He will lead us into all truth. How much will there be that we need to know that we cannot have, and cannot find out? Now 1 John 2:27:—

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

Whoever receives any truth, no matter how true it is, from a man, and recognizes that as coming from a man, has not the truth at all. Whoever will quote a man, when he is trying to teach somebody,—well he is not teaching with authority. He does not know what he is trying to teach, and cannot expect that the people will. The man who knows the truth teaches as though there was not another man on earth who believed it. He knows it so thoroughly that any number of men in this world denying it would not have the least effect upon him.

Elder Kauble.—Is it not just as possible for a man to be positive that he sees light when he does not see it, as for a man to be positive that he sees light when he does see it?

No; it is impossible. A man cannot be sure of a thing that is not so. A man may be deceived, but we have no business to be deceived. What in the world are we in the world for as teachers, if we do not see and know the truth? What business have we to go out and teach somebody else what we do not absolutely know? How dare we do it, and thus run the risk of leading him astray?

Question.—Was not Paul just as positive when he went about persecuting the disciples, that he was doing God's service, as he was after he was converted?

No; he was kicking against the pricks.

Elder Kauble.—I read in the Testimonies that we ought not to teach new doctrines until after counseling with the leading brethren. The question comes, Are we to take our own individual judgment as to what is light?

No; we are not to take our own individual judgment about anything. Cursed is the man that trusteth in man. There is nothing so accursed as for a man to trust in himself. We have the mind of the Spirit to depend on, instead of our own. That statement in the Testimonies is needed, but we need not be worried over it. Did you ever meet a man, and he would say, I have a new ser-

mon, a new point, some new light. He tells you about it, and says, What do you think about this. He does not mean, of course, to ask your advice, but only to get your assent to his theory, so that he will feel more secure. I will tell you that in all my experience I have never seen anything in that way. In all my experience in the truth I have never yet found a new point, or gone to any one and said, I have a new point; because I never tried to get out anything new. I have not the slightest sympathy with anybody that goes about to get out new theories. Such a one could be in better business than that.

Elder Ballenger.—Are we not commanded to get things new and old out of the storehouse?

That is all right; I did not say that I do not get things new, for I am getting such things all the time. But we do not get new things by jerks. We are not studying to find something to unload on somebody else, or to arouse the anxiety of the congregation with the thought that they are going to get something that will tickle them, something that will create a sensation, that will be startlingly new, and that nobody ever thought of before. Such a man always does harm, even though there be some truth in that which he has. Truth is always the same, the old, old story, and yet it is always new. It is life, new life; it is the old thing always brightening up. It is eternal life. We live in eternity, if we are the Lord's. He has given us eternal life, the power of the world to come. And the one characteristic, the chief characteristic of it is, that it is always fresh. The earth made new will be just as new after ten thousand years, as the first day. The man who reads a text of scripture before a congregation, and does not every time he reads that text learn something new from it, has not his eyes upon God. It is not something that you can sit down and jot down with the pen and ink; it simply comes. The new things that come to me are not the things that I keep a memorandum of, so that I can go about and say, Here I have another new thought. Indeed, the man that gets so little light that he can keep a memorandum of it, does not get enough to do him much good. It just keeps coming, coming, coming, like the rising of the sun. You cannot mark it. You cannot make two successive marks indicating the rising sun's position in the heavens. When you make the second, it is not there. It is rising. It is higher, continually higher. So is the light from the Sun

of Righteousness. Light is life, and life is growth, continual growth.

(A voice) Such a man is going on and on; he is growing. "The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Why, brethren, if we had to meet together to decide upon every ray of light that God gives, we should have to be in General Conference all the year around. Light is coming all the time. A man cannot put his hand out and mark it. You cannot, no man in this world can write out a synopsis of faith, and tell the truth. You cannot get at it in that way. Truth is from God, and must be drank in as he has given it. A man is not to go around conscious of how much he knows. There is only one help to Bible study, and that is the Spirit of God.

Question.—Do we understand that receiving the Word of God is receiving the Spirit of God?

Yes, if you receive the Word of God indeed, because it is a living thing; it is the bread of life. If you take it as written by some other man, it is not Spirit at all. But if you take it as the living Word, spoken by God himself, then it is life.

But, as I was saying, we are not to go around burdened with a sense of what we know. Why, brethren, when the apostles received the Spirit of God, do you suppose they went around all the time burdened with the consciousness of power? Christ said to them, Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; but do you suppose they went about conscious of that power?—No; they were simply ordinary men the same as before, without any consciousness of power; but when the occasion for a certain thing arose, being always yielded to the Spirit, they were ready for the occasion.

Brethren, we need to study the Bible; stop fooling with it; stop using it as a plaything; begin to study it, and believe there is something in it. There is more in it than you have any idea of. There is everything in it.

We are studying the question, "I will put my trust in Him." We have seen justification by faith is the bottom and the substance of everything. See here, as we saw in what we read the other day, the failure to receive—not simply to assent to, but to receive—righteousness by faith is the cause of all these complications and these

difficulties that have arisen. Do you see the point? Does that teach you anything? Does that not teach this, that if we all accepted righteousness by faith, and all that is in it,—because that means eternity of progress,—if we received it into our lives, we should know just how to do in everything? because it would open up the whole Bible to us, and then we would be saved all these difficulties, and all the snarls that we get into, and not have to spend so much time getting out. The trouble with many people is, trusting in the Lord makes them think, and it is hard work to think, and so they would rather trust in themselves. Now, that seems like a paradox. A great many people think that the worker who trusts in the Lord, and who preaches by faith, is the man who doesn't think. How many times, as I have tried to impress upon the ministers that they should depend upon the Lord for their preaching just as much as they do for their living right, have I heard the objection raised, "We must not be haphazard; we must not go at random; we must not depend upon the spur of the moment, and go and give whatever we happen to have in our minds."

The testimonies say all that. But who said that depending upon the Lord was going at haphazard? You might as well say that the man who trusts in the Lord, to be kept from sin, is going in an utterly reckless, foolish way. It does look foolish to the man who does n't know anything about it. And I know how foolish it used to seem to me, how absurd, to think that man, by believing, could be protected from doing a wrong thing. But I know it now, and there is no foolishness in it. There is no going at random about it, for it holds a man right to the Rock all the time; and the man who throws himself into the hands of the Lord, that he will preach by faith—do you suppose he is n't going to think and study? The reason why so many people do not trust the Lord is because it requires so much thinking; when instead of that they can just take a little time, when they feel well, and think for an hour or two, and work out a subject to their satisfaction, and they are forever free from thinking on that subject. Then when they get ready to preach, they can get out their notes, and all the time they know exactly how much they know, because they have it in their pocket. But, brethren, you cannot carry the Word of God in that way. You cannot carry the Word of God in your pocket. You

have to carry it inside of your own heart. It has got to be a part of yourself. And as you go along, you may be unconscious that you know anything about a certain thing—the whole thing is gone from your mind, because you don't need to use it then, and some brother comes along and says, "What is your opinion about this thing?" I don't know anything about it; I haven't any opinion. But if somebody comes along who needs light, somebody who wants help for his soul's salvation, and that very thing is a thing that is going to help him out, the Spirit of the Lord will bring it, and it will be as clear as daylight, and you will see it, and all you have to do is just simply to read off to that man, or that congregation, just what you see by the Spirit of the Lord,—what the Spirit brings to your remembrance. But it does not bring that which we have not been giving our minds to; and that throws upon us a responsibility of keeping our minds upon the Word of God, of giving ourselves to the Word of God and to prayer, so that we may be ready for every good work; so that whatever condition a man may be in, whatever need, whatever distress of mind, we will have so studied the Word of God that although we may never have seen that man, we have the Word that meets his case exactly.

Now, we do not have to go around burdened with a sense of how much we know, and with everything parceled, and each one of these things labeled in our minds; this subject is here, and that subject is there. We cannot get at truth in that way. But it is all there as light, and when the Spirit of God shows the occasion and the person, they all meet together; we are ready for every good work. It is not we, but the Spirit of God; and we can put ourselves into the channel and be used by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Wisdom of the Cross.

M. C. WILCOX.

(Sabbath Morning, Feb. 27, 1897.)

TEXT: 1. Cor. 1: 21-24: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

I am not going to take the time this morning to trace out all that this language contains, but shall aim at some of the principles which we can take into our lives. In verses five to seven we read as follows:—

In everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Heb. 2:3 we read of the word being "confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Many things have been confirmed unto us, but what we want is that the things of God—his truth and his law—should be confirmed *in* us, by the power of Jesus Christ. In the words which I have read for my text, two classes are brought to view who reject the gospel: one, a superstitious and credulous class who seek for signs and evidences after the devices of their own imaginations, evidences that will confirm to them their own ideas; the other, a class seeking for confirmations of theories and ideas according to their conceptions or worldly wisdom; that is, according to their own ideas of philosophy and truth. Both of these classes really stand upon one basis, and that is selfishness, or self-sufficiency, self-dependence, seeking rather to establish their own ways than the ways of God.

"The Jews require a sign." And, turning to the history of our Saviour, we find this statement often verified. In Matt. 12:38-40 it is written:—

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

This demand of the Jews was repeated over and over again. Even while he was working his mightiest miracles, and continually showing them signs and evidences of his divine power, yet in the face of these things they came to him asking for a sign. They wanted something that was in harmony with their own ideas. It seems to me that the Saviour's answer to the Jews is one of the saddest found in the gospel: "There shall be no sign given to it [this generation], but the sign of the prophet Jonas." The only evidence that was vouchsafed to them would come to them after they had passed probation's line and their doom had been sealed,—after they had committed the fatal act, and had