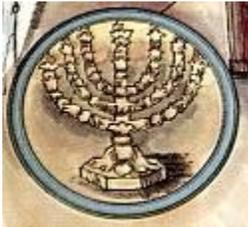


# THE PRESENT TRUTH

Bishop Stephen D. Lewis

## THE OFFICE

**Justification** : The Brazen Altar of Burnt Offering and the Laver were both outside of the Sanctuary proper, to the immediate east of the entrance. It was also in this area that the animals were slain for the services. These activities carried on outside the Sanctuary represented the process of justification and reconciliation of the sinner through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, and the acceptance of that vicarious sacrifice of the Lamb of God by the repentant sinner.



### The Golden Candlestick (Menorah).

Exo 25:31-39, 37:17-24.

Inside the Sanctuary itself, in what is known as the first apartment, or Holy Place, were three pieces of furniture. To the south side of the room was a large golden candelabra, or Menorah, that had six branches off of a central candlestick. The Menorah used pure olive oil as fuel. It was the job of the priests to daily trim the wicks (which were made of old priestly garments) and refill the bowls of oil, so that the Menorah would constantly be a source of light for first apartment or Holy Place. The Menorah represented Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world, and the olive oil was symbolic of the Holy Spirit and the wicks were symbolic of the righteousness of Christ. The

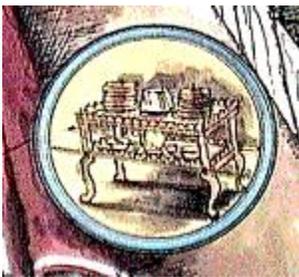
Menorah also represents the seven churches of Revelation, who are to share the light of the gospel message with the rest of the world. It can be found in Revelation 1:12 and 4:5.

Sometimes the central candlestick is illustrated as being slightly taller than the others. The Menorah is also thought to be symbolic of the 7 days of creation, with the taller candlestick representing the Seventh - day (Saturday) Sabbath, the *only* week day that God sanctified (dedicated to a Holy purpose) -

Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

Gen 2:3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

On the right is the Menorah as illustrated on the arch of Titus in Rome. The Menorah and other articles from Herod's Temple were apparently taken as war booty by Titus in 70 A.D. after the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Roman armies. The Israeli government recently asked the Vatican to search its vaults for the Menorah, so that should they have it, it might be returned to the Jewish nation. This is unlikely, since Rome was completely sacked and looted in 410 A.D. by the Visigoths, and again in 455 A.D. by the Vandals. Anything of value (such as a large solid gold candlestick) was probably taken.



### The Table of Showbread.

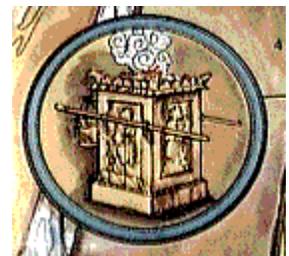
Exo 25:23-30, 37:10-16.

On the north side of the Holy Place was a small table known as the table of Showbread. It was constructed of Acacia wood and covered with gold. On it were kept 12 loaves of unleavened bread (Lev 24:5-9). These loaves were symbolic of Jesus, who is the bread of life (Jn 6:35), but they also represent the 12 tribes of Israel. Also kept on the Table of Showbread, were offerings of wine (Num 28:7), so both the bread and the wine of the Lord's supper were represented here. The Table of Showbread is alluded to in Revelation as a throne before the Candlestick, in chapter 4 verses 2-5.

### The Golden Altar of Incense.

Exo 30:1-10, 37:25-29.

On the west side of the Holy Place, immediately before the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, was a small Golden Altar of Incense. In it was a brass pot, containing hot coals from the Brazen Altar of Burnt Offerings, and it was here that a very special blend of incense was burned by the priest, which filled the Sanctuary with a sweet



smelling cloud, representing the prayers of the believers. Sacrificial blood was sometimes put on the horns of the Golden Altar of Incense (Lev. 4:7, 18). The Golden Altar of Incense also figures prominently in the book of Revelation (Rev 8:3-5) with regard to the end of judgment, or close of probation on humanity.

### **THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

When Christ gave His disciples the promise of the Spirit, He was nearing the close of His earthly ministry. He was standing in the shadow of the cross, with a full realization of the load of guilt that was to rest upon Him as the Sin Bearer. Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, He instructed His disciples regarding a most essential and complete gift which He was to bestow upon His followers--the gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of His grace. "I will pray the Father," He said, "and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:16, 17. The Saviour was pointing forward to the time when the Holy Spirit should come to do a mighty work as His representative. The evil that had been accumulating for centuries was to be resisted by the divine power of the Holy Spirit.

What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world. As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace, hearts yielded to the power of this message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. The prophecy was fulfilled, "He that is feeble. . . shall be as David; and the house of David . . . as the angel of the Lord." Zechariah 12:8. Every Christian saw in his brother a revelation of divine love and benevolence. One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.

"With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4:33. Under their labors were added to the church chosen men, who, receiving the word of truth, consecrated their lives to the work of giving to others the hope that filled their hearts with peace and joy. They could not be restrained or intimidated by threatenings. The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought. So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.

The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives, have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love.

Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high, were not thereby freed from further temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's working even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and ennobled. As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.

The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude. {Acts of the Apostles Pg. 49-50}

The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.

The office of the Holy Spirit is distinctly specified in the words of Christ: "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 16:8. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements. To the repentant sinner, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, the Holy Spirit reveals the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you," Christ said. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 16:14; 14:26.

The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures.

Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13), the Saviour declared. If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.

From the beginning, God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. This was manifest in the lives of the patriarchs. To the church in the wilderness also, in the time of Moses, God gave His "good Spirit to instruct them." Nehemiah 9:20. And in the days of the apostles He wrought mightily for His church through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The same power that sustained the patriarchs, that gave Caleb and Joshua faith and courage, and that made the work of the apostolic church effective, has upheld God's faithful children in every succeeding age. It was through the power of the Holy Spirit that during the Dark Ages the Waldensian Christians helped to prepare the way for the Reformation. It was the same power that made successful the efforts of the noble men and women who pioneered the way for the establishment of modern missions and for the translation of the Bible into the languages and dialects of all nations and peoples.

And today God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the earth. Today the heralds of the cross are going from city to city, and from land to land, preparing the way for the second advent of Christ. The standard of God's law is being exalted. The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men's hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses for God and His truth. In many places consecrated men and women may be seen communicating to others the light that has made plain to them the way of salvation through Christ. And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God.

On the other hand, there are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities, are idly waiting for some special season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow their light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service.

It is true that in the time of the end, when God's work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God's church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church.

But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest "in the time of the latter rain." In response, "the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain." "He will cause to come down . . . the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain," Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23.

But unless the members of God's church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily

they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.

To the consecrated worker there is wonderful consolation in the knowledge that even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace; and from this communion with God He went forth to strengthen and bless others. Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with heaven gathers to Himself power to resist evil and to minister to the needs of men. As the Elder Brother of our race He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith--faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work--will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against sin.

Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth's harvest. Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be "laborers together with God." {Acts of the Apostle Pg. 48-56}

There is a condition to the rest and peace here offered us by Christ. It is that of yoking up with Him. All who will accept the condition will find that the yoke of Christ will help them to bear every burden needful for them to carry. Without Christ at our side to bear the heaviest part of the load, we must indeed say that it is heavy. But yoked with Him to the car of duty, the burdens of life may all be lightly carried. And just in proportion as man acts in willing obedience to the requirements of God will come rest of spirit. He will give evidence of clear judgment and a steadfastness of character to redeem himself through faith in Christ.

Meekness and humility will characterize all who are obedient to the law of God, all who will wear the yoke of Christ with submission. These graces will bring the desirable result of peace in the service of God. In learning Christ's meekness and lowliness of heart, we shall submit the entire being to His control. Then the transforming grace of Christ will work upon heart and character, making human beings, fallen in sin, complete in Him.

Christ would teach this lesson to all who will follow Him. As our substitute and surety, standing at the head of humanity, He is our example. He was obedient to all of God's requirements. He, the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, laid aside His royalty, His position as commander in the heavenly courts, and came to our world as a man, and became subject to the law. And all this, that man might become like his Master, obedient, not to the enemy of God, but obedient to his Father in heaven; then man might engage in the service that God requires of each of His obedient children.

This constitutes the condition of salvation. And God enjoins this condition upon every human being just as verily as He enjoined it upon Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Our first parents fell, because, when tempted by Satan, they disobeyed God. The human family with few exceptions have since been under service to Satan, doing his work, wearing his yoke, and bearing his burdens. But they have found this yoke uncomfortable and galling, these burdens disagreeable and heavy to be borne.

But Christ pledged His own life in order that the transgressor might be spared, that man might have another trial. He would Himself stand in man's place; He would clothe Himself in the garb of humanity, and live the life of man from the very beginning. He would pass through the stages of infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood, that He might show man how he should live, how he should employ his hours of probation.

Christ acknowledged Himself subject to the law. If this were not so, He could not be our Saviour, and take away our sin. And God designs that man shall live up to every specification of the law, that he may reveal a character after the pattern given him by Christ. He desires that while in the world His followers shall not be of the world, and that their experience shall find expression in the words, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" [Gal. 2:20].

The man who is niggardly, who possesses a narrow, self-serving mind, is himself responsible for those objectionable traits of character; for Christ has made it possible for him to be freed from these defects. He has placed within the reach of man the possibility of receiving Him. And He bears testimony, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" [John 1:12].

This power is not the human agent. It is the power of God. When a soul really receives Christ, he receives His righteousness. He lives the life of Christ. Then as he trains himself to behold Christ, to study His life and practice His virtues, he eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God.

Those whose characters are marred by a passionate disposition, should be in haste to seek the Lord. From their hearts the prayer should arise, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" [Ps. 51:10]. Give me a correct estimate of Jesus Christ and His merits. Lead me by His Spirit. "Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee" [verse 13].

In His Son God has placed before the human agent the life he is to live. It is not for him to be constantly branching out in lines of his own choosing, and placing his will against the power of the will of God. Yet many are expending their God-given powers in hopeless pursuit of things they can never attain. How different are the lives of such when compared with that of their Example, who for their sakes pledged Himself to a life of self-denial, of poverty, and of suffering, unappreciated, unacknowledged, despised, and rejected. Christ was often weary and hungry, and filled with sorrow in the consciousness of unrequited love. The nation whom He came to save and bless did not realize His mission. They had departed from God, and were constantly misunderstanding and misinterpreting Him. [John 1:11; Isa. 53:3, 5, 7, quoted.]

In view of the abundant evidence God has given of His love, His sympathy, and His benevolence, He requires our willing obedience. His love will prove a safeguard to every soul. It will bar the path to sin and selfish indulgence. In looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, in studying His life of self-denial and self-sacrifice, we are armed with the same mind to do the same service. "If any man will come after Me," says Christ, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me [Matt. 16:24]. To the true follower of Christ there is a pleasure in doing the things that Christ has done in his behalf. He considers it not an arbitrary exaction, but a clear specification of his only safety from the advances of the wily foe who is ever seeking to entangle our feet and make our path difficult.

God knows that if we were left to follow our own inclinations, to go just where our will would lead us, we would fall into Satan's lines and become possessors of his attributes. Therefore the law of God confines us to the will of One who is high and noble and elevating. He desires that we shall patiently and wisely take up the duties of service. It is for our present and eternal good to work the works of God. If His will is cheerfully and gratefully accepted, the results will be seen in the service rendered and in the character developed.

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. Service is looked upon by such a one in the light of drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul.

Christ assumed humanity with all its humiliation and service, that He might cut man loose from Satan's chariot car as a bond slave. He knew that the service of Satan can bring only wretchedness and misery and distress in its train. The sinner is a stranger to repose and rest. The sinner says, I want my freedom. By this he would get rid of all restraint by casting aside the law of God. But it is this desire that has made the world what it is today--corrupt as in the days of Noah, and polluted as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

God presents before us two classes. For the one--the wicked--He says, "There is no peace" [Isa. 48:22]. Of the other, "Great peace have they that love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" [Ps. 119:165]. Of that law He says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward" [Ps. 19:7-11]. We should deem our service for God a pleasure, and should make it the expression of our love for Him.

Law and service are a part of every true life. Idleness is sin. Money is supposed to carry its possessor above service, and because a man has money he is allowed to spend his time in idleness. But the devil engages all such in the meanest kind of work. It is the Lord who has a right to our service. The more an individual lives for himself, and the less for the good of others the less noble and pure will he be in his own life. His moral power degenerates while living for himself. Compare that idle life with the one who looks his responsibilities in the face, and takes up his life work for God and for his fellowmen.

All who sense their duty to their fellowmen will accept the offer to work in partnership with Jesus Christ, a life of obedience and service. In this way alone can they give the divine credentials to the world. These will entertain a high conception of life. It is not to them a round of worldly pleasure and amusement. This can never satisfy the hungry soul. The truth is noble, elevating, and sacred, and the wisdom and knowledge given us in it is a tree of life to all who will accept it.

In the 58th chapter of Isaiah God has placed before us the service He would have us do for our fellowmen and for Him. He says, [Isa. 58:6-11 quoted].

## SHARING IN THE ATONEMENT

### God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . —Galatians 6:14

Then why not try this kind of service? The Lord calls His yoke easy, and His burden light. Yet that yoke will not give us a life of ease and freedom and selfish indulgence. The life of Christ was one of self-denial and self-sacrifice at every step. And His true follower, with consistent, Christlike tenderness and love, will follow in the footsteps of his Master; and as he advances in this life, he will become inspired with the spirit and life of Christ. {Ms. 20, 1897, Written at "Sunnyside," Cooranbong, NSW, March, 1897}

The gospel of Jesus Christ always forces a decision of our will. Have I accepted God's verdict on sin as judged on the Cross of Christ? Do I have even the slightest interest in the death of Jesus? Do I want to be identified with His death— to be completely dead to all interest in sin, worldliness, and self? Do I long to be so closely identified with Jesus that I am of no value for anything except Him and His purposes? The great privilege of discipleship is that I can commit myself under the banner of His Cross, and that means death to sin. You must get alone with Jesus and either decide to tell Him that you do not want sin to die out in you, or that at any cost you want to be identified with His death. When you act in confident faith in what our Lord did on the cross, a supernatural identification with His death takes place immediately. And you will come to know through a higher knowledge that your old life was "crucified with Him" (Romans 6:6). The proof that your old life is dead, having been "crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20), is the amazing ease with which the life of God in you now enables you to obey the voice of Jesus Christ.

Every once in a while our Lord gives us a glimpse of what we would be like if it were not for Him. This is a confirmation of what He said— ". . . without Me you can do nothing" ( John 15:5 ). That is why the underlying foundation of Christianity is personal, passionate devotion to the Lord Jesus. We mistake the joy of our first introduction into God's kingdom as His purpose for getting us there. Yet God's purpose in getting us into His kingdom is that we may realize all that identification with Jesus Christ means.

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end.