

## October 18

*He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster. Proverbs 18:9*

WE cannot see wastefulness in any of the Lord's consecrated people without feeling that, however great progress they have

F540 "The Master, after feeding the multitude, commanded that the fragments be gathered and not wasted, thus indicating his mind in respect to all affairs, that there be no wastefulness; that we recognize a responsibility toward him for every moment, every dollar, every day; not a responsibility which would keep us in fear, but a responsibility which delights to note the divine will, to be as fully in accord with it as possible, and which realizes that such a course is pleasing to the Lord, and, therefore, may be thoroughly enjoyed."

(Prov 12:27 KJV) "The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting; but the substance of a diligent man is precious."

(Prov 6:6-10 KJV) "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: {7} Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, {8} Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. {9} How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? {10} Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:"

R5375 "The whole human family are servants. One man serves as a jeweler; another as a manufacturer of woolen goods. He serves by buying wool, converting it into cloth and into garments. Another serves as a grocer and supplies food. Some are chiropodists; some, barbers; some, tailors; some, physicians; etc. In every case it is a service to others.

Bringing the matter still lower, we see that the principle extends even to service of the dumb brutes. A horse cannot curry himself; and even a hog needs to be served--needs a trough, a bed, and food. We in turn are served by the brute creation. Whoever separates himself from this arrangement of service is getting away from his own good, and violating a Law of the Universe. Whoever gets to the place where he does no service, but has others to serve him, is to be pitted. He will be unhappy, be he ever so wealthy. Whoever would take this attitude would be arrogant and selfish, and his life would be devoid of beauty or of worth."

(Rom 12:11 KJV) "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;"

R2213 "*Fervent in spirit...* If as stewards of divine mercy and truth we are slothful, it is because we are cool in our love to the Lord; hence the Apostle's instruction that we should be hot, fervent in spirit. The Greek word here translated "fervent" signifies to be hot, to boil."

R4871 "To those who are the Lord's consecrated people it is the greatest privilege imaginable to serve the Lord. The Lord is looking to see to what extent we are willing to sacrifice earthly things, earthly approval,

made in understanding the mind of the Lord in some respects, they are still deficient in this particular. An appreciation of the gift and respect for the Giver implies carefulness and a stewardship in respect to all that comes to us from our heavenly Father--things temporal and things spiritual. Ac-

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that we may have His approval and hear His "Well done!"

R1281 "When we consecrated ourselves fully to the Lord, we thereby signified that we would hold nothing back for self. That consecration included all our possessions, our time, our physical energies and our mental attainments. And it implied the sacrifice of all our former earthly ambitions, hopes and aims, so that we should no longer pursue them to any extent. This, and nothing less, is what our vow of full consecration signifies. But it signifies, further, that these possessions or personal qualifications, which the Lord terms talents, are not only to be released from the service of the worldly ambitions, etc., but that they are to be so released, not for aimless inactivity, but for the purpose of being utilized in an opposite direction--in the service of God, of his plan and of his children."

### PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

*Matt. 25:14-30*

R1281 "At the reckoning time, he who had received the one talent said, "Lord, I knew thee, that thou art an exacting man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou has not scattered. And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast thine own."

"His Lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not scattered: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers; and then at my coming I should have received mine own with interest." It will be observed that this servant was not what men would generally call wicked. He was simply an idler, willing, if he could, to draw a servant's approval and compensation, but lacking any real, active interest in his master's business... As a faithless, slothful servant, he was really a covenant-breaker, and therefore "wicked" and certainly unfit to be trusted with still greater responsibilities on the master's return.

But let us remember that this was not a real case: it was simply a parable used to illustrate real cases. And if the illustration fits your individual case, let it not lose its effect upon you. The very object of the parable is to arouse such to a sense of their short-comings, and to recover them from the lethargy into which they have relaxed, by reminding them of their responsibilities. Activity in the Lord's service to the full extent of our ability or talents is what the Lord has a right to expect of all who profess to be his servants; and it is what he does expect...

Our talents for use in the Lord's service consist of all those things and opportunities which are over and above what we need for the necessary and reasonable maintenance of ourselves or our families, if we have

according to our Lord's parables He is measuring our love and zeal in a considerable degree by our use or abuse of the talents, opportunities, blessings, temporal and spiritual, now bestowed upon us. Z. '04-77 R3333:3

families, and the reasonable provision against distress in case of a sudden calamity or approaching old age, etc. Aside from these, all we have should be in active service, be they many talents or few...

But observe further what the Lord has to say about this "wicked and slothful servant." He says: "Take the talent from him and give it unto him which hath ten talents; for unto every one that hath [made use of his talents] shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not [made use of his talent] shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into *outer darkness*: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The outer darkness here referred to is in contrast with the inner light of the holy place of favor and communion and instruction from God, symbolized in the Tabernacle...

None are so clear in their apprehension and appreciation of truth as those who are fully enlisted in its service. Let all who would run the race successfully look well to their zeal and activity in the Lord's work. If we bury our one or our many talents under a weight of worldly cares and encumbrances which might be avoided or set aside; if we bury them under worldly ambitions for either self or family -- whether this be by wasting consecrated time upon science, philosophy, music or art; or upon business, politics or pleasures; or in pampering pride and appetite--then as unfaithful servants we will sooner or later go into outer darkness, by being caught in some of the snares of this "evil day," and will be led farther and farther into error and away from truth.

Mark well that it is not a case of such unfaithful servants being *liable* to get into outer darkness, into error: it is a case of *must*. The Master's orders are peremptory and decisive: "*Cast* the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." The light now shining is *not* for the unfaithful, but for the faithful servants; and no matter how clearly the unfaithful may have seen and understood the deep things of God, and no matter how he may have enjoyed them, if he has not loved them so as to serve them and sacrifice his conveniences for them, he is unworthy of them and *must* go out into the outer darkness of the world in general. With these as with the world the disappointment of theories and plans in the great time of trouble will ere long bring the weeping and gnashing of teeth foretold.

It is indeed a notable fact that in no single case have we seen one drift away from the truth into the snares of these perilous times who was very active and fully enlisted in the Lord's work, whose one aim and endeavor was to herald the truth and to bless others with it. To such the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for thee"--"Ye shall never fall, for so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

## FERVENCY OF SPIRIT NECESSARY TO OVERCOMING

*"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."--Romans 12:11.*

THIS text might very properly be transposed to read: "In serving the Lord, be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit." The primary thought, the central thought, is that the Lord is to be served, and on this account we are to be careful to learn what kind of service is acceptable.

We ask first, Why should the great Creator of all things, the Upholder of all things, need our service? And the Bible answers us that God needs no service whatever, that He is quite competent to carry out His own Plan, but that He is pleased to have the cooperation, the sympathy, of His own servants--not only of the human family, but also of the spiritual family--that God is not making an exhibition of His own power, but that all of His intelligent creatures are permitted to become more or less participants in the one Plan of which He is the Center.

This is particularly true of the earth. God permitted the Adversary to overturn things, and has permitted sin to have its course, in order to illustrate certain great principles that operate in the universe, according to certain laws. Whoever violates the principles of righteousness will have proportionately an unsatisfactory experience, as sin is contaminating and contagious. And so what might appear as God's inability to control sin and its evil influences will ultimately be seen from a different standpoint--illustrating His Justice, Wisdom, Power and Love.

As some great business firm might say, Now we do not need any capital, but we will hold the balance of stock, and allow some to go out amongst the employees, so that each one may be associated in the business--have an interest in the business; just so God makes use of capital, having plenty otherwise Himself. God therefore arranged the Plan just as it is.

In God's Plan, the Logos was to have the first opportunity of becoming man's Savior and of bringing everything earthly to a condition of full perfection. God so arranged the matter that it would require a *death* to redeem mankind. God could have imposed a different penalty. He *could* have put a penalty of ten years of disfavor, or what not, for the first act of disobedience. But *He did not*. He put the penalty of *death*. And then He made the proposition to the great Logos that if He would carry out His Plan of being the Redemption-price for Adam and his race, which would cost Him His life, He would be granted still greater honors.

So the Logos left the glory that He had with the Father and humbled Himself to become a man and to die, even the death of the cross. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him." In this way our Lord Jesus was permitted to be a co-laborer with God. He was required to be faithful, zealous in spirit, fervent in spirit. And we read of Him, "The zeal of thine House hath consumed Me." He was to be self-sacrificing and not self-seeking.

The pictures of these things were given aforetime--before He came into the world. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so should the Son of Man be lifted up, etc. It required a great deal of fervency of spirit to carry our Lord through all the bitter experiences of His earthly existence. He needed to have a great deal of faith in the Father and a great deal of devotion to the Father. And the fact that He overcame the difficulties shows that He had the faith and the fervency.

### WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND?

But our Heavenly Father's Plan is even broader than this. He planned that Jesus should have associates. And so the Apostle declares that God, who foreknew our Lord Jesus as the great Shepherd of the sheep, foreknew us also by Him--with Him. And if we partake of His sufferings in this present time, we shall also share with Him in the glories to follow. This was premeditated in God's Plan from before the foundation of the world.

This feature of the Plan began to operate at Pentecost. Those who had already believed in God as a Savior, and who had tendered their hearts to the Lord, could not be accepted until Jesus ascended up on High and made application of His merit for them--on behalf of all such. The Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost. Immediately they were privileged to begin a service for the Lord--a service that was made necessary in God's arrangement. He could have *done without* this service, but *He did not*--He arranged to have this very service. He purposed that a witness should be given to the world, to gather out a people for His name, and that those who should give the witness should show their faithfulness in the trials and tests that would come to them.

The Father is seeking such to serve Him as serve Him in spirit and in Truth. Therefore He allows the way to be made narrow by the opposition of the Adversary, the flesh and the world, so that none but those who are fervent in spirit will stand the tests. Others will not enter this work, or will fall out by the way. They will say that it is too hard. If you are God's servant they will say all manner of evil about you. They will say that you are a hypocrite, etc. God does not cause the Adversary to do this, but He permits it, not because He is limited in Power and could not cause it to cease, but because He is testing all who would be followers of Jesus. And He wishes to have no others in that Elect company than those who are fervent in spirit. Therefore are there such services and such tests.

### THE CAUSE OF OPPOSITION

The great business in life of those who would honor and serve the Lord is to serve the brethren and the Truth. Everything that represents the Truth these soldiers of the cross are to uphold--everything that is right, just, true. They will give their approval to such things and their disapproval to other things. This is what causes the opposition of the flesh and of the world and of the Adversary.

So, then, Christians have become dead to the world and alive toward God. Having thus been received and counted in as a member of Christ, every such one has as his special business the service of the Lord, the brethren and the Truth. And according to his abilities and opportunities is he to engage in this business. And this is to be his mind or disposition--to serve the Lord. And he is to be fervent in spirit, not indifferent, not lukewarm. As the Lord Jesus was fervent in spirit, even so are we to be. The fervency of His spirit for God and His arrangements consumed His life. So it must be with all those who serve God--those who walk in the Master's footsteps. This must be, necessarily, the chief business in life for these people of God.

### HOW TO REDEEM THE TIME

It is necessary for us to engage in some kind of occupation in order to secure a livelihood. God has so arranged in order to prove our faithfulness. Further, as other people are engaged in these same occupations, laboring for the comforts of life, we are compelled to compete with these to some extent. But as we see that we have a nobler business, we shall see to it that all these secular things in life are cut off, as far as possible, in order that we may have the more time for the Lord's service. The old ambition to gain earthly things would lead us to lay up treasures on earth. But the hope set before us in the Gospel leads us rather to lay up treasures in Heaven, "where moth doth not corrupt," etc.

So this class do with as few luxuries in life as possible, in order that they may lay down their time and strength in His service. And the more they do this, the more they become copies of God's dear Son. Thus, if any one is engaged in the carpenter business--the same in which our Lord engaged when He was a youth--he will say, How can I minimize the affairs of life so that I can give more of my time to the Lord and less to earthly matters? And so it will be his endeavor to cut off the desire for earthly luxuries. More and more he will count the affairs of this life as loss and dross in comparison with the glory of the life beyond.

In proportion, therefore, as we imbibe the Truth, in that same proportion will be our desire to be fervent in spirit--in that same proportion we shall be striving to sacrifice, to cut off, to devote to the Lord this time and talent and energy. We do not think that the Lord would wish us to be too particular regarding earthly things and waste valuable time. For instance, we might say, I will keep this house as *unto the Lord*. And we might give too much of our time and attention to different matters about the house. But the Lord is inviting us to choose the better part and not to give too much time and attention to procuring and caring for ornaments and bric-a-brac. Whoever would give too much time to the housework or to other earthly affairs would show that he did not appreciate the privilege of the Lord's service.

When we look about us, we find that all men need so much and the Household of Faith need so much. "What do they need?" They need the *Truth*. "Is the Truth, then, to go now to the world?" Yes, to all who have the hearing ear. There is a satisfaction and a blessing in having the mind properly sustained. We would rather be without all the luxuries of life, and have this Truth. We would rather suffer the loss of everything else than suffer the loss of our being.

If everything else in life were taken from us, and we were

without a penny in the world, we would still be rich toward God if we had the Truth. And so we all are needy in respect to this intelligence, this knowledge. When we perceive this, how could we be indifferent to the telling forth of the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light! So, then, God has so arranged this matter that all those who believe and become children

of God may have a share with Him in His great work. And since we know these things, they become a test of our loyalty and our love. And the Lord seeing or not seeing this character in us will determine whether or not we shall be associated in the honorable work on the other side of the veil.

R3332 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

## "GIVE YE THEM TO EAT"

-- MATT. 14:13-23 -- MARCH 20 --

*Golden Text:--"Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life."--John 6:35*

ON hearing of the death of John the Baptist, Jesus crossed the Lake of Galilee,--out of the dominion of Herod. Possibly his thought was that his ministry was not yet concluded, and that Herod, having shown such boldness against John, might seek to interfere with his labors and the completion of his ministry. Or possibly he feared that a rebellious spirit might be aroused amongst the people--and his teachings would seem to foster this. An intimation of the kind is given in the fact that after the miracle the people sought to make Jesus king. To have encouraged any such matter would be to have opposed what he recognized to be the divine arrangement.

Possibly, as some of the epistles seem to intimate, Jesus sought privacy with his apostles that he might contemplate the character of the work he was to do. Evidence of his growing popularity at this time is given in the fact that so large a multitude went afoot for many miles around the shore of the lake that they might be with him and hear his precious words of life--parables, etc., respecting the Kingdom which he proposed to establish, and in which all his apostles and all his faithful were to share.

### INSTANT IN SEASON AND OUT OF SEASON

When Jesus saw the multitude his heart was filled with compassion, and he could not withhold himself from them. In season and out of season, so far as his convenience was concerned, he must work the works of God, lay down his life inch by inch, hour by hour. We read that "he had compassion on the multitude," for they were as sheep without a shepherd. They had a heart-hunger, although they knew not what it was really, for they longed for higher, better, nobler conditions than surrounded them, and this great Teacher seemed to have words such as none other had for them--words of hope, of reconciliation with God, of divine providence and care. Those who sat in Moses' seat (scribes and Pharisees, Matt. 23:2) were so filled with a misconception of their proper attitude toward God, misled so, that they merely banded themselves together to enjoy the divine promises and to appropriate them to themselves, and give up the remainder of their nation as publicans and sinners, considering them too lacking in piety to have divine favor or any part or lot in the Kingdom privileges. Jesus, however, passed by these self-righteous ones who rejected him and the only way of approach to God, and showed his special favor to the humbler poor, who heard his message gladly and wondered at the "gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth"--words telling them that God despises not the imperfect and weak if they are sincere and consecrated to him.

It was after three o'clock in the afternoon, in the early evening, that the disciples suggested that it was time for the multitude to be dismissed that they might find food and lodging in the surrounding villages. John and Mark record a dialogue on the subject between Jesus and Philip, the home of the latter being in the adjoining town of Bethsaida, and who was therefore acquainted with the region, its resources, etc. Jesus inquired of Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" Philip replied that it would require two hundred pennyworth of bread to give each of them a little. This would mean about two hundred dollars' worth of bread according to our present day reckoning. All of the apostles then seemed to join in with the suggestion that the multitude be sent away that they might buy their own provisions as well as secure lodging--though as a matter of fact the people of the East make little ado about lodgings. They will camp almost anywhere, and, wrapping their cloaks about them, lie down in the fields or by the roadsides to sleep--in any place not supposed to be dangerous.

### SEEKING FIRST A NATURAL SUPPLY

It was then Jesus said to his disciples, "Give ye them to eat." Mark says that they inquired, "Shall we go and buy them 200 pennyworth of bread and give them to eat?" Jesus asked, "How many loaves have ye? Go and see." It was the Apostle Andrew who returned with the word that a lad of the company had five loaves and two small fishes which he had put at their disposal. Jesus accepted the situation and instructed that the multitude be directed to be seated in companies. It is supposed that they arranged themselves in

groups of fifty, and that there were 100 groups, making in all 5,000. Apparently they adopted the form of a three-sided square, after the shape of a Roman reclining table, the disciples who served them passing in at the open side and thus being able to reach the entire company. We are not informed how the five barley loaves and two small fishes were increased so as to be sufficient for the five thousand people with a remainder of twelve baskets full. Quite probably the increase was while being broken in the Lord's hands, though possibly also the increasing continued at the hands of the apostles as they in turn distributed the food to the people.

If such a story were told us respecting an ordinary person we could not believe it. Indeed it would be not faith but credulity on our part to believe it. So it is with those who deny the heavenly origin of our Lord Jesus: they do not believe that he could or did do such works as are recorded in the Scriptures. Neither could we believe the matter from their standpoint. It is because we believe that Jesus was the only begotten of the Father, who came into the world to be our Redeemer--because we believe that the Father poured upon him the divine spirit or power that we can also believe that he had power to still the tempest or thus increase the food by his blessing.

### EVERYDAY MIRACLES OVERLOOKED

But, after all, the greatest skeptics in the world do believe in miracles: they see them all about us, in all the affairs of life. They well know that the same amount of barley that composed those five loaves, if planted, might have brought forth a harvest sufficient for the five thousand; they also know that the two fishes in the ordinary course of nature in a short time might have brought forth a sufficient supply of fish for the five thousand. It is easy to be seen that he who arranged the provisions of nature had full control of the situation, and could as easily supply the needed food in the way he did as by some other method. Who will deny that it is a miracle from man's standpoint to have the grain grow and the fishes produce their kind? These miracles of nature are going on about us every day, and hence they are common to us and we forget that they are miracles. It is a fact, nevertheless, that while we can analyze the fish and determine exactly its component elements, and could bring these same elements together in a dish and could form them into shapes of fish, we could not give life to the fish or cause them to bring forth of their kind. That to us would be a miracle.

It is also true that we can analyze the barley and determine definitely its component elements and could bring them together in the same proportions and shapes, yet it is beyond our power to cause the products to germinate or to increase. Let these standing miracles that surround us every day convince all those who trust in the omnipotent God that he is able to do all that he is recorded to have done through his Anointed One. And let us remember that these things which Jesus did, as the Apostle declared, "manifested forth his coming glory"--illustrated and exemplified the coming power and glory of the great King of the world, who is to bless and feed and uplift the race of Adam and give life everlasting to as many as will receive it upon his terms.

If we could not accept these Scriptural testimonies respecting the power of Jesus over natural things, neither could we accept the declarations of the prophets and apostles respecting his coming power in the Kingdom. If we can accept the Scriptural declaration respecting him as the great Restorer of all things, God's representative, Emmanuel, who in the future shall bless the whole world of mankind, then with equal propriety and with the same kind of faith we can recognize him as the one in whom the Father's power operated in a small way in connection with the miracles under consideration and others at the first advent.

### CAREFUL USE OF DIVINE BOUNTIES

The whole lesson was intensified by the Lord's direction that the disciples should gather up the fragments; and, besides, another lesson was given, namely, that however great and bountiful are

God's provisions for people, none of them are to be wasted. <sup>(1)</sup>We cannot see wastefulness in any of the Lord's consecrated people without feeling that, however great progress they have made in understanding the mind of the Lord in some respects, they are still deficient in this particular. An appreciation of the gift and respect for the Giver implies a carefulness and a stewardship in respect to all that comes to us from our heavenly Father--things temporal and things spiritual. According to our Lord's parables he is measuring our love and zeal in a considerable degree by our use or abuse of the talents, opportunities, blessings, temporal and spiritual, now bestowed upon us.

We may be sure that in this miracle as in the others our Lord intended to inculcate some important lesson of faith or practice--not so much for the public as for his special followers, his disciples. We may presume, therefore, that he had a twofold purpose in sending them away by ship while he remained and dismissed the multitude, telling them that his discourses and miracles were at an end. One of these purposes doubtless was private fellowship and communion with the Father in the mountain-- apart from the multitude--apart even from his beloved twelve apostles. There are times when we love to join our hearts and voices with others at the throne of heavenly grace, and come as a company of the Lord's people into fellowship and communion with him, and there are other times when we seem to need individual, personal, private communion with God, as our Lord seemed to have required on this occasion.

Our Lord's second object was, doubtless, to give his disciples opportunity for thinking over the miracle and talking it over by themselves in his absence. They might thus speak more freely one with the other, and get more benefit than if he had been with them, and they would have been under a certain degree of restraint in his presence. The Lord wished this great lesson to be thoroughly impressed upon their minds: it would be helpful to them in future years to remember how he had power to increase their temporal food without human interference and independent of human conditions. It would be a lesson also respecting the spiritual food, that they should not despise the day of small things; that if sent by him to break the bread of life to the people, they should not be fearful and hindered by reason of unpropitious conditions prevailing, but should have full confidence in him that he had the power to overrule in all the affairs of life, that all his gracious purposes might be accomplished.

#### WE MAY DISPENSE THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN

There is a lesson for us of the present day, too, in this matter, as there has been a lesson for the Church all the way down throughout this Gospel age. We may feel that the multitude is large and that the means at our disposal for reaching them with the bread of life are limited. We may be inclined to say here, we have such and such things, but "what are they among so many?" Let us hearken to the Lord's Word, "Give ye them to eat." It should be sufficient for us to know that any one is present who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." Tell him the good tidings, no matter in what form they must be presented, no matter how intolerable the conditions. The important thing is that here are some who are hungry for the Truth, and that if we will the Lord will bless us in ministering it to them.

We have been reminded of this parable sometimes as we made out our annual reports of the work done by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY--and endeavored to realize the immense amount of spiritual food borne to the people all over the civilized world, and our privileges connected with its dissemination. We have marveled how the Lord blessed the comparatively small amount of money so that it reached so far;--it seemed to multiply under the Lord's blessing. The matter is with us as it was with the apostles. The Lord himself raises the question of how much it will require. We look about us and see how few are hungering and thirsting for the Truth, how many grasping after multitudinous errors, false gospels, new lights, etc., and we hear the Lord's word, "Give ye them to eat." It requires faith to go forth and to hope to accomplish the great harvest work under present limited conditions, but so surely as the Lord is the Chief Reaper, his blessing upon what he has given us to dispense will make it *sufficient*, so that all who are really hungry may be fed.

Let the lesson sink deeply into our hearts; let us have the more confidence in him who not only provided the temporal food centuries ago, but who now according to his promise has come forth a second time and is dispensing again spiritual food, meat in due season, things new and old from the treasury of his Word. Let us be

swift to appropriate these promises to our hearts, seeing to it that we are still hungering and thirsting after clearer views of the divine character and plan. <sup>(2)</sup>Let us be on the alert to give to all who are hungering and thirsting the blessed food which has so greatly refreshed and strengthened us. If they do not get it they will faint by the way as they go looking for other provisions. We have the very thing which all of the household of faith need; without it they cannot maintain their standing, they cannot press on, they shall surely become discouraged. A thousand shall fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand without this needed nourishment. Let us be alert.

#### THE USE OF MEANS -- THEN AND NOW

The lad who had the loaves and fishes and who put them at the disposal of the Lord, we may be sure was greatly blessed, although we hear nothing further of him than is here mentioned. It was a case of opportunity, and we may be sure that the boy thus willing to put his all at our Lord's disposal, instead of attempting to sell it to the hungry at famine prices, received a corresponding blessing. The lesson for all is that <sup>(3)</sup>whatever we may have of financial means for sending forth the bread of life to others, or whatever we may have of knowledge of the Truth, is neither to be selfishly hoarded nor selfishly partaken of by ourselves. It is to be consecrated to the Lord, and out of that consecration the Lord will bring blessing to others and increased blessings upon our own heads and hearts.

The Golden Text of our lesson may be said to be the very heart of it in some respects. It was after Jesus had spent the night in prayer and toward morning came to his disciples still on the lake in the boat-- stormstayed--and after they had come to the landing safely, that some of those who had been with him and who had partaken of the miraculous bread and fish had returned to the vicinity of Capernaum and sought Jesus again, that he upbraided them and accused them of seeking him more for the loaves and fishes than on account of the truths which he proclaimed; and using this as a text, proceeded to tell them of himself as the Bread of Eternal Life that had come down from heaven, of which if a man eat he would never die-- the bread of life everlasting.

Blessed are our ears for we have heard! blessed are the eyes of our understanding for we have seen him! blessed are we for we have tasted of this Bread of Life! Blessed are we if we are still hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and day after day being more and more filled according to the promise.

#### A FAMINE FOR THE WORD OF GOD -- AMOS 8:11

We live in very stirring times, in times when there is a greater hungering for knowledge, for wealth, for influence, for power, for everything, than there ever was before. Everybody seems to be hungry. Yet our day is so full of philosophies, inventions, sciences (true and false), moneymaking schemes, financial schemes, theological schemes, etc., etc., that the whole world is absorbed in attempts to satisfy these various hungerings of the soul. Yet these things do not *satisfy* even the worldly;--they still hunger and thirst; and nothing will ever satisfy them but the living bread--the Truth. Now is the time for us who have become "new creatures in Christ Jesus" to see to it that we dispense to others the true bread and water of life; and that our own earthly hunger for earthly things shall not be prospered or gratified at the expense of our spiritual hunger for spiritual things, but that the latter shall have our special attention and care and provision.

The more people are satisfied with earthly things the less inclination they will have for the heavenly things, and the more we are satisfied with the heavenly things the less of appetite will we have for the earthly things. The new nature flourishes at the expense of the old nature, and the new ambitions, hopes and desires at the expense of the old. Likewise when the old nature flourishes, it is at the expense of the new in all of life's affairs. Let us then, realizing the difference between the food that perisheth and the food that brings divine blessing--eternal life--let us choose the latter, let us feed more and more upon the Lord and upon his Word and thus grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and be more and more weaned from the world, its spirit, its hopes, its ambitions. We seek a heavenly country, a heavenly Kingdom, a heavenly nature, and heavenly qualities, fitted and prepared for that heavenly nature. We have found the great Lifegiver, the one who can and does supply this bread from heaven. It is our great privilege to be the dispensers of this bread--"Give ye them to eat." "He that hath an ear let him hear."

<sup>(2)</sup> 1/2 Oct. 19 Manna, Mat. 10:8

<sup>(3)</sup> 1/2 Oct. 19 Manna

<sup>(1)</sup> Oct. 18 Manna, Pro. 18:2