

“THE DAY”

(Discourse by H. C. Rockwell, 1912 Convention Report, start page 247.)

We remind you of the words of the Apostle Paul as given in Rom. 13:12: “The night is far spent and the day is at hand.” I trust that we are all familiar with the illustration that is given in the Word—that the past six thousand years of experience of the race of mankind is likened to a night time and the thousand years of the reign of Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his joint heirs, is the day time.

Our topic was suggested from the fact as it is stated, that in the German navy, on board the war vessels, every morning, as the sailors and officers are gathered about the tables for their morning meal, there is a toast by a special officer, and the toast is to “The Day” when the German Empire would engage in warfare against its foes, and this toast is given in the nature of an agreement or covenant on the part of the sailors and soldiers and officers that they will be loyal to their sovereign and that they will fight to the death in his service. So it is with the Lord’s people all around the world, every morning at the morning meal there is a spiritual toast drunk to the Lord of Lords, King of Kings, and Captain of our salvation. We believe that the spiritual toast is expressed in the vow that we have taken. We believe, dear friends, that in the dawning of the day is the time of special praise and thanksgiving to our God. We have just been singing some of the Hymns of Dawn, in the morning time, so it is fully in harmony with the general topic of the day—this is Praise Day, that we have chosen this topic.

Now, what has produced the condition of darkness, and what will produce the condition of light? Well, we have illustrated before us the natural arrangements of the Lord in nature, the revolution of the earth on its axis every 24 hours. There is a season of darkness when that portion of the earth is opposite to the sun and the day is produced when that section of the earth is where the sunlight may illuminate it.

So all during the past 6,000 years and now, the condition of the world has been, considered from the standpoint of the Lord, in an upside down condition. We say we are on the upside of the earth because we are facing the sun; we are looking up and they, as it were, are looking down, and I suppose, in the minds of many, our friends on the other side are standing on their heads. Well, the inhabitants of the world are practically on the upside down condition and when the Lord’s people try to turn them right side up, they are accused of turning them upside down. They have become so accustomed to standing on their hands that they object to being stood upon their feet. So it was in the days of Paul and Silas; they got into the habit of preaching the Truth, and went into the synagogues preaching, but opposition set in right away. Is not that surprising? Have we anything like that now? Yes, all during the past ages of darkness the Truth has met with opposition, and when the Truth began to make headway, some of the Jews went about in the spirit of

envy to oppose the spirit of the Apostle and to oppose the Apostle. You remember they went around to find them, but found them not—but they found Jason, the prophet, and said, “These that have turned the world upside down have come hither too.” Dear friends, it is not that our people would turn the world upside down, but right side up with care. Our Father has declared a due time for that future work and we are preparing ourselves by developing the proper character so that we may assist in that work. I think that if we manifest these elements of character that this is the best way to praise the Lord our God. So we are getting ready for the due time; and Oh, dear friends, we are now privileged to rejoice in the dawning of this glorious day! We are looking at things from an entirely new standpoint.

In the darkness of the past, “Darkness covereth the earth and gross darkness the people,” the Lord declares—the Lord’s people as well as the world have been groping around in darkness, but the Lord’s people have a lamp that will guide them. But, dear friends, in the night time things look entirely different from what they do in the day time. In the light of the dawn of our day the Bible has become a new book. The doctrines that were all confused in the past are all cleared up. We see them in the light of the sun. In the dim moonlight of the past we could not see them clearly.

Suppose we consider some of the prominent doctrines of the Bible that have become clear to our minds in this morning time. In going over the subject I made up a list of about 79 things that have been turned upside down in the past and represented to mean anything but what they do mean, but now we are privileged to behold the beauty of the Truth, and the Bible is a new book indeed. I want to briefly run over some of these doctrines. It is proper that we should be well established in these in order that we may appreciate His words of promise, justice, love and power. The more we understand the Truth, the more our minds are enlightened concerning the Kingdom of our God, and the better can we serve and praise Him.

(1) You remember the Scriptures speak of the world that was, but very few people previous to this time of Present Truth fully comprehend that which was expressed by this statement of Peter.

(2) Then there is the world that now is; what confused ideas the people had about it.

(3) Then the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness. There are the three worlds outlined in the Bible. What did we know about these before we had been benefited by the services of that faithful servant of the Lord?

(4) Then there are the three ways mentioned in the Scripture—there is a broad road that leadeth to destruction, and the narrow way that leadeth unto the life, and the highway of

holiness. We could not distinguish anything in the darkness of the past about these, but now in the light of the present how beautiful are the three ways!

(5) Then there are the three covenants, also. The promise unto Abraham—that has been a great question in the minds of Christian people, and the worldly philosophers and sages of the past never understood, but now in the morning time we can understand.

(6) Oh, how glad we are that we understand why the Lord has permitted evil and that it will be to His honor and praise and to the interests of His creatures, eventually!

(7) Then the ransom—the very foundation of all the teachings of the Scriptures, not fully understood until recent days.

(8) Times of restitution, for the world of mankind—the thousand year day for the blessing of all.

(9) The heavenly phase of the Kingdom, and the earthly phase of the Kingdom. Did we understand anything about these until the light of the present?

(10) Adamic death. Why, you know, under the upside down condition, death was made to mean more alive than ever.

(11) Second death. Many of us ran across this expression in the Scriptures, but we could not tell any more about what it was than we could tell about what the first death was.

(12) Justification, both tentative and vitalized justification. Understanding this matter in the Bible way means to be right before the Lord our God. We thought we understood it but we had it upside down.

(13) Sanctification. How many friends had queer ideas on this. They called it the second birth. They thought you must have a fluttering of the heart or feel strange in your stomach or see a great light or peculiar conditions of the atmosphere; but now we know what it is to be sanctified, to be set apart, even unto death in the Lord's service.

(14) Glorification. Why, you remember our ideas of glorification—we thought that if by and by we could squeeze through the gates of the New Jerusalem, we could pat ourselves on the back, and that would be glorification. Then we could walk on the battlements of Heaven and looking over the great gulf and see the vast majority of mankind in fire and brimstone and pleading for water—that was our idea of glorification and of Heaven. Many have that idea yet, but we know now what is meant by glorification.

(15) Glory, honor and immortality, seated with the Lord Jesus as joint-heirs of all the wealth of the Universe, especially the love of our Heavenly Father. Surely that is wonderful glory. That will be glory enough for me, dear friends. And you will notice that as we consider every line of the teachings of the Scriptures, it is in full harmony with reason and common sense. It is only those who misunderstand the Scriptures, standing on their heads yet, that make it unreasonable and ridiculous. There is nothing that we need be ashamed of, and so says the Apostle, he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. We are proud of the Gospel, so much so that we cannot say enough about it.

(16) Baptism. The whole Christian world is all upside down on the subject of baptism. Some think that a little sprinkling of water and pronouncing a few words constitute baptism. Some think that being submerged in water is real baptism. But we know that the real baptism is to be baptized into Christ, into His death and then we see the beauty of the symbol—water immersion representatively.

(17) Election. How that has been turned upside down! We thought just a few would be saved and all the non-elect go to an awful place.

(18) Free grace. Many dear friends are trying to make out that God's free grace is to the world now. In the condition of darkness when only a few come to the way of salvation, they tell us that God's free grace is manifested in all and they tell us that it will be your own fault if you get into the great furnace.

(19) Seed of Abraham.

(20) Judgment Day. Our conception of the judgment day was very crude in former times. It was thought that a 24 hour day would be sufficient. We remember a picture we had in the darkness, that the mountains and rocks would roll together and there would be a general wreck of matter and crash of worlds, and that the Lord would come upon a great white throne. Then all the nations would be gathered before Him, the faithful on the right hand and they would be invited into a condition of bliss, and the vast majority on the left hand would be sent into a condition of blisters.

(21) Work of the judgment. Oh, we thought that was the work of damnation; we never stopped to consider that the saints were to judge the world! We had no conception of that at all. If we were to be the judges over the world, would it be our delight to put them into a condition of blisters or torment throughout all eternity?

(22) Resurrection. What peculiar ideas we had of the resurrection of the Church and of the world!

(23) Great Company. No one ever considered what it would be.

(24) Ancient Worthies. These were God's faithful servants of former days, and we did not consider their future work.

(25) Spiritism. While the Scriptures mention these in former days and intimate that in the last days they would be specially active, we had no idea of what it was.

(26) The soul. We had most confused ideas on this subject. We held that the soul must live on and on, and that even God could not destroy it. We got all worked up about it, while the Scriptures set forth the plain, harmonious statement about the death of the soul. We said, Oh, it could not be, because Socrates and Plato and those great philosophers of those times, and all the doctors of divinity, say so, and therefore it must be true—never mind what the Bible says.

(27) Holy Spirit. What wonderful ideas we had! We thought that some person in a peculiar way entered into people all over the world.

(28) Natures distinct. The general idea in the minds of most people today is that every human being is not entirely a human being—but a sort of biped nature—partly angelic and partly earthly. The human, we thought died and the angelic lived on, which will sit upon a cloud playing a harp.

(29) Nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. We used to say it is impossible to understand the fundamental teachings of the Scriptures. Thank God now, in the light of the day time, in the morning time, we are able to appreciate our heavenly Father's love in sending His well beloved Son, and that our Lord and Saviour actually became flesh, became the man Christ Jesus, and He actually died on the cross, to redeem the world. Dear friends, does not the understanding of just this one matter, serve to show us the love and grace of our heavenly Father? It surely does, for we are able to appreciate His love as never before.

(30) Six creative days. We thought they were 24 hour days and that all the work of creation was done in that limited time. Now, with clear views, how grand and majestic is the work of our heavenly Father, when we see the six great periods of time which have led up to the forming of beautiful conditions for mankind.

(31) Seventh day. This is the seventh great day of a thousand years each, in which the world in general will be made a habitable condition for all mankind.

(32) Sabbath day. We thought that was a 24-hour day. We now see that the Millennial Age is the Sabbath day in which the world is to rest.

(33) The tabernacle in the wilderness. We did not understand those type, and shadows, could not understand them at all, and the world is in ignorance and darkness yet on this point.

(34) Sin offering. Oh, what wonderful mysteries are involved in it—types and antitypes. Here is the great mystery that has been concealed from angels and now made known to the members of the Body of Christ who are associated with their head, the Lord Jesus. Not, however, that we are a part of the ransom, dear friends, we are no part of the ransom price, but we are privileged to suffer with our Saviour that by these sufferings we may be developed New Creatures, and if faithful we will be associated with our Head in blessing the world.

(35) Mediator and Advocate. We believe that light has shone very brightly upon these doctrines during the past three years. I trust all present understand the difference between the Mediatorial work and the work of the Advocate, our Lord and Redeemer. It seems to me that the light received upon these serve to illuminate more fully many other things. If we are not keeping up with the light which is shining more and more, it is only a question of time before we will be in darkness. It behooves us to all study diligently that we may be up to date—up with the rest of the Lord's people. Let us be like those noble Bereans of old, and we will keep up with our Berean studies week by week.

(36) Bible Chronology. That was never understood.

(37) Jewish double.

(38) Parallel dispensations.

(39) The earth's Jubilee.

(40) The harvest time. What confusion there has been in the minds of Christian people on this subject! All along it has been set forth in the church that the harvest has proceeded all the way down from the time of our Lord's time until He should come again. But the Master has pointed out that it is in the end of the age. We recognize that a great harvest is going on all over the world. The Truth is the sickle that is being used to gather out the Lord's saints, to be with Him and to bind up the tares preparatory to the burning. Now is the great harvest time, and the Great Reaper is present, and we are privileged as under-reapers to cooperate with the Lord in the execution of His gracious design going on now. Are you harvesting now, my dear friends? What are you doing? You remember the Scriptures declare that "He that reapeth receiveth wages." It behooves us to be diligent now. Now is the time, the Summer is not past yet, though it will soon draw to a close and the Winter of sorrows and troubles and discontent will come upon the world.

(41) Day of Vengeance. We realize, dear friends, that the day of vengeance is the time of vengeance against evil systems and conditions of the present. God is not going to exercise a spirit of vindictiveness against the race, but in the day of vengeance or time of trouble His wrath will come upon the systems and conditions which are out of harmony with Him. There is a blessing in it for it is good to crush the stony hearts to prepare them to receive the hearts of flesh that the Lord will give to the willing and obedient.

(42) The Kingdom of Heaven. Oh, we thought it was an earthly Kingdom altogether, and lost sight of the spiritual!

(43) Prophecy. Oh, how the Lord's people are allowed to understand this! One hundred lines or more of prophecy are being fulfilled now before our eyes. We are walking more by light than faith, in view of the fulfillment of these prophecies that were written centuries ago, especially for our faith, upon whom the ends of the ages have met. You remember, dear friends, that over half of the Scriptures are made up of prophecies. We could not have a consistent view of the Scriptures if we were not to understand the prophecies.

(44) Symbols in the Scriptures. The lake of fire and brimstone, for instance, is not literal, but a symbol and pictured forth the ultimate fate to all that are in opposition to righteousness and justice.

(45) Man of Sin. We thought that some great individual would rise in the latter days and by wonderful power and natural ability this great man of sin would succeed in causing the great majority of the race to worship Him. We know now what the man of sin is, because the man of sin is revealed now, in the dawn of this day.

(46) Immortality. We know about that now.

(47) Eternal life. We know the difference now.

(48) The Trinity. That great mystery was never before understood but it is now clear.

(49) New Creation.

(50) Bride of Christ. You remember in Rev. 21:9 it was the angel of the messenger of the Lord that appeared to John who represented the Church—the John class, and this special servant of the Lord pointed out to John the Bride of Christ, symbolized as the City of the New Jerusalem. Before we came to the knowledge of Present Truth through the services of the messenger of the Lord, did we know anything about the Bride of Christ? No, we had no conception of it at all.

(51) *Parousia, apokalupsis and epiphania.* All these are getting brighter and brighter. Oh, yes, our Lord Jesus in the primary sense is the sun of righteousness, that shall arise with healing in its beams, as the light coming out of the east and extends even unto the west. And then in the larger sense, that sun of righteousness is made up of the Lord Jesus, and the members of his Body. And you will notice that as the members of the Body of Christ pass beyond the veil, the light emanating from that sun grows brighter and brighter and will shine in full meridian splendor when the last member has gone beyond.

(52) Stone witness. In the midst of the land of Egypt is this great witness. I am much interested in it. Some of the friends think that I have made it a hobby. But, dear friends, when the Word of the Lord tells so much about it, that He placed it there, and seeing the immense amount of labor involved in its construction, and it having endured for 4,000 years, so that it should be a special witness to us now, I think we do well to avail ourselves of all the means that God is granting to us at the present time. I feel we will need every ounce of grace. If we become careless and negligent concerning the provisions the Lord has made for us we demonstrate that we do not love Him as we ought. So let us strive to understand every doctrine and teaching that is being revealed now, so that we may be better qualified to honor the Lord. So then, dear friends, because of the illumination available in the morning time, we comprehend these Scriptures better. Now I would like to draw your attention to another line, or general presentation of the Bible showing how all these things are upside down now, and are to be changed about and put right side up in due time. All through the Scriptures a contrast is made from the present evil world and the world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness. Satan is the prince or ruler over the world today, and that is the reason it is an evil world. The Bible tells us that the Lord will be King over all the earth in the day time. The whole world lies dead in Adam now; they were condemned because of father Adam's disobedience. "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all." The whole world will be made alive in Christ. Then whoever will accept the divine provision made for these may have life. The whole world will be released from the Adamic sentence of death, and awakened to the privileges of the day time, when the Lord takes His power.

Again, the Scriptures tell us about the broad road of destruction, and that the vast multitude are on it, but the prophet tells us that the broad highway will be opened up in the day time and the redeemed of the Lord shall go up thereon with everlasting joy and singing upon their heads. What a contrast! Now in regard to the time, "weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning." Dear friends, we are rejoicing now in the light of the morning time. We praise and thank our God because we know Him so fully. To know God is to love Him, for God is love. Now selfishness is dominating the present time, but the Scriptures tell us that love is to dominate the world in the day time.

I am glad the Lord has set apart a thousand years, because it will take all that time to eliminate selfishness from the human heart. Selfishness now, but love then.

Now, dear friends, under the present evil conditions it is difficult to do right. Is it not a hard struggle we find ourselves in when we endeavor to obey the righteous demands of the Lord? But it will be easy to do right then. It is easy to do wrong now and difficult to do right; but it will be easy then to do right and difficult to do wrong. Now the wicked flourish as the green bay tree, then the way of the transgressor will be hard. Wickedness flourishes now but righteousness then. Now the way of salvation is difficult—easy then.

Our Saviour pointed out the difficulties when He declared that it was so narrow and difficult that few there would be that would find it, but then it will be the broad highway. Now the leaden rule is in force—it is a rule of selfishness. The world says, “I do others before they do me.” But the Bible says that in that day the golden rule will be followed, the law of justice will be enforced—“Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you.”

Now a curse is over all the world. You remember that because of Adam’s disobedience God cursed the ground, and all the conditions are laboring under the curse. You remember the closing words of the Bible, in describing the glorious condition. It says, “There shall be no more curse.” The curse or wrath of God is upon the race until His appointed time, then there shall be no more curse. There are people in the world without any knowledge of God’s purpose; they tell us that the present condition is an illusion. They say there is enough hell here, that they do not need hell and torment. While there is suffering and sorrow now, it will be Heaven to them then.

A little flock is being selected now, then there will be a large flock. Under the conditions of the present, the thorns, briars, weeds and deserts afflict the earth. Then the earth shall blossom as a rose. I understand from this expression that the same ground that produced the weeds continually, without cultivation, then will produce spontaneously the fruits and flowers that will result in the blessing and happifying of the world of mankind—just the exact opposite; this world must be turned right side up with care. Nations are learning warfare now—then they will learn war no more. The spirit of the adversary is in the world now, but then the spirit of the Lord will be in the world. Now there is injustice and corruption. Then there will be justice. Now there are times of degeneration—then there will be times of regeneration. Now there are times of destitution—then there will be times of restitution. The proud and haughty rule now—then the meek shall inherit the earth. Strong delusions now, then will be no deception—Satan will be bound for a thousand years. Now there are broken hearts, sorrow, pain and death. Then all broken hearts will be bound, and joy, comfort and gladness will exist. Now separation of loved ones by the great enemy of death—then glad times of reunion when the loved ones of the race will be brought together.

The whole world was condemned in Adam, who was one thousand years going down into death. All in Adam have been journeying down to destruction. The second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ and his associates in the world, will bring all up to perfection during the thousand years. Now the Lord's spirit is poured out upon his servants and handmaidens—then the spirit of the Lord shall be poured out upon all flesh—not limited as now. How glad we are that the time is coming when all the world shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, and that every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall give Him praise, because to know the Lord our God is to worship and adore Him. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children—those that have been our fathers in the past will be the children then. All through the Scriptures are these contrasts, showing the difference between the night and the day.

I wish to give you an illustration of the contrast in these things in connection with an experience I had when climbing to the top of a mountain, to see the sun rise the next morning. It was a weary journey going up, assisting one another. Our only light was the light of the stars and the faint light of the moon, but just before sunrise we reached the top. The first intimation of coming day was the strange illumination of the sky which widened out more and more, and as it did so the various colors of the rainbow were there, until finally the whole sky was a blazing light, and then the sun itself rose like a large ball of fire. As it rose higher and higher, we could see out over the plains for miles and miles, and we could see mountain peak after mountain peak as they were brought to view. It seemed as though Paradise was brought to view. It seemed that this beautifully represented the Lord's people now. All through the Gospel Age the Lord's people have been journeying up the narrow way by the faint light of the stars and moon; but now coming to the dawning of the day, what seasons of joy and thankfulness have come to us! Under the influences of the light of the sun we see the whole landscape—all the various pictures of the plan of the ages brought to our view.

We can look back for 6,000 years and comprehend the mysteries of God, and His mighty hand revealed. Also, we can look 1,000 years ahead under the illuminating light of the dawning day, far over against the morning sky. As we can look also a 1,000 years under the illuminating light of the dawning day, so on this mountain, we could look over against the morning sky and see the highest range of mountains in this country, eighty miles away, but because of their vast height they loomed up. They are called Sangre de Cristo, meaning Blood of Christ. So far into the age will be this mighty mountain of the blood of Christ. Then as we continued on the mountain peak and the sun getting higher and higher, down thousands of feet below, 50 miles away, there was a large city, which looked like a checker board. As we were observing the scene, an attendant came out of a house on the mountain and had a large mirror in his hand and flashed light over the city, and we saw some lights flashing in return from those who saw his light. Now as we view the beautiful purposes of God's arrangement, we have the privilege of reflecting the light that

we have seen, down upon some who are in the world yet, and oh, how it rejoices our hearts when we receive responses to the flashes of light that we are privileged to shed forth upon others!

So then, let us not be negligent concerning the privileges and opportunities of the present, but remember the words of the Master, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. While we are blessing them, there is a reflex action upon our own hearts. While receiving this knowledge in our own hearts, it will make an impression upon us. We never would have acquired anything or come to a full knowledge of anything unless we had endeavored to give it out. So then, dear friends, don't you see the more endeavor to praise the Lord our God, by revealing the light of His love and favor to others, the more He is going to bless ourselves? I suppose some think it is some selfish motive. Now we desire to manifest it in order that we may glorify our Father in Heaven. That is our chief aim, because so our Lord did. It was His highest aim. So let us refresh our minds and hearts, let us make melody in our hearts by singing of the hymn of the dawn of the morning, praising the Lord all the days of our lives.

The world is much perplexed, because they are standing on their heads and seeing things upside down, because they see the time of trouble coming, but the Lord's people manifest to others that they have very good news, glad tidings. As they see our happy faces, with a smile of love and joy and peace, they will naturally be attracted by our praising of the Lord. Let us rejoice more and more as the days go by, and let us not forget the text, "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*"

THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE

If we learn to discern the real values, we will not need to hide from ourselves the fact that we are growing older, by the count of days, weeks and months—for real values are eternal. We are not hurrying towards the hour when everything must be dropped, but rather do we move with expectant hearts towards the hour when hope may be realized, when faith may lay hold to its richest treasures, when love can come into its full inheritance. This is the meaning which the Christian Message gives to life. It is thus that we who have embraced that message may think about the passing of the years. For life is not narrowing toward the grave; it is broadening towards eternity. As the flesh weakens, the spirit achieves strength. It approaches its birthday—not night, but the Dawn lies ahead. —Author unknown.

Enjoy the blessings of this day if God sends them; and the evils bear patiently and sweetly. For this day only is ours; we are dead to yesterday, and we are not born to tomorrow. —Jeremy Taylor.

One day spent well, and agreeably to your precepts, is preferable to an eternity of error.
—Yonge.