

John Trzyna - Isaiah 45:1-3

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My words may be unctuous and blessed to all. I will seek to be faithful to the Lord, the truth, the brethren, and all with whom I have to do not only in great matters, but also in the little things of life. Trusted myself to divine care and the providential overruling of all my interests. For my highest welfare. I will seek not only to be pure in heart, but to repel all anxiety, all discontent, all discouragement.

I will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord's providence may permit because faith can firmly trust him. Come what may.

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. May Thy rule come into my heart more and more, and thy will be done in my mortal body, relying on the assistance of Thy promised grace to help in every time of need. Through Jesus Christ, O Lord, I register this vow. Daily will I remember at the throne of heavenly grace the general interests of the harvest work and particularly the share which I myself am privileged to enjoy in that work.

And the dear co laborers everywhere. I vow to still more carefully, if possible, scrutinize my thoughts and words and doings to the intent that I may be the better and able to serve thee and thy dear flock. I vow to thee that I will be on the alert to resist everything akin to spiritism and occultism, and remembering that there are but the two masters, I shall resist these snares in all reasonable ways. As being of the adversary.

I further vow that with the exceptions below, I will at all times and in all places conduct myself towards those of the opposite sex in private, exactly as I would do with them in public in the presence of a congregation of the Lord's people, and so far as reasonably possible, I will avoid being in the same room with any of the opposite sex alone unless the door of the room stand wide open. Exceptions in the case of brethren, wife, children, mother and natural sisters in the case of sisters, husband, children, father and natural brothers.

Now, dear friends, let us approach the heavenly throne of grace to ask the Lord's blessings upon our gathering this morning, and we'll ask brother Stuart Sowers to lead us in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, we hallow Thy precious name in the name of Jesus. We come to thee again this morning on this last day of convention. We are grateful to Thee for the two days that we have had for the many good things that Thou hast brought to us. We pray, Father, that Thou would help each one of us retain these things, make them a part of our daily lives and guide us in the way that we know that Thou would Have us go to follow after Thy Son.

We pray for a blessing upon this final day that our minds will be receptive to the truths that we will hear, and that we might be strengthened by them for whatever trials might lie ahead, and that we might be better able to serve Thee.

We do remember our brethren, wherever they might be, throughout all the earth this day we ask that Thou would bring a special blessing to them in accordance with Thy divine wisdom.

And we long for Thy kingdom, and we pray that it be soon established throughout all the earth that all mankind will come to know Thee and be able to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. We would ask now a special blessing on our brother Trezena as he speaks to us. We ask that Thou would guide him and that the words he speak with our message, that Thou would have us hear, that thou

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knowest we have need of again. We ask all favors.

We give Thee all thanks, and we pray forgiveness of our many shortcomings, all in the name of Jesus. Amen.

My dear friends, this morning when I arrived here, there were four sisters sitting out there at the patio, and when I greeted them, offered them my good morning, one sister answered, good morning, and she said, isn't it a beautiful morning? And that reminded me of a man of whom I heard many years ago, before I was in the truth, and every day when he awoke, he would greet his family and his friends, saying, good morning.

Isn't it a beautiful morning? And it didn't make any difference whether the sun was shining or whether there was a downpour. To him, it was a beautiful morning, and I think the reason for it was that he appreciated the fact that he had another day of life.

How much more should we appreciate every morning whether the sun is shining or whether there is a downpour? Life on any plane is a wonderful gift of God we have, and a special gift of God while we are on this side of the veil, because we are in the service of God and we have the hope to look forward to life on the highest plane, to have divine life with God, and I think as we bear these things in mind, and as we not only think for ourselves having this privilege, but all our brethren, our relationship toward one another, I think, will be a closer one.

So this morning we wish to say to you, good morning. It is a beautiful morning.

Let us sing, brother, to Zena's opening hymn, number 238, Praise to Him Jesus, Lord is worth to all vain the hope in the way of Thine own hearing May we share my evil heart.

Well, dear friends, this Morning. It is indeed a pleasure and a privilege to to have Brother John Prezino with us. He has, of course, spoken before and we have received a very great blessing from his service. Brother John is a very devoted Bible student. He spends a great deal of time in searching into the deep things of the truth.

He is sacrificing a great deal of his time in bringing truth to us, depths of the truth by which we will gain a greater confidence and trust in the Word of God. To have just a superficial knowledge of the Word of God is not sufficient for us. We have to know the reasons. We have to know the depth. We want to reason with God because he has invited us and we rejoice in this invitation.

We want to know of God. So it is our pleasure to introduce to you, Brother John Fruzino.

Thank you, Brother Hummel.

Before we begin, on behalf of Sister Florence and myself, we'd like to express our thanks and appreciation to the brethren here in New Brunswick for all the many kindnesses and the hospitality accorded us.

Let us open our bibles to the 45th chapter of Isaiah and read the first three verses.

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before me, and I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two lead gates, and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight. I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron, and I will give thee the treasures of darkness

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and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name and the God of Israel.

Here Isaiah had prophesied some 200 years previous that a Cyrus would appear on the scene of history, that he would not only conquer Babylon, which had not as yet become a world power, but would also free Israel from a captivity into which they had not been taken into as yet.

The prophecy also cites Cyrus as that future king, and it cites him by name. He would restore Jerusalem and Judah. He would rebuild the temple According to verse 28 in the previous chapter that said of Cyrus, he is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying, to Jerusalem thou shalt be built, and to the Temple thy foundation shall be laid also. Some of the details of the conquest of Babylon are given, not only in the second verse of the 45th chapter, but in the 27th verse of the 44th that saith, to the deep be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers, referring here to the drying up of the river Euphrates. The opening of the gates which faced the river after Cyrus troops had gone under the main gates.

When the river dried, the scriptures say to open the two lead gates, and archaeology confirms this. If you can visualize the city of Babylon, the ancient city of Babylon as a rectangular city surrounded by huge walls, and then the the Euphrates river went almost through the center of it, and then at the entrance and exit of the city were these huge river gates. But these are not the ones referred to here along the river, the entire course of the river where it was touching the city, they had additional walls.

And then in these walls were the two leave gates.

And had not the gates been open, left open carelessly because of the reveling connected with Belshazzar's feast that night, Cyrus troops, after they had entered the dried river bed, they might have been annihilated because they would have been easy prey from the high walls ahead if these two leaf gates hadn't been carelessly opened. Actually they were providentially opened.

So as the Lord had promised whose right hand he had holden or supported, we Notice in the 28th verse of the 44th chapter, he is called His Anointed. For by God's providences he was set apart for a special purpose, namely that of freeing the children of Israel from Babylonian captivity. Kings of Persia were not anointed, but this is an expression that is applied in reference to the Jewish custom of setting apart kings to the royal office by the method of anointing. Finally, after Babylon had been conquered, the Lord promised that he would give him treasures of darkness and hidden riches, secret places. In this text, treasures refers to a depository.

Hidden riches is a secret storehouse, hence a secreted valuable buried generally money. The Septuagint translates this verse as and give thee treasures of darkness deep hidden unseen treasures will I disclose to thee. When a city in ancient times was conquered or captured, the first object of search, once the city had been secured, was to find their gold, their silver, their other treasures, which were generally hid in these cellars in the dungeons, generally in the administrative or palace area of the city, and history tells us that Cyrus obtained a vast hoard of gold in his conquest of Babylon. Some £34,000 of gold, some half million talents of silver.

We have no way of determining the value of the silver, but we do know on the gold, if we transfer it into our present way of determining, money would amount to something like \$17 million. In fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy regarding Cyrus, Ezra in The first chapter of the second verse stated, thus said Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of

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the earth, and he had charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. But our text has a more significant meaning than the prophetic fulfillment it has. An antitypical lesson. Cyrus was a type of Christ at his second advent.

At his return, the waters of the Euphrates began to dry up and the antitypical Cyrus freed the captives who were in Babylon, spiritual Babylon, allowing those who desired to leave to do so, to return to the promised land, and we must remember, in the original conquest of Babylon, when Cyrus allowed the people to go free, not all of them did. Only a few took advantage of this to return to the promised land when they had the opportunity. The antitypical Cyrus loosed the loins of kings. The loose outer robe of the Orientals, when it was girt fast with a girdle, stood as an emblem of strength and preparedness for action.

On the other hand, to be ungirded meant to be feeble. Job spoke of lucid, the girdle of the strong. Job 12:21. Thus we saw this fulfilled in 1914 when the Ten Kings fell. Our Lord Justice Cyrus permitted his own children to bring back with them from Babylon the vessels of the temple, the vessels of gold, silver, the precious truths which for so many centuries had been misapplied, misunderstood and abused, as well as hidden in spiritual Babylon Christianity.

The antitypical Cyrus permitted his children to once again see, to once again appreciate the treasures of darkness, and as the Septuagint read, the deep, hidden, unseen treasure will I disclose to thee. Others besides Isaiah spoke of treasures in the Old Testament, spoke of these hidden secrets. Moses in Deuteronomy 29:29 wrote, the secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the law, and in Proverbs 3:22 3:32 we note the class which is identified with these secrets, these treasures of darkness.

It says, for the froward. This word froward means wayward, obstinate, or just plain stubborn. For the froward is abomination to the Lord. But the secret is with the righteous. It is this righteous class, this justified class, that have the secret.

We'll give one more Daniel 2:22. He revealed the deep and secret things. He knoweth what is the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. Secret. Here is the same root as the word secret in our Isaiah text, which means to hide by covering over what says the New Testament regarding the hidden riches, the treasures of darkness.

In Colossians 2, 3 Paul uses the word treasures, and this is the identical word which is found in Isaiah 45, 3 in the Septuagint translation. You must remember that the New Testament, the Masorat Hebrew Scriptures, was translated into Greek some three centuries BC and it is now referred to as the Septuagint translation, and this is the word they used when they translated the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek in our Isaiah text. The same word secret, the same word treasure, I should say. Let's begin by reading the first verse of our Colossians second chapter text verses 1, 2 and 3 for I would that ye know what great conflict I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

The Apostle Paul here is telling us the depository or the source of these treasures. He says they are hidden in Christ. He also tells us that these treasures of wisdom and knowledge, of the divine, good things and reservation, and the fellowship which God permits us to anticipate and to enjoy

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these blessings in a measure even now, are hidden in the one to whom we must come to to become members of his body, which is the true church by sacrifice, before we can even begin to have the opportunity of even searching for these treasures of darkness, or of finding any of them. You'll notice in this Colossians text that Paul introduces us to two additional words, riches and mystery. Riches, according to the concordances, is a figurative expression of the wealth and abundance of something that which God or Christ possess in boundless abundance that which Christ or God possess in boundless abundance and of mystery.

The Word is defined as the secret thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God, which are hidden from human reason, as well as from all other comprehension below the divine level, and hence must be revealed to those for whom they are intended. When we read this definition, we thought of the Scripture which things the angels desire to look into. This is even hidden from the angels, hidden from human reason, as well as from all other comprehension below the divine level, and hence must be revealed to those for whom they are intended. Young in his concordance gives us the for whom in his Definition, he says, what is known only to the initiated. We now begin to see the relationship between treasures, riches and mystery.

A treasure is something which we cherish, something which we take a special pleasure in, something in which we delight in. It is in our thoughts, our plans, our hopes. It's an inspiration in our lives. It's an incentive to give us the energy, the perseverance, the zeal, as well as the endurance for the hope with which it enkindles. The treasures which the world possesses yield best but little satisfaction.

Some find treasure in wealth and fame and social standing. In their homes.

In our neighborhood where we live in Chicago, we would say that the treasure our neighbors have are their beautiful green lawns. We've never been able to get our lawn as green as the rest of them, but we know that these treasures are transitory. Our Lord said so in Matthew 6, 1921, where he said, lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

These treasures which the world has, being earthly, are subject to perish, subject to change, decay, and if their heart is centered in any of these, and should they lose it, it would turn them to sadness. They would become dejected, it would become a severe blow. I know a good example at work. A good number of the people we work with have fairly sizable investments in the stock market.

And we don't have to ask them what happened to the market. At the end of the day, we can just look at their faces, you know, we know that it must have gone down about 10 points because they're just walking with their nose backing on the floor. But not so with the riches, the treasures which are laid up in heaven, the heavenly riches. We might ask, then, what are these treasures that can be laid up in heaven?

In the heavenly depository, not in the underground cellars which Cyrus had to search in order to find the treasures of Babylon. According to the Divine word, everything that is pure and holy and good is acceptable there. The chiefest of all, however, of all these treasures is the personal friendship and love of Christ. If we have gained this treasure, we have gained one which never changes.

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Romans 8:35, 39.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or pearl or sword, as it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Luke the 12th chapter, 31st to the 34th chapter, which is a corollary scripture to our Matthew 6 text which we just read, our Lord tells us in addition, in the 31st and 32nd verses, but rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Here in our Lord's admonitions to his apostles, he sets before them the treasures of the kingdom of heaven also he further tells them that it was the Father's good pleasure to so do the dying God says, fear not, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom. God has outlined for us very definite promises of redemption and deliverance from sin and death, and has called us by his grace to be the heirs of His Son who will be the heir of all things. We are called to be joint heirs and to be partakers of the Divine nature.

We are called to constitute a royal priesthood, and there is but one procedure, one definite procedure for all of those who would be heirs of this king kingdom. It's the same for all. There are no shortcuts. We must recognize that we are sinners and unworthy of any divine notice.

We must recognize our Lord as our Redeemer as well as the Redeemer of the entire world of mankind, and recognize that although this sacrifice will ultimately cleanse the entire world in the great work of reconciliation, that this will be accomplished in the mediatorial phase of our Lord's reign, which is still future. They hear the Lord's message that he is now seeking members for that kingdom class, and they make a full, unreserved consecration to do his will. From the time of making the consecration to become the Lord's servants, they now come to the recognition of that heavenly kingdom and of this great treasure which is beyond all comparison and value as defined earlier, riches, wealth, and boundless abundance. Paul expresses it in 1 Corinthians 2, 9, 10, where he says, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

We know from such scriptures as Revelation 3:18 and the 45th Psalm that the divine nature is symbolized by gold. The condition of the church in glory, the object of the seizure of Babylon by Cyrus was not only for the purpose of dominion, but for her gold, for her treasures. So with the church, this becomes her objective, just as it became Paul's objective when he said in Philippians 3, 13, 14, this one thing I do.

In one of our Lord's parables, he makes mention of treasure. This is recorded in Matthew 13:44. It's a single verse parable again. The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in the field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he had, and buyeth that field. In our understanding of parables, we must keep in mind that the Lord used illustrations which were common to his day, illustrations which were familiar not only to the apostles, but to the people in general back there.

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Throughout Israel's long history, Palestine has been a land where the inhabitants had often buried treasure. There were many reasons for this. The land had been swept frequently by foreign conquerors and people. When they seen the approaching armies coming, they would hide whatever valuables they have in the ground, and they would generally hide these in the middle of an open field, because this is the most difficult place to find a treasure. Also, men leaving for war, they had no banks or safety deposit boxes back there.

They wouldn't trust their neighbors, probably not even their own relatives when they left. So they would take the treasure and bury it out in the field, and also, the land was full of robber bands. Someone who was on a journey would see a suspicious group approaching, and rather than take a chance, he buried the treasure so as to avoid being robbed. As a result, if any of these people were killed after the treasure had been hid, the treasure would remain hidden.

And this was common back there. When our Lord spoke of treasure which was hidden in the field, they all understood the illustration, and since many of the population were poor, the finding of such treasure would make them weak, would make them rich. This was something that they had on their minds, you might say, all the time, if they could, only while they're plowing the field or while they're doing some other work, if they would run across some of this treasure, they wouldn't have to work the rest of their lives. Our parable begins with the kingdom of heaven.

Is like unto and this is a common beginning of nearly all of our Lord's parables, and the teachings are applicable not only to the finished Messianic kingdom. But the majority of these parables refer to the kingdom class of the present time, the Gospel age and its harvest.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto Treasure hid in the field Here the desirability of obtaining joint heirship with Christ is pictured as a treasure the finer realizing the value, he desires it for himself. Our Master declared that those who heard him then, and us who receive him, now that he has the information to give respecting this treasure for he had already found it, and he was prepared to shortly he was prepared shortly to pay the great price which would purchase that field, purchase the world. The field is the world now. He was offering to us this treasure a share in the Messianic kingdom, the which when a man hath found, he hideth and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field. The finder, realizing its great value, desires it for himself, and he exercises such faith that he goes and disposes of all his property in order to buy that field.

Only those who appreciate the Gospel message will gain its precious promises. If we love the present life, the present joys, the present aspirations, then we will labor for these. But if we intelligently hear the Gospel offer, and by faith accepted and in proportion to our faith, and our appreciation will be our self sacrificing zeal to attain that prize, and it will cost us all of our earthly goods. In what respect is this treasure hid? In what sense is it hidden?

Paul speaks of this treasure which had been hidden afield in Colossians 1:23. Even the mystery which had been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints. Also, we are told from whom it was hid by our Lord in Luke 10:21 I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hath revealed them to unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight, as these scriptures tell us to whom it was revealed. Paul says it was made manifest to his saints.

Our Lord says he hath revealed them unto babes. Babes here is not referring to immature Christians, as we find in Hebrews 5:12 13, where Paul was speaking of the milk of the Word. But in this specific Scripture, the thought of this word babes is innocence unspoiled by learning those with

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whom God is pleased.

Selleth all that he had when we think how much time and energy is put forth and how much money and influence is expended in order to obtain some small honor in the world, and once this is done, these honors or the wealth that's obtained will last but for a few short years, and will not be satisfying at best, then we can appreciate the more the true treasures of glory, honor, and immortality, which the Father had in reservation for his called chosen and faithful class. When our Lord found the prize, this treasure, he sold all that he had. We read looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2 as King Cyrus, at the head of the huge Persian army, as his generals was exposed to all the risks of war.

In other words, he was in the thick of the fray. So with our Lord he was willing to risk, and he did risk all. When he went into death, he not only forfeited his pre human existence, but in addition his perfect humanity, so that he could purchase his field purchase the world selleth all that he had.

The Scriptures give us an illustration of one who would not sell all that he had in order to purchase this treasure, and this is the account of the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16 22. We'll only read the first two and the last two verses of the account.

And behold, one came and said unto him, good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, why callest thou me good? There is none good but one that is God. But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments, and skipping down to the 21st verse, Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me.

And when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions as a Jew. The rich young ruler knew that the law knew of the law, and he knew of its requirements, and he realized that under that covenant none had gained eternal life, not even Moses. The test which the Lord had subjected him to was a crucial one, and showed clearly the difference between the Spirit of the law and the letter of the law. But the cross was too heavy for this rich young ruler.

The Master's prescription was too bitter. The Scripture says he went away sorrowful. Other translations say, went away grieved, sad at heart, in gloom, in deep distress and no wonder the superlatives. For he had passed up the treasures of darkness.

Lest we be too harsh in our judgment of the rich young ruler, the Scriptures tell us of an entire nation that passed up these treasures of darkness. Paul tells us in Romans 11:7, 8. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded or callous.

According as it is written, God had given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear. Unto this day, by virtue of Israel being the natural seed of Abraham, they were given the first opportunity of becoming the spiritual seed of promise. At the time of our first advent, Israel was on trial. They were on trial before God and before their own law covenant, which they had promised to keep. By keeping this law perfectly, they would have been worthy of eternal life.

But this test they failed. The commandment which was ordained to life I found to be unto death. Romans 7:10. For more than 16 centuries, Israel had been waiting for the fulfillment of God's

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promises that they would be a great nation, and that through him the divine blessing would flow unto all of the nations of the earth. According to Deuteronomy, the 28th chapter.

But to be ready, they must be a holy nation. Just preceding Jesus, John the Baptist had been sent to them, preaching reformation and repentance, preaching for them to get back in harmony with the law, preaching that their hearts might be prepared to recognize themselves as sinners and to receive their long promised Messiah when he would be finally revealed to them. But instead, only a small remnant recognized the Lord, recognized his true purpose, and accepted the Gospel message. Accordingly, our Lord strongly rebuked them through their leaders, their scribes, and their Pharisees. Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation, bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Then our Lord cast them off as a nation.

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Thus, as a nation, just as the rich young ruler, they had passed up the treasures of darkness, the hidden riches in secret places, and instead they slew the king of glory. But after the spiritual kingdom of God shall have been exalted, the Scriptures assure us that God's favor would once again return to natural Israel. For in Romans 11:1 2, we read, I say, then hath God cast away his people.

God forbid. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people, whom he foreknew with the ancient worthies as their head. They will be the first nation to be blessed under the new order of things in the kingdom arrangement which will then prevail. They will recognize him whom they slew, and then through them those of his people who are in harmony with his will.

Through them the blessings will extend to every nation of the earth. Zechariah 8:13 and it shall come to pass that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hearts be strong.

How is this treasure different from an earthly treasure? How is it possible for this treasure to remain hidden, to remain in darkness, just as Babylon's treasures remain hidden in the Dungy caverns until Cyrus search parties came upon it?

Well, just try putting the message of the kingdom into the papers, on radio or TV or tracking the neighborhood and see what happens, and I'm sure New Brunswick has had the same experience that we've had back home. After a huge effort in a public witness manner, we find that perhaps only one or two will come to a public talk or film. Oftentimes none.

The scriptures call our attention to the fact that the nominal church of the present time, the symbolic Laodicea Babylon, also claims to be rich. Revelation 3:17 18 because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold dried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see. Notice the gold again here and notice the word rich again. This then is the condition of the nominal church today.

As the Laodiceans back in the apostles times looked upon their material wealth and prosperity, so today's churchianity looks upon their riches and their possessions, which are all transitory. But the

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Lord declared, as we read, that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind, naked and Perhaps it was somewhat difficult to see the full force of this scripture in Brother Russell's day. But since the advent of Modernism in these systems with its evolution and atheism theories which have brushed aside original sin, it has brushed aside the virgin birth and the need of a redeemer, in other words, it's brushed aside the ransom. We now see more than ever the full force of the Revelator's word, but the Symbolic Laodicea will not take the consul, buy of me gold, the true treasures, the hidden riches, but they will go down to destruction with the political and the financial systems with which they are allied with. In the last seven plagues she will go down in a great time of trouble with which the age will terminate, cast as a millstone into the sea.

It will be during this time that this is the time of the seventh plague, when Babylon came into remembrance before God. In the next verse, in verse 21, this is in Revelation 16 we read, and there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven. Every stone about the weight of a talent, and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great Job spoke of the same hail in the 38th chapter, verses 22 and 23.

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble? Against the day of battle and war, the time of trouble would not be complete, and the world would not be prepared for the reign of righteousness were it not for this hail. The seventh plague upon Egypt was hail, but it did not affect the Israelites. So we believe that the symbolic hail will affect only those who are in opposition to the truth.

And since the hail came down from heaven, it is from the true spiritual powers. Because the old heavens had passed away, the corrupt ones had been swept away by that time. These are the new heavens which will replace the old. As a secondary fulfillment of this Scripture, we feel that the Hail will be literal coming down upon Israel's enemies during Jacob's trouble, just as the literal hail was cast down upon the Amorites when Joshua fought the five Kings before Gibeon.

But by this time the church will have passed off the scene, for she will have attained that which she had been striving for during the past 19 centuries to be with her Lord in glory. For she will have inherited the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places. May the Lord add his blessings.

Thank you, Brother John. I neglected to mention at the beginning that the title of Brother John's discourse was Treasures of Darkness, as taken from the 45th chapter and the third verse of Isaiah. I believe that from Brother John's words we have our appreciation exercised this morning that we have this great privilege to have found this hidden treasure, that we have the privilege of being children of God, and of being in his word and in his plans and purposes for the salvation of mankind. So we want to thank brother John for this message at the present time.

We'd like to point out that there's a very short intermission of only 15 minutes, so we ask you not to go too far away. Let us close this part of our service with hymn number 109 SA for all my life, I SA my heart is ever through his kind Heavenly Father, we come before Thee to thank Thee for Thy interest, Thy guidance with us. We ask Thee to bless the words that have been spoken. We pray that we may continue to strive to be ever faithful to our covenant of sacrifice with Thee. Continue to strive to obtain these heavenly treasures which Thou hast promised to us.

We ask Thy blessing now upon the continued sessions of this convention, plus the ones who will subsequently serve us here. We pray all these favors and blessings in Jesus, their name. Amen.