

## The Review and Herald.

"Sanctify them through the truth, thy word is truth."

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., THIRD-DAY, JUNE 13, 1871.

ELD. JAMES WHITE,  
URIAH SMITH.

EDITOR.  
ASSISTANT.

### Mutual Obligation.

In the further investigation of this subject, we come still closer to our people. In the rise and progress of the cause of what we term "present truth," God's providence has placed us under obligations most sacred.

Our gracious God has committed to us one of the most beautiful systems of divine truth taught and defended by men. While it is in harmony with the broad fundamental principles of salvation through Jesus Christ, it simplifies the grand theme, relieves it from huge bands of error with which eastern orthodoxy has girded it, and shows with wonderful definiteness the true position and work of the people of God.

With great delight may the well-instructed disciple trace the connection between the law and the gospel, the harmony of prophecy, which shows our whereabouts in the prophetic history of probationary time, the signs of the times, which show that the second advent is at the doors, and the last warning messages of Rev. 14, which connect the present with the past second-advent history, give certainty to the present, and light up the glorious future.

And here we might add the immortality theme, as held by us, that immortality is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ—for which we seek—and not a matter of parental inheritance—to be given at the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the just; and that the wages of sin is death—not eternal life in misery.

With our ministers and our people it should be a matter of devout thanksgiving that God has dealt so graciously with us, in giving us such sweet and harmonious views of divine truth, and qualifying men to set forth the word of truth so clearly and forcibly as has been done in our publications. And while the goodness of God in this, calls for deepest gratitude to the Source of all good, from ministers and people, the sacrifices and incessant toils of the pioneers in the cause, who were the honored instruments in this great work of sacrifice, and mental and physical wear and suffering, should be embalmed in the memories of all those who espouse the cause when things are made ready to their hands, whether they be ministers, or the rank and file of the church. These pioneers of the cause felt that they were under the most sacred obligations to give their lives to the toil of bringing out the truth in our publications, and proclaiming it everywhere, and standing continually in its defense; and, to say the very least, the thousands who have been benefited and blest with the toils of these who have brought upon themselves premature age, for their good, should feel that they are under certain obligations to them and should cherish feelings of tender regard for them. And while these who may be fearfully worn, and may feel that they are about to lay off the armor, may boast in the Lord for what he has done through them, God save those who have but recently put it on, from boasting in their own strength.

The most fearful thing in our midst is, that men enter the ministry with no apparent sense of obligation to God for his precious truth, or to the pioneers of the cause who have brought out the system of present truth, or to our people who stand ready to sustain their every step they may advance. These men seldom accomplish any real good in the cause. And they never will until they, by means which God may employ, are brought near the divine Fountain, and are baptized into the sufferings of Christ and the spirit of the work.

When the pioneers of the cause went forth, they were destitute of publications, and almost without friends and means. Then the light upon subjects, now as clear as day, was obscure. There were no evidences that the Spirit of God was moving the public mind toward unpopular truth, and prejudice was terrible. But, with all these embarrassments and discouragements, they had success, and accomplished permanent good, such as is rarely seen by those who enter the work now under the most favorable circumstances.

Those who now enter the ministry, may not prize the truth as they should, from the fact that they have never searched for it as for hid treasures. And, not realizing the blessings they enjoy, they do not feel under particular obligations to God, or any one else, for them. With them, it is an easy matter to take hold of, and teach, the

truth brought out ready to their hands. And not feeling the value and the weight of it themselves, they let it fall upon the people as light as down, and no good is accomplished. Our system of supporting the ministry backs them up in their superficial work, and they never become efficient laborers.

But there are no reasons why these men should not succeed, if they will enter upon the work with correct views, pure motives, and right feelings. Any man of sufficient mind to justify the supposition that God is calling him to the ministry, with our publications and the Bible in hand, in a few months can become a workman. In fact, he need tarry but a few weeks before he may add to his studies the almost daily practice of addressing humble congregations. He may at once become mighty in the Scriptures, and, with the blessing of God, very soon become an able minister of Jesus Christ. Those who cannot, and do not, thus succeed, may decide either that they are mistaken in their calling, or that they fail to make themselves what they might be.

And if men who enter the ministry would always feel the force of the words of Christ, when he says, "Without me ye can do nothing," and would go out to preach to hearts as hard as steel, trusting in God to soften hard hearts, and to turn men and women from error to truth, and from sin to holiness, while they should humbly appeal to the reason and to the tenderest sensibilities of the human soul, God would give them many souls as seals of their living, ardent, sacrificing, holy ministry. The way is all prepared for them. The truth is made as clear as a sunbeam. The people are anxious to read and to hear. God's Spirit is moving upon the public mind, and would God that we could add that intelligent, devoted, ardent men, grateful for what God has done, feeling the full force of the theme of mutual obligation, were leaving all, and making a rush for the ministry.

We hope to be pardoned for giving free expression to the impression that we are addressing an ungrateful people. God has wonderfully blessed us, and has laid us under the most solemn obligations that we hardly realize. And prominent among especial blessings enjoyed by Seventh-day Adventists, is the manifestation of the spirit of prophecy. We have not space here to treat upon the perpetuity of spiritual gifts; neither to even glance at the history of the manifestation among us. We simply call attention briefly to some of the good results of this branch of the work of God among us.

As a people, we are united in sentiment and in action as no other religious body is at this time. Being gathered from different denominations, and from different tongues and nations, it is wonderful that such a state of unity exists among us. Our differing as widely as we do from the established faith and practices of the religious bodies presents a good opportunity to our people to scatter off into speculative ideas of truth and duty; yet, thank God! we are one. Having heavy crosses to bear, and being made to feel the pressure of close, practical testimony, in sermons, in exhortations, and in print, it is astonishing that more do not slide out from among us in choice of a path with less crosses, and where they may find an easier way. Why is this unity of faith? and why this harmonious and comparatively vigorous action among us? We know of no one cause so fruitful in producing these glorious results among us, as the manifestation of the gift of prophecy.

While this gift has appealed to our people, from the earliest existence of the cause, to consecrate themselves and their earthly treasures to God, it has warned them against rashness. While it has warned the worldly of the duty to sacrifice, it has also warned the liberal to move cautiously, from a clear sense of duty, and not from impulse. And while it has been the greatest burden of Mrs. W.'s labors for more than twenty years to arouse the people to activity, and to zeal, in the cause of Christ, she has given no small attention to the various phases of fanaticism that have struggled from time to time to find a place in our midst. The result is manifest. Even our camp-meetings where from two hundred to twelve hundred of our people gather, and remain for nearly a week, listening to the most stirring appeals, which move sinners and backsliders by hundreds to turn to the Lord, are as orderly, and as free from all fanatical confusions and noise as the most calm and becoming service in church. Hence the unparalleled good order of our camp-meetings is the praise of the people wherever they are held.

For more than twenty years has the Spirit of God been appealing to our people through Mrs. W. on the subjects of order, organization,

neatness, cleanliness, liberality, activity, and unity, and, thank God, the good fruits are now being seen. Without this gift, we are more exposed to seisms than other bodies. With this gift, received and heeded, we are enjoying unity of faith and that efficient action which unity gives, such as is not enjoyed by any other body. We have nothing in ourselves to boast of. By the grace of God we are what we are. And as we value unity, prosperity, and the favor of God, we choose to accept and honor the gift God has bestowed, although unsanctified human wisdom may frown.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." Amen! Thank Heaven, the floodgates of glory are not eternally closed. In the last days the gift of prophecy was to be manifested. Not, however, for our diversion, or exaltation, but for practical purposes, will the Holy Spirit appeal to the people of God while passing through the perils of the last days. If the church does not now need such especial instruction and comfort, she never needed it. But God did set the gifts of the Holy Ghost in the Christian church, and in no time of that period of the absence of her Lord does she need them as much as in the perils of the last days, when fitting to receive her returning Lord at his second advent. Let this be the language of every willing heart, "Lord speak, thy servant heareth."

When men can show that the manifestation of the spirit of prophecy among us is unscriptural, and that Mrs. W.'s writings and her oral appeals to the people are calculated to lead the people from God, from the Bible, from Christ, from the Holy Spirit, from the keeping of the commandments of God, from the duties set forth in the teachings of Christ and the apostles, and from the simplicity and purity of the Christian life; then, and not till then, will they have a reasonable excuse for their persistent opposition of the work, and their persecution of the person through whom God speaks to his people.

When the opposition can find in all her writings one unchaste word, one sentence that lowers the character of God, of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, or the standard of Christian holiness, or that leads from the sacred Scriptures as a rule of faith and duty, then it will be time to warn the people against them. Until they can meet the subject fairly, their sneers are hardly worth noticing, as it is both difficult and unpleasant to review and answer a sneer.

We invite all to compare the testimonies of the Holy Spirit through Mrs. W., with the word of God. And in this we do not invite you to compare them with your creed. That is quite another thing. The trinitarian may compare them with his creed, and because they do not agree with it, condemn them. The observer of Sunday, or the man who holds eternal torment an important truth, and the minister that sprinkles infants, may each condemn the testimonies of Mrs. W. because they do not agree with their peculiar views. And a hundred more, each holding different views, may come to the same conclusion. But their genuineness can never be tested in this way.

The questions to be considered are, Does God's word teach the perpetuity of the gifts, and their special manifestation in the last days? If so, the manifestations will be intelligent, and for the practical benefit of the people of God. Has there been a manifestation of this kind among Seventh-day Adventists that bears the heavenly credentials? and has the fruit been good? Here are some of the tests by which this work may be proved; while it is too late, this work being too well known, and its influence having extended too far, for religious bigotry to test it by peculiar dogmas. It must, and will, be viewed upon broader grounds. In the language of another we close for this week:—

"Every test which can be brought to bear upon such manifestations, proves these genuine. The evidence which supports them, internal and external, is conclusive. They agree with the word of God, and with themselves. They are given, unless those best qualified to judge are invariably deceived, when the Spirit of God is especially present. They are free from the disgusting contortions and grimaces which attend the counterfeit manifestations of spiritualism. Calm, dignified, impressive, they commend themselves to every beholder, as the very opposite of that which is false or fanatical.

"The influence is not mesmeric; for this people, reprobating the use of that agency, studiously refuse to learn the principles of its application, or

to have aught to do with its practical workings; besides, the hallucinations of a mesmerized subject embrace only such facts and scenes as previously exist in the mind of the mesmerizing power; but the visions take cognizance of persons and things, and bring to light facts known, not only by no person present, but not even by the one through whom the visions are given.

"They are not the effect of disease; for no disease has ever yet been known to have the effect of repeatedly suspending the the functions of the lungs, muscles, and every bodily sense, from fifteen to one hundred and eighty minutes, while in obedience to some influence which evidently had supreme possession of the mind, and in obedience to that alone, the eyes would see, the lips speak, and the limbs move. Further, their fruit is such as to show that the source from which they spring is the opposite of evil.

"1. They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand. They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master.

"2. They lead us to Christ. Like the Bible, they set him forth as the only hope and only Saviour of mankind. They portray before us in living characters his holy life and his godly example, and with irresistible appeals they urge us to follow in his steps.

"3. They lead us to the Bible. They set forth that book as the inspired and unalterable word of God. They exhort us to take that word as the man of our counsel, and the rule of our faith and practice. And with a compelling power, they entreat us to study long and diligently its pages, and become familiar with its teaching, for it is to judge us in the last day.

"4. They have brought comfort and consolation to many hearts. They have strengthened the weak, encouraged the feeble, raised up the despondent. They have brought order out of confusion, made crooked places straight, and thrown light on what was dark and obscure. And no person with an unprejudiced mind can read their stirring appeals for a pure and lofty morality, their exaltation of God and the Saviour, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, 'These are not the words of him that hath a devil.'

"Negatively, they have never been known to counsel evil or devise wickedness. No instance can be found in which they have lowered the standard of morality. No one of their adherents has ever been led by them into paths of transgression and sin. They do not lead men to serve God less faithfully, or to love him less fervently. They do not lead to any of the works of the flesh, nor make less devoted and faithful Christians of those who believe them. In not a single instance can any of the charges here mentioned be sustained against them; and, concerning them, we may emphatically ask the question which Pilate put to the Jews in reference to the Saviour, 'Why, what evil hath he done?'

"Yet with all this array of good fruit which they are able to present, with all this innocency of any charge of evil that can be brought against them, they everywhere encounter the bitterest opposition. They are the object of the blindest prejudice, the intensest hate, and most malignant bitterness. Worldlings and formal professors of all denominations, join in one general outcry against them of vituperation and abuse. Many will go a long distance out of their way for the purpose of giving them an uncalled-for and malicious thrust. And false-hearted brethren in our own ranks make them the butt of their first attacks, as they launch off into apostasy and rebellion. Why is all this? Whence all this war against that of which no evil can be said? From the example of Cain who slew his brother, of the Jews who clamored for the blood of the innocent Saviour, of the infidel who storms with passion at the very name of Jesus, and from the principle of the carnal heart which is at enmity with everything that is holy and spiritual, we leave the reader to answer."

(To be Continued.)