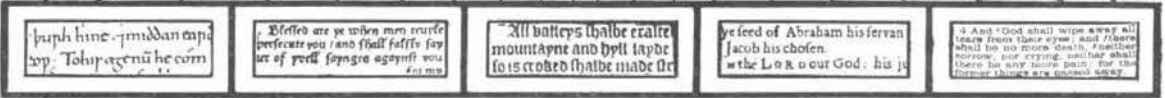


BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



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The Reality of the Unseen World.

The nature of the spiritual world has defied the powers of human imagination ever since man first began to think. There is no evidence that even in those very early days of human history when monotheism was universal and all mankind worshipped God with a tolerably clear idea of His character and attributes there was any definite conception of that realm which lies beyond the portals of human sense. The Genesis story of the Heavenly Guardians—the Cherubim—barring access to the lost Paradise is a fairly clear indication of early man's own realisation that the spirit world and the human world were no longer in that close contact which was characteristic of early days. Throughout the ages men have sought by pen and pencil to visualise and describe the "glory land" but always, until the last few generations, in anthropomorphic terms. Even to-day there is little realisation on the part of many believing Christians that the characteristics of that world of necessity must be very different from our own.

The old conceptions had one advantage in that they maintained the idea of **reality** in the other world. When the early Mesopotamians and Egyptians went down to the grave they took with them abundant material provision for the next life. The Egyptians went into death expecting to wait until the "Last Day" when, if the "Judges" had decreed them worthy of life, they would rise again and take their bodies, preserved for the occasion, and resume possession of the property which had been buried with them. The Sumerians and Accadians—from whom Abraham came—on the other hand, placed their Paradise "beyond the mouths of the rivers," i.e., beyond the shores of the Persian Gulf, and expected to be translated there with all their paraphernalia at the time of death. Sir Leonard Woolley has recounted a very human incident which illustrates this well. In one of the great pits in which lay buried an early king together with his attendants, slain to accompany him to the other world, there were found the remains of a young girl who, instead of wearing her silver hair ribbon wreathed in her hair as did her companions, had it rolled up and held tightly in her hand. Sir Leonard remarks that she was probably late for the ceremony and had insufficient time to finish her preparation. The girl evidently intended to complete her toilet in the

other world, being quite confident as to a safe arrival there, complete with hair ribbon.

It was left to Greek philosophy to etherealise and spiritualise these very material ideas about the "other world." The early Greeks believed in a full-blooded race of gods holding high court on the heights of Olympus, but when at last men climbed Mount Olympus and found there were no gods there, no vast banqueting halls nor Elysian fields, nothing but snow-clad slopes and wind-swept crags, the other world became to them a shadowy unreal sphere where disembodied spirits, the "shades" of the departed, moved in tolerable content or intense melancholy, desiring nothing better than to be delivered from their unhappy plight. Plato's theory of the immortality of the soul was built upon this philosophy.

This conception of the "soul" having been carried over into Christian belief by way of the Gnosticism of the first and second centuries after Christ, the Christian heaven was pictured as a strange mixture of the real and the unreal, the material and the intangible. Thus we had—and still have—such anomalies as the Lord Jesus Christ in His heavenly glory retaining the fleshly body crucified on Calvary, still bearing the wound prints, and His attendant angels as spirits, shadowy, intangible beings. The Church of Christ at His return is said to be "raptured", which is defined as a translation of the physical human body to the heavenly sphere, to be stamped with the impress of heavenly glory, but at an almost simultaneous time the souls of the wicked are to be cast into hell and tormented with literal fire.

All this is so palpably illogical that a completely new angle of approach to the problem of defining the spiritual world in terms appropriate to present day knowledge would seem to be profitable. It may be useful here to recall Drummond's well-known insistence that after the inadequacy of each of two antagonistic definitions of a truth has been demonstrated, the **composition** of the two points the way to a better understanding of the vital truth. In this instance it may be suggested, in the light of to-day, that the unseen world is both **tangible and intangible**; intangible to we who on this side of the veil find our human senses incapable of discerning that world—but to those who inhabit that world, as tangible and real as our

own world is to us.

In the natural reaction from the excessive materialism of "Dark Ages" theology this possibility has been often ignored. The enlargement of Christian thought which has come as a result of realising that God has a destiny for the human race on earth and simultaneously a destiny for certain members of the human race—the "Church" of Christ—in heaven has caused a partial throw-back to an excessively intangible, "shadowy" conception of the spiritual world. It is true that the old theology had little to commend it—the choice of occupation throughout all eternity being limited to the alternatives of playing a harp or blowing a trumpet, both of them diversions likely to pall after a time. At the same time, to conceive the glories of the spirit realm to consist of a vast expanse of empty space illumined by supernatural light and peopled only by tenuous wraith-like forms is no more logical. The glories of the spiritual world, although incapable of accurate description by man, are greater in every respect than any which the earth can show. To those who, responding to the call to discipleship now, expect to see for themselves the wonders of that world, it would come as an overwhelming disappointment to find that after all there was nothing to do, nothing to create, nothing in which to rejoice. The great hope of the Christian is that, made like his Lord and able to see Him as He is (5 John 3; 2) he may be able to co-operate more effectively and more whole-heartedly with the works of God. This is the hope set before His followers by Jesus; this the incentive which acts as a guiding star throughout the believer's earthly life; this the vision which enables him to endure "as seeing Him Who is invisible."

How then can we visualise this world which is at once real and not real—a "spiritual" world to us as we think of the invisible and powerful influence which it manifests to-day, and yet a substantially material one when we think of the activities included in the programme awaiting those from earth who eventually attain that world—as well as the ceaseless activity already manifested by angelic beings who now carry out the works of God?

In everyday life it is a common experience to switch on a radio receiver and tune into a particular wave-length. The room is filled with music—a definite world of sound is created and is perceptible to the ears of the listener. Yet, inaudible and unknown, other worlds of sound are pulsating through that same room,

unperceived only because their wave length is different. Those radiations are just as real as the former, and in other places, from correctly tuned receivers, are yielding music just as audible. The physical receiver can discern only that to which it is adapted and tuned.

So it is with man. His fleshly organism is "tuned in", as it were, to this material order of things and his five senses are receptive to this and to no other. Whilst he "tabernacles" in this body of flesh he can never see or sense the spiritual world; but let the identity, the real individual life, be transferred from this body and impressed upon a new organism, one adapted or "tuned in" to the spiritual order of things, and immediately a new world breaks in upon his vision, and new sights, new sounds, a new touch, replace those which formerly existed. That is the clear teaching of Paul, who had good cause to understand this matter better than any other man who has ever lived (see II Cor. 12; 1-4). His declaration in II Cor. 5; 1 is this. **"We know that if our earthly dwelling place were dissolved, we have a dwelling place of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we are in discomfort, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed upon we shall not be found naked . . . not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."**

The clear implication is that the identity, the mind, the "ego," call it what we will, is transferred from one body to another and immediately begins to function in its new surroundings—its new "wave-length"—with all the powers and attributes its new organism will allow. That there is such an organism appertaining to "spirit beings" is clear from the words in I Cor. 15, given in answer to the question "How are the dead raised up and with what body do they come?" Just so surely as there is a natural body (*psuchikos*), says Paul, so there is a spiritual body (*pneumatikos*) and God will "clothe" each individual with an appropriate body, in the resurrection.

As to the powers and attributes appertaining to the spiritual order of existence, and its environment and the nature of the world in which spirit beings move, we can have no clear information nor can we expect to be able to visualise it. It is only by way of analogy that the unseen world can be presented as a reality to our minds. For example, we are familiar with the glories of colour—the vivid hues of a

flower garden or piece of tapestry, the delicate tints of the countryside in spring or the flaming glow of a sunset. Now picture one who all his life has been able to see these things only in monochrome—in black and white—and a surgical operation performed so that he can distinguish colours for the first time. Our introduction to our surroundings in the spiritual world must be something like that; the beholding of scenes surpassing the beauty and grandeur of this world as much as our sunsets and flowers surpass the black and white representations of them which we see in photographs.

Of activity in such a world it is hard to speak; for conditions will be so different from our present experience. We can, however, reason to a limited extent from our knowledge of the universal laws of God. We may safely conclude that those things which are characteristic of man's nobility and which carry him nearer to God will be found in greater degree in the other world. God is essentially and always a Creator, bringing things into existence for wise purposes. Man also is essentially a creator, and is never so happy as when he is creating something—whether it be an object of art or of utility, or a medium of happiness. It may be concluded therefore that creative powers will be possessed and exercised by all who dwell in that world. How they will be exercised we cannot certainly say, but if we say that eternal continuance of the creating of objects of beauty and utility, and things conducive to happiness, will be a feature of every world and plane of being we shall be probably not far from the truth.

A necessity to the exercise of creative powers is the acquisition of knowledge. There can be no end to learning any more than there can be an end to creating. Mankind in his eternal home upon earth will go on learning to all eternity and putting the knowledge he gains to ever new and fruitful uses. So in the spiritual world—knowledge will continue to increase for

all time and the joy of adding to knowledge in a condition where that knowledge will be continually productive of good, and only good, will not be the least of the "joys of the Kingdom."

"The communion of saints" is a phrase which, appearing as it does in the Apostles' Creed, is meaningless to the great majority of those who repeat that Creed. The communion of saints in the heavenly realms will be meaningful indeed, and that communion will be one that exists between friends who have much to impart to each other and who are in absolute heart sympathy with each other in all the varied works and occupations which fall to their lot as time rolls on.

Thus may we picture the spiritual world—real to its own peoples although shadowy to us—having its own characteristic environment, its own activities and pursuits, its own arts and sciences and blessed beyond all measure by the ever-abiding presence of its acknowledged Pre-eminent One, He who came to earth as our Lord and Saviour Jesus, and is now exalted above all that is named in heaven or on earth.

There we must draw the veil. High above that world, resplendent in glory which is beyond all comparison, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see," there dwells the Majestic Presence Who, All-wise, All-Powerful, All-loving, has created all things and waits with infinite patience for the consummation of His plans. Not even by way of analogy may we attempt to visualise the Divine Presence. We can come to Him as to a father, having confidence that His ear is attentive to our weakest cry and yet knowing that, like Moses, we can by no means look upon His face, and live. With the beloved Paul we can but render our life's devotion in glad surrender and repeat with him, "**Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible; the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.**"

I BELIEVE IN MY JOB.

IT may not be a very important job, but it is **mine**. Furthermore, it is God's job for me. He has a purpose in my life with reference to His Plan for the world's progress. No other fellow can take my place. It isn't a big place, to be sure, but for years I have been molded in a peculiar way to fill a peculiar niche in the world's work. I could take no other man's place. He has the same claim as a specialist that I make for my-

self. In the end, the man whose name was never heard beyond the home in which he lived, or the shop in which he worked, may have a larger place than the chap whose name has been a household word in two continents. Yes, I believe in my job. May I be kept true to the task which lies before me—true to myself and to God, who intrusted me with it.

(*People's Pulpit Monthly*)

That Whip of Small Cords. A note on John 2; 15.

A much misunderstood incident in our Lord's life is that recorded by John as occurring during the early stages of His ministry, the cleansing of the Temple. A similar incident also took place much later and this is recorded by the other three evangelists, but it is the one spoken about in John's Gospel which mentions the whip of small cords. The generally accepted impression is that Jesus, entering the Temple and finding it given over to all manner of merchant trading connected with the ritual sacrifices, made Himself a whip (more properly a flail or scourge) and drove out the traders by the use of sheer physical violence. This action, so contrary to the general tenor of His conduct and teaching, has been made the basis of argument to the effect that the Prince of Peace sanctioned the use of violence and that in consequence the teachings of Jesus are not incompatible with the active prosecution of war between nations.

A brief study of the passage in question reveals the false premise upon which this conclusion rests. Jesus did not in fact assault the traders with His flail at all. He drove out the beasts—the cattle and sheep—and then returned to upset the money-changers' tables and utter those burning words of denunciation which caused the guilty men before Him to slink out of the Temple precincts, quailed and cowed under the fire of His indignation.

The Authorised Version is at fault in rendering the passage "**When He had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen**" (Jno. 2; 15). The Revised Version corrects this mistranslation as follows: "**He made a scourge of cords, and cast all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen.**" This rendering is confirmed by the majority of independent translators, as may be seen by the following examples.

"**All of them he thrust forth out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen**" (Rotherham).

ON PRAYER.

Once deny that God can answer prayer, and He is degraded into a being less than His universe, a prisoner in the heart of His own creation.

(G. Campbell Morgan)

"**So he drove all—both sheep and bullocks**" (Weymouth).

"**He drove them all, sheep and cattle together**" (Moffatt).

"**He cast all out of the sanctuary, the sheep as well as the oxen**" (Concordant).

The sheep and cattle were driven out, their owners being left to round them up as best they could; the money-changers, sitting to barter the pilgrims' coins, of all nations, for the Jewish coin in which alone the Temple tribute could be paid, grovelled on the ground seeking to recover their ill-gotten and scattered gains; while the sellers of doves for the sacrifices of the very poor quickly carried their cages away as His piercing voice rang in their ears, "Take these things hence: make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

The time was the Passover. Every orthodox Jew had within the past few days scrupulously searched his house for hidden leaven and anything else that might defile, and attended to his own ceremonial cleanliness that he might keep the Passover according to ritual. Now there appeared one Who took to Himself the role of a prophet in Israel and commanded men to cease from desecrating the Temple of their God, and with that inborn awe of a man who spoke to them in the name of God they hastened to remove themselves from the Court which they knew was defiled by their presence. The fact of Christ's indignation, joined to their own knowledge that their conduct was indefensible, was sufficient to empty the Court of the Gentiles of its trafficking crowd, and it was not until after the occasion had passed and the cupidity of these men once again overcame their temporary confusion that they began to ask of Him a sign—a miracle—to establish His right to act as He had done in claiming the authority of a prophet in Israel.

To be too busy to pray gives religion a Christian burial, it is true, but it kills nevertheless.

(E. M. Bounds)

He who prays without ceasing is likely to rejoice evermore.

(Adam Clarke)

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

"YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER KNOWETH."

How good is our God! We would trust Him and trace
How kindly He dealeth:
How truly He healeth!
To us He revealeth—
The Light of His face.

How gracious is our God! our most glorious God,
'Gainst Whom we have striven!
His Son He hath given;
The vail hath been riven,
Through His precious blood.

How faithful is our God! All His promises stand,
From them we may borrow,
True balm for our sorrow:
The cares of the morrow—
May leave in His hand.

How loving is our God! In His love we abide;
Our Father who knoweth,
Our sorrow, bestoweth—
Such grace as o'erfloweth;
In Him we confide.

How great is our God! the Creator, who planned—
In grace to elect us,
Whose arm will protect us!
How can he neglect us,
The Sheep of His hand?

How marvellous is our God! He made the heavens,
In love He has called us:
By grace He hath saved us;
His great power hath kept us;
What wonderful grace!

To Him be the glory, dominion and fame,
Whose grace is His pleasure!
Come, pour out your treasure—
Of praise without measure—
To His Holy name! —(Selected)

"We have thought of Thy mercy O God, in the midst of Thy people,

Go round about Zion, and encompass her: tell ye her towers, mark ye well her strength, and observe her palaces; that ye may tell the next generation.

For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our Guide for evermore." — Psalm xlviii. 14 (Septuagint version).

"Your Heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of." — Matthew vi., 32.

PEACE WITHOUT MEASURE.

The greatest privilege of the present time is to get into the elect company of God's saints. In order to enter this company, faith and obedience are necessary requisites. That faith must recognise Jesus as the Lamb of God, the Sin-bearer. It must recognise Him also as the Pattern and Exemplar. The reward will be to those who have His spirit, His disposition, and who will walk through the present life in His footsteps. Such will eventually gain with Him glory, honour, immortality — the kingdom.

In the present time, they will to the world seem to have the unfavourable side, a battle against the world, the flesh and the adversary. The world cannot understand what pleasure and blessing these really enjoy because of the surrender of their wills to God's will, and because of the Spirit of the Lord, which they consequently receive. But these alone have the peace and joy and blessing which the world can neither give nor take away. What other men are seeking and failing to find, God's saints enjoy.

**"Peace is theirs which knows no measure
Joys which through all time abide."**

CHRIST.

Once in all history we meet a Being who never did an injury, and never resented one done to Him, never uttered an untruth, never practised a deception, and never lost an opportunity of doing good; generous in the midst of the selfish, upright in the midst of the sensual, and wise far above the wisest of earth's sages and prophets, loving and gentle, yet immovably resolute; and whose illimitable meekness and patience never once forsook Him in a vexatious, ungrateful and cruel world.

THE BOOK OF BOOKS.

No one has equalled Moses for law, nor David for poetry, nor Isaiah for vision, nor Peter for holy zeal, nor Apollos for fiery oratory, nor Paul for logic, nor John's statements of sanctified love. What a ridiculous statement that to study the Bible "marks a step backward in education!" God's Word is the very greatest of all books, and its Author the very greatest of all teachers. We do well to stay close to its pages. It is *The Book*.

A little word in kindness spoken,

A motion or a tear,

Has often healed the heart that's broken,

And made a friend sincere. — *Whittier*.



APOCALYPTIC ORIGINS.

No. 1. "The Sealed Book of Rev. 5."

After the Lord had completed His messages to the Seven Churches (Rev. 2 and 3) the method of making His further revelations was changed. From Chapter 4 onwards the further disclosures were made, in the main, by a series of moving-picture impressions, having an effect on the mind of John similar to the modern cinema picture upon the eye. There was no literal enactment of the scenes, nor audible utterance of sound, such as others not "in the Spirit" could see or hear; but to the rapt exalted state of John's receptive mind they were so real and actual that John doubted not that Jesus had sent His angel (Chap. 1; 1, 22; 8, 16) to communicate these things to him, as an expression of dispensational verities, to be recorded for the benefit and information of that and later Christian generations. Interspersed with the scenes were spoken words, sometimes by the Angel, sometimes by Jesus, at times addressed personally to John, at others, for his recording.

The Christian Church throughout its whole career, though failing to understand, has accepted the visions as well as the utterances of this book as authoritative, and in every way as binding as any other inspired portion of Holy Writ. Few have ever doubted or questioned its validity or authorship. Hence these scenic-pictures rank with all prophetic and Apostolic utterance as an expression of the Divine Will and intention, every part of which will have its appropriate fulfilment in its own due time and manner.

At the commencement of this scenic-display, John records one of the most arresting and remarkable pictures of the whole series. It is the key to all that follows.

"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." (Rev. 4; 1, 2.)

John saw himself pass through that opened door-way. Entered within, he saw a magnificent spectacle spreading itself out before him. At the moment of entry a THRONE of an extraordinary nature—the most conspicuous object of the scene—was being "set." An unnamed jewel-represented Being sat on it. Around it was an arched rainbow of emerald

hue. In close proximity, as though a part of its frame, yet free enough to fall prostrate, were four living creatures, with different facial forms, which John calls "Zoa" (mistranslated "beasts" in the A.V.).

The "surround" of the Throne, as well as its base and foundation, was as of transparent crystalline glass, deeply refractive like the sea. In this foreground were seven torches (lamps) throwing up their tongues of living fire. Around it were twenty-four lesser thrones (mistranslated "seats") on which twenty-four venerable beings, called elders, were sitting wearing golden crowns, and faultless white raiment. John heard the four "Zoa" and the four and twenty "Elders" praising the centrally Enthroned Being, for His mighty creative works.

After duly noting all these things, John's attention was attracted to a seven-sealed scroll (or book) lying in (or to) the right hand of "Him" that sat on that central throne. While thus noting this Scroll, a mighty Angel in an adjacent position proclaims with a loud voice,

"Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (Chap. 5, 2).

There seemed to be no response. Challenging heaven and earth, and all created things, it seemed to John as though no one was sufficiently worthy to accept the sweeping invitation.

"And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth was able to open the book, neither to look thereon" (v. 3).

Because no one was able to take the book John wept bitterly. To him the situation seemed hopeless. But while the fountain of tears flowed freely, a voice from one of the "Elder"-thrones sought reassuringly to comfort him, telling him that a "Worthy One" had been found who not only could but would take the Scroll and break the seals,

"Weep not; behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" (v. 5).

Checking the up-rush of tears, John looks up again at the scene, to find now,

"in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven

Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth"
(v. 6).

The "Lion of the tribe of Judah" stood there, like a "Lamb as it had been slain"; but it was a most extraordinary Lamb. It had seven horns and seven eyes in its head.

It advanced to that August Throne and took from the right hand of its emblazoned Occupant the little Scroll about which the mighty challenge had been uttered. Thereupon there break forth a mighty chorus of praise and rejoicing which, beginning with the four beasts and the twenty-four Elders, spread to the ten-thousand times ten thousand angels surrounding the thrones, and from them passed to heaven and earth's remotest bounds, till every tongue took up the anthem and called forth,

"Blessing and honour and glory, and power, (be) unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (v. 13).

This amazing investiture and acclamation ended, the four beasts uttered a loud "Amen", while the twenty-four Elders fell down in reverent worship of the "Ancient of Days" who liveth for ever and ever.

Leaving the consideration of all the remainder of this amazing symbolism for the time being, the question will be asked, Why did the taking of the little book by the Lion-Lamb make all this stir and difference to the otherwise hopeless situation? Unmistakably the passing of the little book is the all-interesting centre of that sublime scene!

John knew right well what that scene, with its supreme Judge, and assessor-witnesses and the sealed Scroll, implied. A similar court had held jurisdiction many times in Israel. Connected with his ancient land and people, John knew that Assembly as the "Court of Redemption for Alienated Inheritances." The sealed Scroll, lying in the hands of the Judge, was like the legal document containing the title-deeds of a surrendered "lot" in Israel. The day of its redemption had come, and the court had gathered, with its judge and jury, to sanction and legalize the transfer, to the redeemer, of the purchased inheritance. Upon the price of redemption being forthcoming, the judge passed over to the "redeemer" the sealed Scroll, which he then proceeded to break and render void.

At this point it will be necessary to define

what is meant by "Redemption." Usually when this word is used by Christian teachers, it carries their mind back to the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and to some spiritual blessing, now experienced, flowing out from that blessed sacrifice. Very few see anything more in it than the laying down of the Master's life. There is much more in the word "Redemption" in its Hebrew usage. The word comes to us and takes its significance from certain laws and customs which made it impossible to alienate estates beyond a certain time. No matter why a man may have been compelled to dispose of his "lot"—(his inheritance in the land)—or whoever may have taken possession of it meanwhile, it returned to its owner (or his heirs) in the year of Jubilee, unpurchased. All debts were cancelled, and all land and slaves went out free. In addition to this Jubilee release, another enactment gave the disponent of an estate the right of redemption, or failing himself, the next-of-kin could redeem it. (Deut. 5; 5-10.)

An illustration of this is found in the book of Ruth. Elimelech and Naomi, fallen on straitened times, had sold their lot in Israel and removed into Moab. Elimelech died in Moab, and so did Naomi's two sons. Naomi, accompanied by a daughter-in-law, Ruth, returned to Israel, and found home and shelter with her kinsman, Boaz. A nearer kinsman than Boaz existed, to whom the first right of redemption fell. By another statute, however, he who redeemed the land, must take also the childless wife of a deceased owner, and raise up seed to his kinsman, that his inheritance be not blotted out in Israel. The nearer kinsman desired not to take Ruth to wife, and passed on his prior right to the second-of-kin, Boaz. The token of this surrendered right was to pluck from the foot a shoe, and bestow it upon the redeemer. This Naomi's kinsman did to Boaz.

Boaz had bought, as Naomi's kinsman, in her stead, and with her consent, the inheritance of Elimelech (and his sons) which had been "deeded" away (and incidentally the wife also of one of the heirs). In the disposing of an inheritance two scrolls were prepared, both identically worded. One was left open, to be read at any time, by any interested party. The other was sealed by the purchaser's own signet, and then duly signed and attested on the outside by his witnesses. A sealed, wit-

nessed scroll was always the evidence of an alienated inheritance, and gave its possessor the right to occupy and harvest the "lot", until the Jubilee, or some specified earlier day of redemption.

(Illustrating the use of the two scrolls, we learn how Jeremiah purchased the field of his kinsman in Anathoth (see Jer. 32; 6 to 12). After weighing out the silver, Jeremiah "took the evidences of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open" (verse II).)

When any person (whether the original proprietor or another acquiring his right) was found legally competent and willing to "take" and destroy the "sealed" scroll, thus redeeming the alienated inheritance, he was called in Hebrew, "the GOEL" or Redeemer. The inheritance, thus redeemed, became for a time, his own, and he might then proceed to eject and dispossess any other person found on the "lot", himself claiming and taking its harvest for himself.

This redemption procedure, culled from the types and shadows given to Israel, is the basis of this sublime picture revealed to John within that Heavenly door—and this process of redemption, carried through by the near kinsman—the Lion of the tribe of Judah—is both the key and the subject matter of the whole remainder of the Book of Revelation. It is, in fact, the grand culmination of the whole Plan of God.

Briefly told, the story is this. Adam sinned, and brought ruin to his hopes and expectations. Because God foreknew that a satisfactory Saviour would, in due time, be found, He allowed Adam's race to perpetuate itself under sin. From among this provisionally ransomed race God made choice of Abraham and his seed to be the channel of His mercy to all flesh. To the earthly children of Abraham, God offered, if faithful while He trained and equipped them, to make them a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex. 19; 5-6) because all the earth was His—i.e., coming with in His purposes.

By means of His righteous laws which He gave them, and the promises of attaining life ultimately, God purposed to make Israel the channel through which He would reach out to gather the outcast nations of the world.

Israelites were to invite other peoples into her commonwealth as proselytes of the gate and under cover of her mercy-seat to wait, like Israel, until the real sacrifice for sins should be offered. But Israel failed miserably. She fell to other gods and forgot her own.

From Sinai on, she should have been God's Kingdom, the first and chief nation among men. God's offer was to make her "a kingdom—a priestly kingdom—and a holy nation." That inheritance, entered upon at Sinai, was forfeited by her sin. Not only that, Israel sold herself to "sin"—for nought (Isa. 52; 3) so she was additionally, a slave. God's purpose regarding the nations was frustrated temporarily by Israel's perversion and fall.

The story of Revelation is a two-fold one. It reaches out to all the families of the earth, and gives them all as children of Adam the benefits of His Ransom-price. But it must be as previously planned. It must come through Israel. Her Kinsman of Judah redeemed her inheritance for her, and proposes to restore to her the despised and forfeited "lot" for which she was chosen by the Almighty God of Abraham (Gen. 17; 1).

Meantime Almighty God gave to the Gentiles the place of supreme authority in the earth during the season of Israel's rejection—i.e., during the Times of the Gentiles. The story of this book (which is the kernel and capstone of all revelation) tells of the steps taken by the Kinsman Redeemer, first, to eject and dispossess the alien Gentile; then the restoration to Israel of her unique place as God's chosen channel; and then through her the final ingathering of all the worthy ones of the nations into His everlasting Kingdom. That explains the use of so much Hebrew thought and idiom in this wonderful book. It is the redemption charter of Israel.

The footstep followers of the Worthy Lamb—the Church of God—has her own unique place in this programme. She does not need to appropriate Israel's place or promises. Her inheritance, more glorious than others, has never been forfeited—she is joint-heir of an inheritance won for Himself and her by the Worthy Lamb of God—the reward of His faithfulness unto death.

THE STUDENTS' PAGE

The Flood.

An interesting evidence of the widespread nature of the Deluge is afforded by the fact that the whole of London and the South of England has a stratum of alluvial mud ranging from five to thirty feet thick, shown to have been laid down under sustained flood conditions in very slow moving waters. This stratum contains man-made implements and the bones of animals such as the mammoth, hippopotamus, lion, etc. There are indications that it was laid down at a time when England enjoyed a sub-tropical climate. At Stoke Newington, London, there is an area on this stratum which was evidently devoted to the manufacture of flint implements, and there is evidence to show that the workers abandoned this area in great haste, leaving great quantities of finished tools behind. The whole of these indications point to the same catastrophe which laid the deep bed of clay over Southern Mesopotamia, pronounced by Sir Leonard Woolley some years ago to be concrete proof of the reality of the Flood story in Genesis.

To Know Good and Evil. (Gen. 3; 24)

An interesting line of thought is afforded by the assertion of scholars that the expression "is become" (*hayah*) in Gen. 3; 24 is in the preterite or "past" tense and is more correctly rendered "the man who *was* like us as to his knowledge of good and evil..." The importance of this lies in the fact that it was not the declension of humanity into sin that made him "become like one of Us"; on the contrary, it took him farther away from God. Rotherham remarks that "man" in this verse is intended to refer to the species and not to an individual (Adam) and viewed in this light the indication would be that man in his primitive state, before the Fall, was made like the "*elohim*"—the angels, in so far as his (progressive) knowledge of evil was concerned. The angels gained their knowledge of the distinction between good and evil by logical reasoning on the basis of the laws of God. Had man continued in harmony with his Creator he would have done the same, but he chose another way instead, and in consequence is now reaping the fruits of that way—the way of bitter experience. Therefore is man barred from the Tree of Life—the powers of ever-continuing earthly life—until he has been reclaimed from the power of sin, brought into harmony with God, and regained the standing he lost in that early Paradise.

Superscription on the Cross.

Some have wondered why the writers of the Gospels differ in their record of Pilate's inscription placed above the Cross. Matthew records it as "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews" (Matt. 27: 37) Luke, "This is the King of the Jews" (Luke 23: 38) John, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (John 19: 19) and Mark, "The King of the Jews" (Mark 15: 26). It would seem at first sight that the Evangelists had been guilty of carelessness in compiling their records, but such is not the case. It will be remembered that the inscription was written in the three languages current in Palestine at the time—Hellenistic Greek, Aramaic Hebrew, and Latin. Luke, being himself a Greek, would probably record the Greek inscription. Matthew, a "Civil servant" of the Roman Government, accustomed to rendering his accounts and reports in Latin, would take note of the Latin form, whilst John, a Galilean fisherman, would of course read the Hebrew. Mark, a mere lad at the time, has apparently preserved only part of the inscription. On this supposition, the Latin inscription would consist of twenty-two characters and the Greek and Hebrew of twenty each. Thus the inscription in each language would occupy an equal amount of space.

Things Under the Earth (Phil. 2; 10)

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth." The reference to some who "under the earth" will bow the knee to Jesus sometimes provokes a question. Those in heaven, and those on earth—that is easily understood; but who are those "under the earth?" The Greek word which is translated by these three words is *katachthonios*, which is composed of *kata*, meaning down, *chthonios*, which is defined by Liddell and Scott as having reference to anything in or under the earth but especially to the gods below the earth. These gods in Greek mythology were the Titans, who rebelled against the gods of heaven and after being defeated were cast out of Heaven and imprisoned below the earth. These Titans correspond to the fallen angels, and it would seem that Paul used the word to refer to those fallen angels who are described by Peter as being imprisoned in Tartarus. In other words, when the Divine Plan for man is complete, not only will all in heaven and earth bend the knee, but also those who were "disobedient in the days of Noah" unless of course by wilful and continued opposition to the ways of God they reap the inevitable wages of sin—death.

*“This
Thing
is
From Me”*

(1 Kings 12; 24)

HAVE you ever thought—that everything concerning you concerns Me too? For “**he that touchest you touchest the apple of Mine eye.**” *Zech. 2; 8.*

“**You are very precious in My sight.**” (*Isa. 43; 4.*) Therefore it is My special delight to educate you.

I would have you learn that when temptations assail you, and “the enemy comes in like a flood” that—**THIS THING IS FROM ME**, that your weakness needs My might, and your safety lies in letting Me fight for you.

Are you in difficult circumstances, surrounded by people who do not understand you, who never consult your taste, who put you in the background?

THIS THING IS FROM ME—I am the God of circumstances—thou camest not to thy place by accident, it is the very place I meant for thee.

Have you asked to be made humble? See then, I have put you in the very place where this lesson is taught, your surroundings and companions are only working out My will.

Are you in money difficulties? Is it hard to make both ends meet?

THIS THING IS FROM ME, for I am your purse bearer, and would have you draw from and depend upon Me. My supplies are limitless. (*Phil. 4; 19*) I would have you prove My promises. Let it not be said of you in this thing ye “**did not believe the Lord your God.**” (*Deut. 1; 32*)

Are you passing through a night of sorrow? **THIS THING IS FROM ME.** Jesus was the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. I have let earthly comforters fail you that by turning to Me you may obtain everlasting consolation. (*2 Thess. 2; 16, 17*).

Has some friend disappointed you? One to whom you opened out your heart?

THIS THING IS FROM ME. I have allowed this disappointment to come, that you may learn that—

*“The best Friend to have is Jesus,
He will hear you when you call,
He will keep you lest you fall,
The best Friend to have is Jesus.”*

I want to be your confidant. Has someone repeated things about you that are untrue? Leave them to Me and draw closer unto Me, thy Shelter, out of reach of the strife of tongues, for, “**I will bring forth thy righteousness as the light and thy judgment as the noonday.**” (*Psa. 37; 6*).

Have your plans been all upset? Are you bowed down and weary?

THIS THING IS FROM ME. You made your plans and then came asking Me to bless them, but I would have you let Me plan for you, and then take the responsibility, for this thing is too heavy for thee. Thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. (*Exodus 18; 18*). You are only an instrument.

Have you longed to do some great work for Me? and instead been laid aside on a bed of pain and weakness? **THIS THING IS FROM ME.** I could not get your attention in your busy days, and I want to teach you some of My deepest lessons. They also serve who only stand and wait. I want you to learn to sing—

*“I am not eager, bold and strong, All that is past.
I am ready—not to do, At last—at last.”*

Some of My greatest workers are those shut out from active service, that they may learn to wield the **weapon of all-prayer.**

Are you suddenly called upon to occupy a difficult and responsible position? **Launch out on Me.** I am trusting you with the possession of difficulties and for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works and in all that thou puttest thy hands unto. (*Deut. 15; 10*). Remember the pot of Holy Oil—every interruption that would make you impatient, every word that pains you, every revelation of your own weakness, be anointed with it. Interruptions are Divine instructions, the sting will go as you learn to see **ME IN ALL THINGS.**

(Author unknown).

IN DAYS THAT ARE YET TO BE

A pen-picture of the New Era

He watched the girl making her way towards him across the grass. Her slender figure outlined against the greensward made a pretty enough picture as with lithe steps she came quickly up to him. The radiance of youth gave a touch of eagerness to a countenance aflame with missionary zeal as she approached.

"Well, Arthur, have you made up your mind yet?"

"I have not, Sindra."

The girl sat down on the low wall beside him, stretching out one hand to coax an inquisitive sparrow towards her. "Is the evidence still insufficient, then?"

The man leaned forward, hands together between his knees. "I don't know" he said slowly. "I don't want to be unreasonable but . . ."

"But you are sure there's a rational explanation of it all somewhere, if you can only have time to find it" replied Sindra, a mischievous smile lightening the gravity of her face.

Her companion flushed. "Now you're teasing again. Well yes, there must be a rational explanation. Things like this just don't happen, that's all—its absurd, incredible."

"But this one *has* happened" returned the girl gently.

Arthur looked out over the cliffs to the distant sea. "I know just what you are going to say. That I look thirty and feel twenty, sound in wind and limb and fitter than I ever remember feeling before—and yet I know myself to be over sixty years of age and not long ago fighting for my breath with two nurses and a doctor doing their best for me. You are going to tell me again that I didn't fall asleep at all but that I died and was buried and I have been raised from the dead and I tell you it's incredible. I won't believe it."

"How do you account for your being here, then?" His hands moved restlessly. "I don't know. I remember the room beginning to go dark and the doctor's voice coming as from a great distance, 'He's going' and then everything seemed to swim before my eyes and things just faded out. When I opened my eyes again I was lying on the grass fully dressed and you were holding my hand." His eyes held a far away look. "Just like *she* did on the day—"

"You slid down Giles' gravel pit and knocked yourself silly at the bottom?" suggested the girl. Arthur sat bolt upright. "How did you know anything about that?" he demanded. "That happened years ago—you couldn't have been born then."

She laughed lightly. "Perhaps your mother told me."

"You're a queer girl, Sindra. I can't make you

out at all. I'll wager you are not more than nineteen and you talk sometimes as if you've lived for years and years. How could you have known my mother? She died when I was sixteen." He was suddenly silent.

"Tell me about her" said the girl softly

"There isn't much to tell. We were the best of pals—more like brother and sister. They brought her home one day from the river. She had tried to save a child from the water. The child was saved all right, but my mother was dead when they got her out." He paused for a moment. "I was sixteen and about to become a Sunday School teacher. That night something died in me. It was all so cruel, so senseless. If God exists, He would not have allowed it. I became a rationalist, and for forty years preached rationalism, until my illness."

"And now?"

"I shall go on preaching it, I suppose."

"Why 'I suppose'?"

"The people here don't seem as if they are likely subjects, somehow. They are so *sure*."

"Sure of what?"

"That God *IS*—and that they are living under a new and righteous system of government."

"Well, it *is* new, and it *is* righteous, isn't it?"

"I grant you that. Everything seems different somehow—and everyone seems happy, except—" He dropped his face into his hands.

"Poor laddie"

He looked up instantly.

"Sindra, you said that exactly like my mother used to. You remind me of her in lots of ways. What does it mean? I can't understand . . ."

Blue eyes looked into his own. A cool hand was laid on his. Incredulity and amazement fought for mastery on his face, and then, "Sindra—you *are* my mother. Younger than I have ever known you. Living, and I saw her dead. Talking to me here, and yet I saw them filling in . . . Then God be merciful to me a sinner."

He broke down, shoulders heaving. Strong young arms encircled him and an endearing voice he had thought was forever stilled spoke words of comfort in his ears. A grateful heart gave thanks to Heaven for answered prayer and the surrender of one more heart to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The evening mists began to gather. Youthful voices carried on the breeze to the two seated on the cliff top.

"Far, far away, like bells at evening pealing,

*The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea,
And laden souls by thousands come for healing,
Great Shepherd, turning eager steps to Thee.*

Angels of Jesus! Angels of light!

Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night."

Hand-in-hand, mother and son of the old world, brother and sister in the new, wandered together down the pathway into the village.

Gathered Grain.

"Dreamer; crank; fanatic"; how often have such terms been applied to men and women who have seen in vision the world that can be; yea, shall be, when the beneficent reign of Christ has done its work upon earth. "Christianity—had it for two thousand years. It doesn't work," say some, all regardless of the fact that in all that two thousand years only a few have ever approached near enough to the feet of Jesus to learn of Him and find that it does work. "The Sermon on the Mount—very fine, but not practical to-day," say others, as though the sorry mess men have made of their world is "practical." The dreamers of olden time were better informed, and in a fine flight of ecstasy the prophet declared, "Your young men shall see the glorious visions of which your old men dreamed dreams." Let the dreamers go on weaving their visions of the golden future on the solid foundation of God's Word, knowing in the words of one who was himself a dreamer that

**"We take the taunt with gladness,
Knowing that God, beyond the years you see
Hath wrought the dreams that count with you
as madness
Into the substance of the world to be."**

* * *

The prayer of faith—does it really ascend to God and find answer? R. J. Barker, telling of his work amongst the unemployed in the Rhondda Valley in 1930, says

"In the November of that year we reached a full stop. I called the fellows together and said:

"I've no more money. I've spent all the money I've had, and my own as well; I cannot pay you, and I have nothing to live on myself. What am I to do?"

Billy said: 'Let's pray about it.'

We did, and on the morrow money came. Before a week had passed we had received nearly two hundred pounds."

* * *

"As I was paying heed to what was profitable, some writings came into my hands which were too old for Greek ideas, and too divine for Greek errors. Thus was my soul instructed by God, and I understood how pagan teachings lead to condemnation, whilst these teachings abolish the bondage that prevails throughout the world, and free us from a plurality of rulers and tyrants innumerable. They furnish us not with something which we had not al-

ready received, but with something which, thanks to errors, had been lost."

Thus wrote Tatian, an Assyrian, and one of the most brilliant pagans of the second century, speaking of his conversion to Christianity. It is worthy of note that, coming to the Old Testament (the writings to which he refers above) and the teachings of the Christian church, he realised how different were these principles from the Greek philosophy which held premier place in the world of that day, and, too, that acceptance of this new way of life brings freedom from the bondage which is upon men. Said Jesus: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"; and again, "If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed." There was not much liberty in the Roman world, and that freedom in Christ which is the portion of all who become His by full surrender to His way of life stood out in sharp contrast to the condition of those who still sat "in darkness and the shadow of death."

* * *

Things worth striving for.

The **patient perseverance** which defeat cannot discourage nor discouragement defeat.

The **impartiality** which delights as much in a good work another has done as if you had done it yourself.

The **spirit** which finds a more ready excuse for your brother than for yourself.

The **charity** which always looks for some good intentions even where a slight or wrong was seemingly intended.

The **righteousness** which would rather right a wrong than conceal your own share of it.

The **loyalty** which even your own stumblings and failures cannot dishearten.

The **wisdom** which knows when to speak and when to be silent.

The **zeal** which can never do enough and yet seeks no credit and asks for no compliments.

The **forgiveness** which not only pardons in word but proves its reality by never referring to the matter again.

The **humility** which chooses the meaner and more undesirable part of a service to leave the nobler and the more honourable part for another.

The **Christianity** which is as careful how we live in our homes as how we act before our brethren.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANONYMOUS

The Committee would acknowledge with sincere appreciation anonymous gifts of 10/- and £1 respectively.

LOCAL GROUPS AND MEETINGS

A twice-weekly regular meeting has been commenced at Hambleden, near Henley-on-Thames, and any friends interested may have full information upon writing the Secretary, Bro. B. E. Harrison, "Brookside," Hambleden, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.

A regular meeting has been established at Harvel, near Meopham, Kent, and friends visiting or removing to that area are invited to write for details of the meeting to Bro. H. Spain, "Bethersden," Dean Lane, Harvel, near Meopham, Kent.

"HERALD" AND "DAWN" RENEWALS

As a result of the present situation, postal transmission between this country and America takes considerably longer than formerly. We suggest therefore that the friends send us their renewals of subscriptions to the above periodicals at least one month before expiry date, since it requires several weeks for the notification of renewal to reach Brooklyn. In like manner the magazines are likely to be anything up to three weeks late reaching this country, and friends need not write us regarding missing numbers until at least one month after published date has elapsed.

NEW FEATURES

As the B.S.M. enters upon its eighteenth year of publication, the Committee would appreciate a word from readers as to which features are best appreciated. One or two presentations in "dialogue" or conversational style have been included in recent issues and the friends' thoughts on this method of illustrating Biblical teaching would be particularly welcomed. Letters in response to this invitation should be addressed to the Editor, Bro. A. O. Hudson, 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

TWO NEW "DAWN" BOOKLETS

Two pamphlets just published by the "Dawn" are entitled "God's Remedy for a World gone mad" and "Peace Assured—Prayers to be answered." Each of these pamphlets are reports of radio addresses recently broadcast in America, and we now have supplies in stock for immediate despatch. Each one consists of 30 pages, of the familiar Dawn "pocket" size, white paper covers. Price in Great Britain one penny each, post free 2d. each, 12 for 1/-, 50 for 3/9.

FOR DISPOSAL

A few second hand books of interest to students are available at post free prices as follows:

Cook's Commentary on the Old Testament. 6 volumes, about 4000 pages	7 0
Weymouth's Translation of the New Testament (2 copies available)	1 6
The Battle of Armageddon (Karatol)	1 0
P.R. Sermons (4 copies available)	2 0
P.R. on Covenants, Mediator, etc. (2 copies available) ..	2 0
Foregleams of the Golden Age (B.B.I. Australia)	1 0

VOL. 2 OF "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES"

This volume is about to be published by the "Dawn" in a neat cloth bound edition, the price in this country being not more than 2/6. Will friends who desire copies when ready, please notify us to that effect at once, without sending money, and copies will be despatched as soon as they are to hand. This early advice is especially appreciated since it enables us to estimate the probable demand for the book in this country and to order accordingly.

"WILL THERE BE WARS FOR EVER"

The leaflet "Will there be wars for ever" is still available, free of charge, in quantities for judicious distribution. Kingdom Cards, for free distribution, will also be gladly sent to any address upon request. Until further notice all requests for free literature should be sent to 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent, and **not** to 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

It has been found necessary to keep the Reference Library closed for a further month, pending its re-establishment at a new address. Due announcement will be made when it will be re-opened.

"THE DIVINE DRAMA OF THE AGES"

Under the above general title the newly formed Divine Drama Film Unit will endeavour, D.V., to present a succession of coloured Scriptural films to be available without charge to local friends anywhere in Great Britain. The object of this effort is to encourage brethren to arrange Biblical film meetings to which personal friends, neighbours, and others may be invited and see for themselves something of the Bible message as we understand it. The arrangement of the meeting will be the responsibility of the local group, which will be asked to provide a suitable hall or room, which of course must have electric light available. Apart from this the hall does not have to fulfil any special requirements. The films, projector and qualified operator will be provided by the Divine Drama Film Unit free of charge. The projector requires no special provision for use beyond a suitable table at the rear of the hall upon which it may be placed. It is desirable, although not essential, that a brother be appointed to give a short talk after the film explaining some of the matters dealt with, although some brethren may prefer to afford the audience an opportunity for questions instead.

It is hoped that the first two films will be available during January and that these will be followed by others, so that meetings of this nature can be arranged periodically in each locality.

Friends desiring to take advantage of this opportunity are requested to write in the first place to the office, from whence their letters will be passed over to the brethren who are sponsoring this work.

* * *

Here is a synopsis of the two films to be first shown.

* * *

"THE RAISING OF THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON"

The picture opens in the home of the Shunammite—Elisha passes by and is invited to make this home his own—The Shunammite's hospitality calls for recognition: "What shall we do for her?"—Her dearest wish comes true—Years later, the boy in the field with his father, is smitten by sunstroke, taken home to his mother, dies—The Shunammite's despair is overcome by her faith in God—Elisha returns and the miracle is performed—Resurrection prefigured—Faith is triumphant. * * *

"A ROYAL PRINCE"

A reverent presentation of the story of Jesus—It opens with Mary the mother of Jesus in the woods—The Annunciation—The Shepherds in the fields—The Magi—Escape into Egypt—Herod and the Innocents—The boyhood of Jesus—Jesus the Carpenter—His baptism by John in the thirtieth year of His age—His ministry—The Crucifixion—Burial of Jesus—His Resurrection—His Ascension—"Dawn"—"The Desire of all nations shall come."

NEW OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS

A number of enquiries have been made respecting the significance of the changed office address. The change is due to war conditions, nearly all the Welling office staff having been removed or about to remove to other parts of the country in connection with their daily employment. Under these circumstances it has become necessary to temporarily separate the business side of the Committee's activities from the purely Secretarial aspect, as indicated by the new address given on our inside front cover this month.

PUBLICATIONS.

MISCELLANEOUS

	Price	Post free	Six post free
Tabernacle Shadows An exact reprint of the original booklet (Dawn)	1 3	1 5	7 6
Evolutionists at the Cross-roads Biblical teaching in relation to Evolution and recent statements of scientists 126 pp (Dawn)	1 0	1 2	6 0
Zionism in Prophecy An interesting survey of developments in Palestine. 64 pp (Dawn)	1 0	1 2	6 0
Some of the Parables Brief expositions of the "Kingdom" Parables. Illustrated. 99pp (B.B.I.)	6	7	3 3
Pilates Report Reputed report of Pilate to Tiberius regarding the Crucifixion. Art booklet. 32 pp (C.T.I.)	6	7	3 3

B.S.C. PUBLICATIONS

The Plan of God—in Brief An abridged edition of the "Plan of the Ages" retaining all the most important portions. 104 pp	4	5	2 3
The Promise of His Presence An exposition of Scriptures relating to the Second Coming of Christ. 92 pp	4	5	2 3
The Beauty of Holiness The story of consecration through the ages	4	5	2 3
The Golden Future A 36 page booklet describing man's hope and Millennial conditions. Specially prepared for witness work	2	3	1 3
Parables of the Kingdom Six stories from the teachings of Jesus. 30 pp	2	3	1 3
Evolution—and the Scriptures A brief introduction to the subject 12 pp	1	2	7

DAWN.

All at 3d. each. Post free 4d. Six for 1s. 9d.

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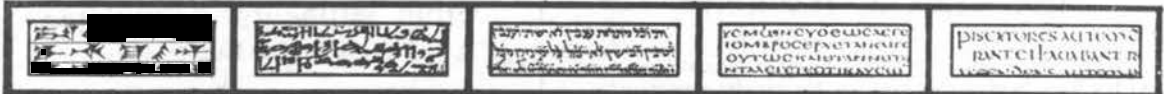
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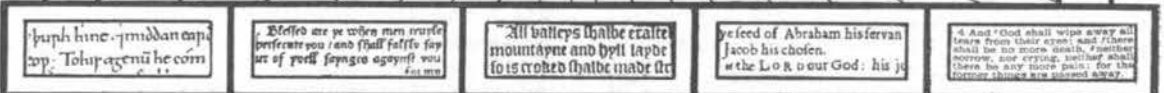
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BIBLE STUDENT'S MONTHLY



Vol. 18 No. 2

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NOTICE TO CLASS SECRETARIES.

The practice of sending occasional circular letters to class secretaries dealing with subjects of general interest is being discontinued for the present, except in cases of emergency, and all such notices will appear instead in the "B.S.M." Will all secretaries please watch this page for such notices, and where appropriate, bring them to the notice of the class for such attention or action as is desired.

A post card is being sent to each class on our list asking for up-to-date information regarding their arrangements for meetings. It is helpful for us to have this on record in order to be able to direct friends moving to other parts of the country and desiring to know the whereabouts of the nearest class at which they may be able to fellowship. Any class which does not receive this card by February 5th but would like to have such information recorded is invited to write the office asking for a copy of the card, or alternatively giving details of place and times of local meetings when writing.

The Divine Purpose as to Life on Other Worlds.

A Forecast of Possible Future Creative Activity.

With that love of the mysterious which is characteristic of humanity, men have long speculated as to the probability of intelligent beings existing in other regions of the Universe. The tremendous store of knowledge respecting the planet Mars which has been acquired during the last ten years, in consequence of the completion of the 200 inch telescope at Mount Wilson, California, has given a fresh impetus to the discussion of this question. To thoughtful Christians the subject is one of profound interest, for one's whole understanding of the purpose of God in creation is bound up with one's belief regarding the uniqueness of the human race in the Universe.

Past generations were not concerned with such considerations. To them the stars and planets, sun and moon had been created as attendant satellites to this earth to give light and heat for mankind and enrich the skies with their beauty, the earth itself having been brought into being purely as a temporary expedient to provide a dwelling place for mankind during its brief fleshly existence; and upon the dawning of the Day of Judgment the whole material creation, earth, sun and stars alike would be disintegrated in that great catastrophe which was to mark the end of all things terrestrial, together with the commencement of heavenly bliss for a chosen few and eternal woe for all the rest.

With a more rational view of the Divine Plan and above all, realisation that the stupendous wonders of the material universe have an essential place in God's eternal purpose and are not intended to be dissolved into nothing and their beauty destroyed for ever, the old idea is being abandoned. When it is realised that God is fitting mankind for the right and proper use of this earth which He has given them for all eternity, it becomes easier to see that, eventually at any rate, life on other worlds is not only a possibility but a probability. We realise now that God takes delight in creating intelligent beings who will respond to His beneficence with their heartfelt devotion; and if He acts thus toward men on this planet it is surely

unreasonable to suppose that He will not act similarly in respect to other worlds which also owe their existence to His creative power.

Christians believe that there is a spiritual world, existing before the material universe came into being, and peopled with intelligent beings not discernible by any of the five human senses and yet without question possessed of powers and attributes far exceeding the human. That this spiritual world is the model upon which the material creation has been built is reasonably certain, the intimation that man was made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1) being one indication to that effect. That in some way it pervades the entire framework of creation, touching the very Throne of God on the one hand and reaching down to mankind on earth on the other, is also apparent. It would appear therefore that the vast array of stars which composes our visible universe, a great community of "star-cities," stretching away into infinite space, are all together intended to form the eternal home of a material order of society attaining to the same exalted rules of life which already obtain in the spiritual realm. In such case the human race as it will be when the Divine Plan on this earth is completed is but an example of what may be on many other spheres in time to come.

With this larger conception of the Divine Plan in view, it is reasonable to ask whether the human race is, after all, the first entrant upon the scene of material things. Of those other worlds where conditions seem to admit the possibility of life, can it be a reasonable supposition that some have become scenes of intelligent life before the drama which opens with the record of the third chapter of Genesis began to be played on the stage of this earth?

The answer to that question is intimately bound up with the problem of evil. We may not be sure that we have, even yet, a complete solution to that problem, a riddle which has exercised the mind of reformer and philosopher, priest and layman alike, throughout the centuries. We are certain though of one thing. Evil is a temporary intrusion in God's Plan.

There was a time when evil was not. Again, there will be a time when evil shall have been eliminated. Evil is at this present time in the ascendancy amongst humanity upon earth; there is also rebellion in heaven. The overthrow of evil in both these spheres is to be approximately simultaneous and thereafter evil will never find place in the creation of God. Such is the plain inference of Paul's words to the Philippians (Phil. 2: 10) pointing to a triumphant conclusion to the work of Christ in two spheres—the heavenly as well as the earthly. There can be no warrant therefore for supposing that evil is an essential preliminary to the entrance of any created being into the condition which God designs for him, or that if in the plans of God other races of beings are to inhabit other worlds they too must go through an experience of sin and death similar to that which is our lot to-day, before they in their turn can be ushered into their inheritance. Such a perpetuation of evil throughout all time is unthinkable for there is no reason to suppose that the creative activity of God manifested in bringing new creatures into being can itself ever have an end.

A further consideration is that our Lord Jesus Christ laid aside His pre-human glory of the spiritual nature and came to earth as a man for the suffering of death, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death—the devil" (Heb. 2, 14). If such a destruction of the power of evil is in fact no destruction at all, but merely a postponement of the conflict until another world of men comes into being for the same story to be repeated, the wonderful life and death of Christ, with all that it means to us, becomes a mockery, little more than a pantomime.

For these reasons therefore we, in the present state of our knowledge, may well conclude that the human race is in fact the first of God's material creations and that the events described in the first chapter of Genesis when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" were indeed descriptive of a new development in His creative activity.

Turning now from our reasoning on the basis of Scriptural principles and enquiring as to what contribution the scientist can make toward a fuller understanding of the subject, an interesting confirmation of the expectations outlined above is afforded by the present state of knowledge regarding the planet Mars. Being Earth's next-door neighbour and capable, for a number of reasons, of closer study than any other planet

it has become an object of intense attention on the part of astronomers. Particularly was this the case in 1939 when the planet was nearer the earth than at any time since 1924 and an opportunity of using the latest scientific instruments was afforded.

The result of these researches has been the obtaining of evidence satisfactory to observers that Mars is a planet very much like our earth—although considerably smaller—that it has an atmosphere extending some fifty miles high from its surface, and that whilst five eighths of its surface consists of arid desert, the remainder is covered with dense vegetation—"meadow, moorland, and forest" to quote one authority. Water appears to be more scarce than upon the earth and the climate is much colder. Ice-caps appear at the North and South poles of Mars in the winter, similar to the ice of our own Arctic and Antarctic regions, but melt in the spring and give rise to great seas and oceans, which extend down to the Martian equator and irrigate the land, thus watering the vegetation. The famous "canals," long straight lines crossing the surface of the planet, and formerly thought to be the work of the "men on Mars" are now concluded to be broad tracts of fertile land fringing the water courses somewhat similar to the broad belt of fruitful land on either side of the Nile which forms the land of Egypt.

So delicate are the instruments used by astronomers to-day that the temperature on Mars has been measured and found to be equal at its hottest, to that of a cool bright day on earth, although at night falling far below freezing point. The relative absence of clouds in the atmosphere causes the areas of desert, forest and sea to be shown up remarkably distinctly, and in consequence maps of the surface have been prepared in considerable detail. In accordance with custom, names have been given to the more important physical features of the planet, and those who think it reasonable that the Spirit of God may yet move to the creating of beings in the Divine likeness on Mars as many long ages ago it did on earth will be more than interested to learn that one particular fertile district has been named "Eden" and four "canals" radiating outward from it, Gihon, Pison, Hiddekel and Euphrates, respectively.

Such is the condition of our neighbour planet at the present time. It has been customary for many years to consider that Mars, smaller than the earth and farther from the sun, was already too cold to sustain life and rapidly becoming

a dead and frozen world. This conclusion rested upon the old hypothesis that the planets are cooling down and will all ultimately become incapable of supporting life. To-day scientists are not so sure. The effect of radio-activity inside the earth is not yet fully understood but that it is an important factor is known and it is not so certain that humanity is in danger of being "frozen out." This gradual alignment of scientific thought with the declaration of Scripture, which promises the earth as an eternal home for man, is full of significance to students of the Bible. It also throws an entirely new light upon the discoveries regarding Mars.

If at some future date Divine energy is to introduce, on Mars, a race of happy intelligent beings, the work of preparation for that event has been going on since the birth of the solar system. In such case Mars is now in a state of development such as the earth passed through at some time in the remote past. In other words, Mars, instead of being older than our earth, is in reality younger, in so far as its development for God's ultimate purpose is concerned. Do the latest discoveries afford any confirmation of this supposition? It may be suggested with some confidence that they do. The earth itself has passed through a number of periods during which it was much colder than it is now; and on occasion too cold to support life. There has been no regular gradual "cool-off" in the history of our planet. The testimony of the rocks gives concrete evidence of "glacial epochs" alternating with periods of more genial climates. The order in which these periods occurred on earth is well known, and the nature and extent of plant and animal life appertaining to each period.

The conditions at present observable on Mars appear to correspond to a remarkable degree with conditions upon earth at the close of the Palaeozoic Age. The earth was intensely cold; glacial ice covered Brazil, South Africa, India and Australia, where the land now swelters under tropical heat. Other parts of the world were covered with vast forests of coniferous trees (firs, pines, etc.), mosses and ferns.

Flowers and fruit trees had not yet made their appearance and there was no animal or bird life, no insects or butterflies. The mists and vapour of the Carboniferous period had but lately cleared away, permitting the sun and moon to shine more directly upon the earth (See Gen. 1; 14) and the more arid and dry Triassic period, which was to see the dawn of animal life, was at hand. This may be the period alluded to in the first chapter of Genesis from about verse 12 to verse 19; and the telescope appears to confirm that in this our day our neighbour planet has only as yet attained this same stage.

If this be so, we can expect long ages yet to pass during which the climate of Mars will grow warmer and more genial; changes in the atmosphere preparing the way for animal life; alternations of cold and heat, swamp and desert; until at last the all-seeing eye of God will look down upon the work of another sixth day, and the voice of God be heard, pronouncing all that He has made "good" and then, perchance, uttering once more those words which, spoken at the dawn of human history, have been fraught with such tremendous consequences, "Behold, let us make man. . . ."

But that will be long after the story of sin and death is finished; long after the "last enemy that shall be destroyed" has ceased to afflict humanity; long after men upon earth have entered into the inheritance "prepared for them before the foundation of the world." These things must first become history, and then, during age after age the mighty power of God Most High will be manifested in successive works of creation staggering in their immensity and altogether beyond the scope of present human imagination. Truly, as from our little vantage point on earth we contemplate the grandeur of the visible universe and realise that we, and our fellows, and all that appertains to us, comprise just one, and but one, little section of all that our God is planning, we can say, as did Paul of old, we are "citizens of no mean city."

If lonesome or blue or friends untrue, read Psalms 23 and 27, Luke 15.

If trade is poor, read Psalm 37, John 15.

If discouraged or in trouble, read Psalm 126, John 14.

If you are out of sorts, read Hebrews 12.

If you are losing confidence in men, read 1 Cor. 13.

If skeptical, read John 6: 40; 7: 7; Phil. 2: 9-11.

If you can't have your own way, read James 3.

If tired of sin, read Luke 18:35, 43; 9:14; John 9.

If very prosperous, read 1 Cor. 10: 12, 13.

Happy conclusions—Psalm 121; Matt. 6; 33; Rom. 12.

—*Peoples Pulpit Monthly.*

"TALKING WITH GOD." (Ex. 32; 34).

The following words were written with due appreciation of the sacred character of the conversation, and as a reverent attempt to re-construct the scene and the thread of discussion which passed between the Most High and Moses on the mountain top.

Scene.—The mountain top on the morrow after the great sin and Moses' descent among the people.

Moses.—"I have come up again into Thy holy presence, O Most High, to confess the sin of Thy people. Truly it was a great and grievous sin. They had made their golden calf, and were prostrating themselves before it, and rising up to their indecent play. It was a spectacle grievous to behold. So wroth was I at the wicked sight, I dashed the tablets of Thy Law upon the ground and, behold, they are broken up. I pray Thee, lay not this as a sin to my charge. I walked forth into the midst of their revelry, and called for Aaron, my brother: 'Why hast thou done this evil thing? What did this people unto thee that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? Why didst thou yield thee to their request?' 'Oh, be not wroth with me,' he said, 'thou knowest what these people are, that their heart is ever set on mischief. It was thine own absence that gave cause for their fall. They knew not where thou wast, nor whether thou would'st return, and thus they wanted someone to lead them in thy place! Let not thy wrath wax hot when I tell thee that I took their gold and cast it into the fiery flame, and there came out thence a golden calf. Then they would have it set upon its base where they could see and worship it in a feast unto the Lord.' I burned the idol in the fire and poured the liquid gold upon the water they had to drink. I stood in the main corridor of the Camp, and called out in a loud voice, 'Who is on the Lord's side? Let all who love Jehovah come to my side.' The sons of Levi came at my call, to whom I gave Thy charge to vindicate Thy Law. They took their swords and went throughout the Camp. They spared none who had led their brethren astray. Three thousand of these rebels have been slain, and all the rest were chastened and subdued. And thus, O great Jehovah, the claims of Thy just Law have been met, and they who have broken their covenant with Thee, have become as the slain beasts whose blood I sprinkled to make that agreement sure.

"And now I have come up to Thee to confess their sin, O Most High Jehovah, and to beseech Thee to forgive their sin. I have performed the charge Thou gavest me to stay the rebellious rot, and now I pray Thee, be merciful to this people, and oh, forgive Thou this their sin. . . . Hearest Thou not what I say, O God Most High? Hast Thou no ear for my sad plea? Is it nought to Thee now, that I lift up my piteous cry for their relief? Dost Thou not see that my heart is heavy with their sin, and that I stand ready to die in my distress? Wilt Thou not forgive their sin . . . their grievous sin? If not...if...not...then blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written! Oh, let me not longer live to look upon their shame, and know that Thou hast no love for this Thy people! O God, hear! O God, forgive!"

The Most High.—"O faithful Moses, distress thyself not so! Say not thy soul is heavy within thee, for thou hast found favour in My sight. Thou hast been down into the rebellious Camp, and hast purged their sin by fire and sword! Thou hast put My fear into many hearts, and shall I now erase thy name from My book? Shall I forget all that thou hast done for this rebellious host—and Me—and let thee pass out of life to sleep with thy fathers? Not so, O faithful soul—I will not blot out thy name from My book of remembrance! It shall be written there as one that is faithful to My Will! Thou hast been a worthy servant unto Me, and now, more than before thou hast won my great esteem! Thou wast ready to give thy life for theirs—to die with them, even if not for them! Now I know thou hast the Spirit that must animate My great purpose! Now I know that thou hast the will to sacrifice and serve the people of My choice! Now I know thou hast greater love for them than for thyself! That is pleasing in My sight, and I will accept it all as though performed, but I will not blot thee out of my book. Only him that hath sinned will I blot from my remembrance!

Now, get thee down, and lead this people to the place whereof I have spoken, and I will

send Mine Angel with thee, to be thy guide, and take both thee and them beneath his sheltering wing! He shall watch over you, and lead you in the way that you shall go. Go down again, I have heard thy prayer; but, in the day when

I make my recompenses and rewards, I will visit the sin of those who have sinned upon their heads. As they have served My purposes, so shall their recompense be. My peace go with thee, for thou hast found favour in My sight."



LUCIFER, THE PRINCE OF EVIL.



A study in the personality of the Devil.

Chapter I.—Archangel of Evil.

"The whole world lieth in the wicked one" says the beloved John (1 Jno. 5: 19) and the bitter truth of this observation is daily manifest. The reign of sin and death has borne fruit in the existence of a "groaning creation" (Rom. 8: 22) which looks and longs hopelessly for deliverance. The Scriptures confirm quite clearly that Satan is the prince or god of this order of things (Jno. 14: 30, II Cor. 4: 4) and our Lord Himself did not dispute the fact (Luke 4:6). The contrast between the fair beauty of Eden and those scenes of misery and degradation which now mar the earth would be not only saddening in the extreme but productive of hopeless despair were it not for the Divine promise that the power of evil shall one day be overthrown and Eden will bloom again.

Despite the evidence of Satan's rule, so manifest in the world and on the pages of history, there is very little direct reference to his personality and activities in the Old Testament. The existence of evil was plain to all men; many were the speculations as to why evil was permitted and many there were who endeavoured to overcome the power of evil. Enoch and Noah stand out as early examples of great men leading righteous lives in an environment which was rapidly becoming more and more godless (Gen. 6: 5). Abraham and Job appear as men of faith who were esteemed and respected by their contemporaries. The children of Israel at Sinai recognised the existence of evil and entered into a covenant with God by the provisions of which they formally renounced evil and pledged themselves to absolute holiness of life, but that "covenant they brake" (Jer. 31: 32). There was in ancient days no lack of appreciation that mankind was in a fallen state and in the grip of evil. It is apparent, though, that intelligent belief in a presiding genius in the realms of evil, a master mind who directed the forces of evil, was not so widespread. Men and women groaned and suffered under the tyranny of sin without realis-

ing just how it came about that they found themselves in this hopeless state. It was left to the seers and pastors of the people of Israel to discern the relation of these things to the story of that happening in Eden so long before; and it is these men who have recorded sufficient of the visions they saw and the revelations they received to constitute a tolerably clear outline of Old Testament teaching regarding the personality and work of the Devil.

From the days of the early Christian Church it has been customary to regard Satan as a powerful spiritual being who is in a state of irrevocable rebellion against God, one who is the embodiment of all wickedness and whose whole intellectual and moral nature has become subordinated to evil. The vivid stories of the Old Testament describe, in eloquent language, the principal acts and events of his career, and his final end when God's Plan for this earth is completed.

The word "Satan" was not originally the name of a personality, it is a Hebrew word meaning an adversary, an enemy, or an opposing one. In this sense the word appears fourteen times in the Old Testament, translated "adversary" or "to resist" and in these instances it is clear that the reference is not to the arch-enemy of God and man, but to opponents of lesser power and fame. Psa. 38: 20, 109: 4, 20, 29, and 71: 13, are cases in point. In Num. 22: 22, the angel of the Lord is said to be a "Satan"—an adversary. In 1 Kings 11: 14, 23, 25, an earthly "satan" was said to be "stirred up" by God. It should not be thought, however, that this usage of the word means that there is no personal devil—although some Christians do maintain that understanding, that the Scriptures, in speaking of the devil or of "Satan," refer to the principle of evil in active operation, and that the idea of a personal devil is an out-worn relic of mediaeval theology. It would appear that this viewpoint overlooks certain important Scriptural considerations.

The principle of evil has always existed and will always exist, although the Bible makes it plain that evil will not continue in active operation forever. A day will come when the whole of Divine creation will be fully in harmony with the laws of God, and evil will not again darken His vast realm; but the Bible declares plainly that evil was introduced into this world by an external agent, that mankind was drawn into evil under circumstances which showed that at least part of the guilt lay at the door of another than man (Gen. 3: 14) and that during the whole course of human history that other agent has constantly warred against God, tempting and seducing men and angels. Moreover, the Book depicts in no uncertain terms the ultimate destruction of this same agent and the complete rectification of all the evil that was introduced by him. To accept all this as picturing the principle of evil in active operation does not do the record justice, for these stories are clearly intended to explain by whom the operation of evil in this world was set in motion. The plain indications in Genesis, in Job, in Isaiah and Ezekiel, and throughout the New Testament, are that there exists a being who, originally created perfect and sinless, harboured thoughts of disloyalty and rebellion which led to open disobedience and culminated in the terrible scenes on this earth which are associated with the reign of sin and death.

Thus it becomes the natural thing for the Hebrew word "Satan"—an opposer—to become the proper name by which this being has been known throughout the Christian era. The popular idea of a grim-visaged demon with horns and hoofs, a kind of presiding deity of Hell, is borrowed from pagan mythology and has no relation at all to the truth. Satan is a spiritual being, his habitation is the spiritual world, he has all the powers and faculties which belong to that order of existence; but he is one whose moral nature is inflexibly set in the things of evil.

There are references throughout the New Testament which indicate that Jesus and the Apostles believed in the existence of Satan. The story of our Lord's temptation at the beginning of His ministry is meaningless unless it is accepted that He actually did become the recipient of suggestions from the Devil. It may have been true that He was not literally taken up and set on a pinnacle of the Temple, just as it must have been true that with the natural eyesight He could not have literally beheld all the kingdoms of the earth from his vantage

point at Jerusalem; but the essence of the story is that Jesus was exhorted, not to fall down and worship an abstract principle of evil, but to definitely acknowledge as His liege lord one who at that time was admittedly the "prince of this world." Doubtless the proposal was to the effect that He could then undertake His work of healing and blessing mankind without going through the experiences ordained for Him by His Father, experiences which must inevitably culminate in the tragedy of Calvary. The Tempter definitely declared that all things in this world, the kingdoms and all their glory, had been "committed" unto him as lord; and this claim, which is supported by many Bible statements, was not denied by Jesus (Luke 4: 6).

Words attributed to Jesus such as that in Matt. 12: 26. "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself" can only be understood by realising that Satan was already known to be the author of evil works but not of good. The idea of this prince of evil lending his power to the execution of good works, as suggested by the Pharisees, would be an indication that his power to maintain his kingdom by the practice of evil was already tottering. Such language could hardly be applied to an abstract "principle of evil."

The association of the "Devil and his angels" in Matt. 25: 41, and in certain other Scriptures, indicates a leading personality among all those spiritual beings who are known to be in active rebellion against God.

Paul's terrible words in Ephesians 6: 12, in which he speaks of the unseen enemies of the Church, imply evil intelligences in the spiritual world, set in battle array against all that is good and pure upon earth and in heaven. Such a picture illuminates the Biblical presentation of one among them, their leader and instigator, who fulfils the description given in the Old Testament.

Moral responsibility cannot be imputed to an abstract principle; and the Scripture very clearly imputes moral responsibility to that agent by which, as it says, the first human beings were induced to swerve from righteousness and so introduce the reign of sin and death. Onward through the centuries the story is the same—behind all the misery and suffering, the hate and greed which characterises the rule of man in the world, there stands a shadowy figure upon whom is laid the ultimate responsibility—and the inevitability of a personal retribution in due time is as clearly indicated. It was

Tertullian who said that although God punished Adam and Eve for their transgression, He did not curse them as He did the serpent, because they were candidates for restoration and the serpent was not. Whether this is a correct conclusion or not, a striking contrast is evident in Scripture when it is seen how throughout the sacred record there runs a golden thread of promise speaking of the ultimate undoing of all the serpent's work, and visualising the reconciliation of "whosoever will" to God; but declaring in no unmeasured terms the finality of that judgment which was passed upon the serpent at the beginning.

The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel between them contribute a detailed exposition of the sin and the fall of Lucifer. It remains to three other men of God,—Moses, Job and Zechariah—to complete the picture by describing, in allegory and symbol, the three great phases of Satan's activities on the earth. Moses records the story of his successful attempt to introduce evil into this world and its terrible result in the fall of man. The writer of the book of Job pictures in eloquent language Satan's continued sway as the "god of this world," and shows forth in revealing language the inherent baseness of the Satanic character: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" (Job. 1:2), whilst Zechariah in poetic imagery speaks of Satan as the inveterate enemy of the Church. Apart from these five accounts the Old Testament is destitute of direct reference to the "prince of this world." Other nations feared and worshipped him; many of the pagan mythologies had their god of evil, to be propitiated and revered; but the Hebrews in their sturdy belief in Jehovah, even at those times when their faith sank to the lowest of ebbs and they turned aside after Baal and Moloch—false conceptions of the once universally worshipped true God—never betrayed their national faith to the extent of deliberately worshipping the prince of evil.

In this day of rush and hurry and busy activity everywhere, if we are not careful, we shall allow ourselves to become too much absorbed in the doing even of right and proper things, to wait upon God. The strain of "going to it." may become infectious, and pass from mundane things to the spiritual sphere, and crowd the avenues of life with many things by no means bad. Good things can become injurious if they destroy that peace and quietude of the inner life, and make the child of Grace forget his God and Father.

In thus taking a stand for implicit belief in the personality of the devil, the way is laid open for examination of the two descriptions of his creation and fall which are found in the Old Testament. One is recorded in the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel and the other in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah. In both cases a characteristic feature of Hebrew prophecy is revealed, one that should be kept in mind when studying the Scriptures. In speaking of events or matters remote from their own day, the prophets were accustomed to preface their words with some allusion to contemporary affairs which would be easily understandable to their hearers, and with this "background" in mind gave the deeper message in such a manner that in future times the earnest student would realise its true application even although it did have a surface application to the days in which it was written. The Revelation given to John in much later times was written in the same style—the background being that of the Roman Empire and events of his own day but the realities of his vision reaching forth into the distant future.

In these two passages therefore the prophets first addressed their words to the then King of Babylon and the King of Tyre, but as they develop their themes the language becomes more and more inappropriate to an earthly potentate and much more applicable to the powerful spiritual being who in a long past day renounced his loyalty and obedience to God.

The burning words of these two inspired prophets echo down the ages with all their primal intensity of feeling. "Thou shalt be as though thou hast not been: and never shalt thou be any more." So will the last shadow of sin vanish from earth and the rebellion which has taken its toll of mankind be a thing of the past—only the memory of the days of evil remaining as an ever abiding and never-to-be-forgotten lesson to the sons of men.

Things are not necessarily done by rush and bustle. Spring glides in from day to day quite smoothly. The harvest matures without din and noise. The final conquest of evil "comes not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Zech. 4:6.

Shut out the throb of this busy world at least once each day and go alone with God, and there learn to be still, while the tension eases off. You will have grown stronger in that quiet place.

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

THOU KNOWEST.

Lord, when the thorns of earth pierce sharp and deep,

And I instead would choose the scented rose,

Let me recall Thy tender, watchful love,

And that mine inmost need Thy wisdom knows.

Ah, who can tell how far our feet might stray?

We are so prone to wander from Thy side,

If not hedged in by Thine eternal arms,

And made within Thy sheepfold to abide.

I am so glad Thou knowest all, dear Lord!

My life but poorly proves what lips confess,

And well I know none but a Father could

So frail an offering with such mercy bless.

Thou knowest all! This is my cradle, Lord,

The shadow of Thy wings neath which I sleep,

Not for my goodness, but Thine own great love,

Thou wilt in peace Thy child securely keep.

GAMALIEL'S PREDICTION.

"And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: . . . lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." (Acts 5:38-39.)

The prediction of Gamaliel has been fulfilled. Men have opposed Christianity in every way, but in vain. They have reviled it; have persecuted it; have resorted to argument and to ridicule, to fire, and fagot, and sword; they have called in the aid of science; but all has been in vain. The more it has been crushed, the more it has risen, and still exists with as much life and power as ever. The preservation of this religion amidst so much and so varied opposition, proves that it is of God. No severer trial CAN await it than it has already experienced; and as it has survived so many storms and trials, we have every evidence that, according to the predictions, it is destined to live, and to fill the world. (Matt. 16:18; Isa. 54:17; Isa. 55:11; Dan. 4:35).

(Barnes' Commentary.)

THE STIMULUS OF CHRIST.

So by all the stimulus of Christ, by every incentive of love, by all your affectionate tenderness, I pray you to give me the utter joy of knowing you are living in harmony, with the same feelings of love, with one heart and soul, never acting for private ends or from vanity, but with an eye to the interests of others as well as to his own.

Phil. 2:1-4 (Moffatt).

THE HAPPY MAN.

The Happy Man was born in the city of Regeneration, in the Parish of Repentance unto Life: he was educated at the school of Obedience, and now lives in Perseverance: he works at the Trade of Diligence, notwithstanding he has a large estate in the country of Christian Contentment, and many a time does jobs of Self-Denial: he wears the plain garment of Humility, and has a better suit to put on when he goes to court, called the Robe of Christ's Righteousness: he often walks in the valley of Self-Abasement, and sometimes climbs to the mountains of Heavenly-Mindedness: he breakfasts every morning on Spiritual Prayer, and sups every evening on the same: he has Meat to eat which the world knows not of, and his Drink is the Milk of the Word of God. Thus happy he lives and happy he dies.

Happy is he who has Gospel Submission in his Will, Due Order in his Affections, Sound Peace in his Conscience, Sanctifying Grace in his Soul, Real Divinity in his Breast, the Redeemer's Yoke on his Neck, a Vain World under his Feet, and a Crown of Glory over his Head. Happy is the life of such a man; to obtain which, believe firmly, pray fervently, wait patiently, work abundantly, live holily, die daily, watch your hearts, guide your senses, redeem your time, love Christ, and long for Glory!

MEDITATION.

Those who would be in health do not sit still in their houses to breathe such air as may come to them, but they walk abroad and seek out rural and elevated spots that they may inhale the invigorating breezes; and thus those godly souls who would be in a vigorous spiritual state, do not merely think upon such holy doctrines as may come into their minds in the ordinary course of thought, but they give time to meditation, they walk abroad in the fields of truth, and endeavour to climb the heights of gospel promises. It is said that Enoch WALKED with God: here is not an idle but an active communion. The road to bodily health is said to be a footpath, and the way to spiritual health is to exercise one's self in holy contemplation.

C. H. Spurgeon.

FEAR knocked at the door,
FAITH opened it,—
and no one was there!

Gathered Grain.

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay
 In the shelter of the fold
 But one was out on the hills away
 Far off from the gates of gold
 Away on the mountains wild and bare
 Away from the tender Shepherds' care."

The words are familiar to many Christians; but the story behind them is not well known. Elizabeth Clephane, a Scottish girl of twenty-one, was stricken with grief at the news of her ne'er-do-well brother's death after a drunken carousal in Canada. The tragedy occurred in the year 1851, when it was the general belief that such an one was hopelessly lost. Elizabeth accepted the belief of her times but her heart told her that if she so loved her prodigal brother, then her Saviour must love him in even greater degree. In the midst of her grief she penned the words of this hymn. Not thinking it to be of interest to others she kept it locked away, a secret between her Lord and herself, but after her death it was discovered and sent to a Scottish editor for publication.

"God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." In the year 1874, twenty three years after Elizabeth Clephane thus penned her heart's feelings, the two evangelists, Moody and Sankey, were waiting on the station platform at Glasgow. Ira Sankey had purchased a weekly newspaper in the hope of finding some news of his homeland, America. Disappointed in that expectation his eyes fell upon this little poem, published for the first time. Cutting it out, he placed it in his pocket book. At the end of the meeting, one which was the commencement of Moody's work in Scotland, the latter turned to his colleague and asked him to sing an appropriate solo. Somewhat troubled at having nothing immediately ready, Sankey bethought himself of the poem, and, crossing to the piano, improvised a tune as he sang. At the end of his singing a great sigh went up from the audience; some were in tears; and that night saw the birth of a great revival in Scotland.

* * *

"It is taken for granted that suffering was before the Church in Smyrna and it may be before us. It is well that our eyes are blinded to the scenes of our future experience, lest, gazing upon the events that may emerge in the providence of God, we should cease to toil and become paralysed by fear and alarm. But whatever be the scenes of the future, as these

appear upon the world's stage, this we know, that the great law of the Christian dispensation is: "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" but the great comfort of the Christian is: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." The path that leads to glory is not strewn with roses, but planted with many a thorn: "Through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God." "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not."

(Forest Gate Bible Monthly).

* * *

The first hues of dawn illumined the eastern sky above the housetops. A blessed quietness pervaded the air, contrasting with the tumult of the night which had but lately died away.

At a busy street corner, now almost deserted, the dim light revealed a tall, slender pillar supporting an object which has become only too familiar a sight in our towns in these days. Suddenly it gave voice—a deafening, strident, unwavering note, reverberating over street and housetop, but for all its harshness coming as music to the ears of the hearers. The word passed quickly from lip to lip; "All clear; All clear." It meant that the winged messengers of death had departed; that the coming of day had banished the terrors of the night. The doors of the shelters were opened; men and women straggled forth into the street, blinking a little at their emergence into daylight, and breathing in with relish the sweet, pure air of the morning. And the sun rose higher as its healing rays spread over the earth.

What a fitting picture of the New Dawn. There will be a day—may it come soon—when the sweet, searching notes of the Great "All clear" will sound over all the earth. The great Trumpet of Jubilee will "wax louder and stronger" and summon all men and women from their graves to rejoice in the healing beams of the "Sun of Righteousness." The forces of evil will be speeding away as the light of Millennial day waxes stronger and brighter. The powers of death will have flown away and be gone. The confusion and distress, the sorrow and suffering and strife of earth's dark night will be over, and upon all the earth shall be peace.

"And it shall be said in that day "Lo, this is our God. We have waited for him, and he will save us. This is the Lord. We have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

"MANY BODIES OF THE SAINTS AROSE."

—A note on Matthew 27; 53.

"The earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

Thus runs Matthew's account, and since no other Evangelist records the incident, it stands as a somewhat strange statement, difficult of comprehension. For long it was suspected that the passage was an interpolation on the part of some ancient copyist, but it has been traced back to the earliest manuscripts known and there seems to be no valid reason for doubting its authenticity. The phrase "and the graves were opened" is not found in the Sinaitic, and both Sinaitic and Vatican MSS omit "and went." It seems therefore that Matthew has indeed recorded an actual happening and it is worth while to seek the true significance of the account.

The apparent sense of the passage is that at the time of the crucifixion many of the "holy ones"—saintly men—of Israel rose from their graves and were seen walking about Jerusalem. The unusual nature of such an occurrence has led some to offer alternative explanations. One suggestion is that the earthquake opened up many of the tombs—which were for the main part cut in the rocky sides of the Mount of Olives—and that the bodies were exposed and some even thrown into the city precincts. The suggestion hardly meets the sense of the account and appears to be little more than an attempt to offer an alternative. Another explanation is that the followers of Christ, at the time of His arrest, fled for hiding to the tombs and only ventured forth after His resurrection. The known antipathy of every God-fearing Jew to the ceremonial uncleanness resulting from contact with tombs—especially at the time of the Passover—would make this supposition extremely improbable, and this hypothesis also does not fulfil the plain meaning of the words. Amazing as the statement may be, it seems as if there were in very fact certain ones raised from the dead at that time as one of the "signs" attendant upon the culmination of our Lord's life at Calvary.

Because the Lord Jesus Christ Himself was to be the first one to be raised from the dead in the true "resurrection" sense ("Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept") it is clear that

these who were thus brought back to the world of men were raised only for a short time and must ultimately have gone back into the grave, in like manner to Lazarus and others whom Jesus restored to earthly life during His ministry. This is borne out by the word used for "arose"—*egeiro*—meaning to wake up or rise up, and is the word used in Matt. 24: 14, "There shall arise false Christs," John 7: 52, "Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" and for the raising of Jairus' daughter and the widow of Nain's son. The word for "resurrection"—*anastasis*—is not used in such cases.

Another difficulty is the statement that these awakened ones did not come into the holy city until "after his resurrection" as though they lingered among the tombs for three days before showing themselves. Again it is noted that "anastasis" is not the word used in verse 53. A word used nowhere else in the New Testament is employed—*egeresis*—and the meaning of this word is that of a rising up or being set up. The Septuagint uses the same word in Psa. 139: 2, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising" while a further instance of its use in our Lord's day is found in the Apocrypha, I Esdras 5: 62, "Singing songs of thanksgiving unto the Lord for the rearing up of the house of the Lord," speaking of the building of the Temple after the return from the Captivity. It is possible therefore that the reference in verse 53 is not to our Lord's resurrection at all but to His being "raised up" or "set up" on the cross, on Calvary. Certain it is that there is no indication in any of the New Testament stories of the Resurrection that dead men recently restored to life were appearing in Jerusalem. The whole tenor of the Resurrection story centres around the disciples' ignorance that anything unusual was transpiring until our Lord Himself appeared to them in various guises.

There is nothing said as to what these awakened ones did after appearing in the streets, and no indication that they were seen again, or even that the rulers and Pharisees knew anything about them at all. We have here an isolated statement of an isolated incident the more mysterious because of its brevity. The darkness lasting three hours, from noon until three o'clock; then the earthquake, of itself not an uncommon thing in Jerusalem; then this mysterious appearance of saintly ones of old,

risen as if in protest against the tragic deed then being consummated on Golgotha. The expression "seen of many" would at least indicate that there were sufficient witnesses to attest the reliability of the record, according to Jewish ideas, and these three words ought to be taken as sufficient authority for believing that the incident took place exactly as related.

Then it was all over. The earth ceased to tremble, the sun came out again, and those visitants from the past were seen no more. Perhaps their brief span of waking life lasted only between the time of the earthquake and that hour when Joseph of Arimathea came to Pilate and besought the body of Jesus. It may have been that they were after all not

the ancient dead, but very recently deceased righteous men who came back into the city with their grave clothes and all the signs of death upon them, rendering the city itself ceremonially unclean by their presence at the very time of its most solemn feast, and so symbolising in the most expressive fashion possible the position of that city in the sight of God. If this be the true purpose of the occurrence, with what fearful foreboding must the witnesses have gazed upon—and perchance recognised—these death-like messengers and maybe sensed something of the doom which even then was gathering around the city which had rejected and crucified the Prince of Life.

MINISTERS OF RECONCILIATION.

We aim to do good in the after while;
 What good have we done to-day?
 We would bring to each lonely one a smile:
 But what have we done to-day?
 We would give to truth a greater worth,
 And to steadfast faith a greater birth,
 And would bless the fallen ones of earth;
 But what have we done to-day?

We will be so kind when we're "over there;"
 How kind have we been to-day?
 Our Master's likeness we expect to wear;
 But whose have we worn to-day?
 We shall share His joys and His glories too,
 Rejoice and praise Him the whole day through,
 Do all that the Father would have us do;
 But what have we done to-day?

The overcomers His throne will share;
 Have we overcome aught to-day?
 We'd serve all the dear ones with tender care;
 Have we served them so to-day?
 Harmless, loving and kind as a dove,
 Manifesting His heavenly love,
 Revealing the Spirit from above;
 Is that what we've done to-day?

We'll sympathise fully with others then;
 But how are we doing to-day?
 We'll think ere we speak, and not condemn;
 But what are we doing to-day?
 Worthy we'd be of the Heavenly Call,
 Saving all men from the Curse and the Fall,
 That the glory of God may be open to all;
 BUT, ARE WE IN PRACTICE TO-DAY?

In Days that are Yet to Be.

A pen-picture of the Resurrection.

He came striding along the road, a fine figure of a man, vigorous and healthy, but with eyes betraying a haunting sadness. The other, seated by a wayside pool embowered in brilliant flowers, held up his hand in that gesture of greeting and invitation so familiar in this strange new world. The newcomer halted, hesitated and came across, voicing an easy greeting as he sat down on the grassy bank.

For a moment neither spoke. A lark soared up into the azure sky, the throbbing sweetness of its song holding the two listeners enthralled. The fields and trees shimmered in the heat of an afternoon sun, and all creation seemed at peace.

"You are on a mission?" queried the one by the pool.

"A mission which spurs me ever onward without rest" returned the other, "and until it is accomplished I may not know happiness."

"It needs the help of your friends, perhaps?" ventured his questioner, but the traveller shook his head.

"My sorrow is of my own making. I once defied the powers of Heaven and thought to outwit God. Now the hand of God is outstretched to me in blessing but I cannot enjoy His munificence until I have made amends for the evil which I have done."

"I have read in the sayings of Jesus that there are those who in this day come forth to a resurrection by judgments" observed Gerhard, his eyes on two goldfish disporting themselves in the pool.

The newcomer nodded. "Those words are true. There was a time when a man of God, crying his message to a heedless people, declared, 'Every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.'² 'What a man soweth' said Paul, 'that shall he also reap.'³ I knew of those Divine laws, but in my folly believed that I, a king, could flout them with impunity."

"You were a king then?" returned the other with interest. His companion did not answer at once. A party of children racing along the road in joyous abandon, perceived him as he sat, and in a minute had surrounded him with every evidence of recognition and affection. "Elder Brother, elder brother" they cried. "Here is Michael. Tell him the story of Jesus." Michael came forward shyly—a chubby golden curled toddler of three. He looked up into the friendly face above him and climbed confidently upon his knee. A strong arm held him safely but the man's eyes were misty with tears.

"Yes, I was a king," he said at last, almost reluctantly. His eyes looked away across the quiet

countryside as though they saw other and far different scenes. His thoughts came back to the present and he turned to Gerhard. "You are a resident here? You have offered the help of a friend. Perhaps you can indeed assist me."

"That will I gladly do" came the ready answer.

"I seek a woman named Miriam, who in the Days that Were lived in the land of Judea. Her home was in the village of El-Ramallah near the royal city of Bethlehem. I am told she lives in this district and I must have converse with her."

"Then I can help you; for Miriam of El-Ramallah lives yonder on the slopes of the hill." Gerhard pointed, and following his outstretched arm, the other perceived a cluster of red-roofed cottages surrounded by trees. "You see the house beside the yellow mimosa? Miriam lives there, praying daily for the raising to life of her firstborn child, slain by Herod, the King of Judea, in the days when Jesus was born."

"Then I must haste there to-day" said the stranger, rising to his feet and gently putting Michael upon the ground, "for my prayers must be joined with hers for the restoration of that life which was so ruthlessly cut off by my fear and cruelty."

"Then," said Gerhard quickly, "You are . . ."

"My name is Herod. I was King of Judea in the Days that Were. To-day I serve the Lord Christ whom I sought so blindly to destroy. But I have learned that 'by mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.'⁴ There are words which ring in my ears day and night, written in letters of fire before my eyes, 'In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.'⁵ Until I have sought out every mother whom I made desolate—until I have prayed with her and witnessed her joy as her loved one is restored to her arms, I may not rest. Then, and then only, shall I be free from that age-lasting reproach spoken of by the prophet Daniels when he told of this blessed day."

With the shouting children running at his side and baby Michael nestled comfortably in the crook of his arm, Herod, slayer of the Innocents, strode up the hill to where a woman of faith waited for her heart's petition to be fulfilled in glorious reality.

1, Jno 5:29. 2, Jer. 31; 30. 3, Gal. 6; 7. 4, Prov. 16; 6
5, Matt. 2; 18. 6, Dan. 12; 2.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

A well-beloved brother in the Lord left our midst when Albert C. Guard, of London, answered the home call on January 8th last. The Aldersbrook meeting has lost a most lovable personality, and there will be many who, visiting that meeting, will miss his sincere and unaffected welcome and handshake.

ANONYMOUS

This opportunity is taken to express very sincere appreciation for an anonymous donation of 10/-.

EVACUATION

From time to time we receive offers of accommodation in country districts for brethren who have been adversely affected as a result of prevailing conditions. Friends who are seeking a home in such districts may write to the office with a view to ascertaining if any suitable opening is available, with brethren. There is at present an offer to receive one adult, either brother or sister, at Arundel, Sussex. Another brother and sister would be pleased to let two or three rooms in their home in a Somerset town. Any enquiries as to these offers must be sent to the office in the first place.

CALENDARS

A number of Scripture Art Calendars, monthly turnover sheets, coloured, Scripture pictures, are still on hand and we shall be glad to dispose of them at the special rate of 1/- each post free if immediate application is made.

AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS

A number of enquiries respecting missed numbers of the "Herald" and "Dawn" are coming in to the office. Will the friends please note that under prevailing conditions American mail takes anything up to six weeks to arrive and that it is quite possible for these periodicals to be one or two months late in delivery. So far as we are able to ascertain at time of going to print, it would seem that all the copies for December of both "Herald" and "Dawn" sent to this country have failed to arrive, and we are asking our American brethren to send duplicate December numbers if their stocks permit. Friends who are concerned about this issue therefore may rest confident that if it is possible for the deficiency to be remedied, this will be done.

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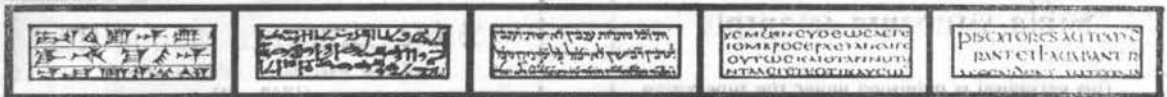
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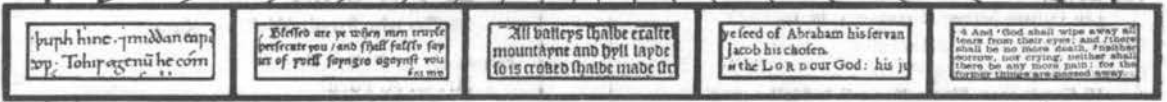
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BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



Vol. 18 No. 3

MARCH, 1941

Threepence

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THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

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Letters for attention of Committee or Secretary

Mr. A. O. Hudson,
24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent

Benevolent Relief Fund

Mr. G. A. Ford
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24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

CONCERNING THE

“HERALD” and the “DAWN”

Subscribers to the above periodicals are requested to read the following notice carefully and to make it known to others. Many enquiries come into the B.S.C. office regarding missing numbers of the above magazines. The brethren are advised that in such cases the reason is that the missing copies have gone to the bottom of the Atlantic ocean. It is useless to enquire either at the B.S.C. office or of the brethren in America; readers can rest assured that their copies are posted regularly, but that there is always the obvious risk of loss due to enemy action.

An impression is abroad in some quarters that these journals have ceased to circulate in England. **This impression is not correct.** The Committee is still able to accept subscriptions for both magazines and transmit same to America, and the American friends are still able to send the magazines, but the circumstances mentioned above need to be borne in mind.

AN

OLD TIME CONVENTION

is suggested for

Easter Sunday & Monday

(D.V.) at

DEWSBURY

This gathering is under the responsibility of friends at Dewsbury and near-by towns.

Details of time and place will be announced later.

It is hoped that a feature of the gathering will be the presentation of two “Divine Drama of the Ages” films

“The raising of the Shunnamite’s Son”

A story of Elisha

“A Royal Prince”

The story of Jesus.

Friends interested may write for further details of this convention to:—

Mr. A. Boyce, 7 Falcon Road, Savile Town,
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"ARE THERE NOT TWELVE HOURS IN THE DAY."

A study in John 11; 9.

As the life of Jesus was drawing to its close the increasingly ferocious hostility of the Jewish authorities caused Him to withdraw Himself from Jerusalem and its environment on several occasions.

This seems to have been necessary because His utterances became more challengingly emphatic, and His works more startlingly miraculous. By reason of this greater emphasis, Jesus drew the attention of the common people more definitely to Himself, but at the same time it fed the flames of anger and malice which for some time had smouldered in the hearts of the rulers.

One of His startling miracles at this time was the bestowment of sight upon the "man born blind." To supplement this gracious act Jesus uttered the parable of the shepherd and his sheep. For daring to defend the character of his benefactor the once blind man was "put out of the synagogue" by the infuriated rulers. They thus cut him off, as they thought, from the hopes of Israel. To show the people the true character of the Pharisees and rulers, Jesus told them, illustratively, of an occurrence which had happened many times in their midst. False hireling shepherds "whose own the sheep are not," had failed to preserve and keep the flock from danger, while a true owner-shepherd would risk his own life rather than that of his flock. Both the people and the Pharisees saw at once the point of Jesus' story.

The Pharisees had cast out of the fold one of the sheep of Israel. They cared not what became of him. Jesus, by kindly act and forceful word, had found the wandering sheep, and gave him sight deeper than fleshly sight. The Pharisees cared more for Sabbath-day formalism than for the poor man's eyes. Jesus thought more of the stricken man's sufferings than of their Sabbath-day restrictions. It called not for deep insight, therefore, to understand which was hireling and which was shepherd. This was a daring challenge to make against the self-perpetuating rulers in Israel, and so incensed them that they "took up stones again to stone him" (John 10: 31).

But inasmuch as His time was not yet come, the hostile Jews could not take and destroy Jesus, however much they desired so to do.

"He escaped but of their hand, and went away again beyond Jordan" to Bethabara—the place where John the Baptist began his ministry. There, for some time, He abode. (John 10: 39-40).

While dwelling there, a messenger arrived with the tidings that Lazarus (whom Jesus dearly loved) was sick, and that his grief-stricken sisters would greatly appreciate the presence of their beloved Master and Friend. Instead of proceeding immediately to the succour and comfort of the sorrowing household, Jesus remained, for reasons best known to Himself, in Bethabara for two whole days. During this period Lazarus died. Towards the end of the second day Jesus came to know, by some means, that Lazarus was dead; but strange to say, not until He knew this did Jesus take steps to go to Bethany. When, however, the knowledge had come, Jesus proposed to His disciples that they should accompany Him to the home of the bereaved friends. "Let us go into Judea again" said the Master "Oh Master" the disciples replied "it is only recently that the Jews sought to stone thee. Wilt thou go to Jerusalem again so soon? Wilt thou openly put Thy life and person in danger by such a step?" Instantly Jesus made reply "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day he stumbleth not..." How strange an answer to make to their solicitous reply. What did Jesus mean by these words?

To realize their meaning, let the words first be considered carefully in relation to Jesus' experiences before, during, and after this incident, and it will be seen that this strange answer has an application to the Master Himself. A slight change of wording may bring out its intended meaning, and show how fearless Jesus was, when the Will of God called Him to service. "Are there not twelve hours in MY day? If I walk and work in the day I cannot stumble and fall. Can the Jews deprive me of so little as a single moment from that full day? If my Father bids me go again to Jerusalem to perform another challenging work among that hostile people, can any man interfere with Me till my work is done?"

Jesus knew He had a "day" during which

He must work the works of His Father, and in that "day" He could not be thwarted; but He also knew that a night would come when He could no longer work and in which He would fall to His enemies wrath (John 9: 4). But till that "day" was fully run, until His work was completely done no power on earth could interfere to put His life in danger. Until His "twelve" full hours were spent His life was sacrosanct, and could not be extinguished. Adopting an unknown writer's forceful phrase, Jesus was "immortal till His work was done." That was the secret ground of Jesus' confidence. He had "work" to do, and no malice of men nor hate of demons could interfere with His safety while engaged on His Father's business.

What lessons can we draw from this scrap of Jesus' history and from this cryptic statement from His lips?

In these troubled days amid the perils of our modern world, it were well for each child of God to ponder these singular but confident words of our beloved Lord, for as Jesus "was" in His eventful day so is each consecrated believer in our tumultuous day. Every follower who is "in Christ" may claim and enjoy the same privileges before God which our dear Lord possessed. Every promise and assurance which God gave to Jesus (compare Isa. 49: 8 with 2 Cor. 6: 2) may be claimed by Jesus' associates as his or her very own. Each child of God has his or her own "day" for his or her own "work"—a full complete "twelve hours" with which no foe can interfere. In face of peril or danger, be the source thereof what it may, each consecrated follower of the worthy Lamb may say "Are there not twelve hours to my day?" "Is it not God alone who determines what my work shall be and when the span of life shall end?"

It will greatly contribute to the peace of heart for every one who loves the Lord to realise that his "times" are in the Lord's hands, and in His hands alone, and that no man nor confederation of men, even with the world's deadliest forces at their command, can shorten or interfere with their little "day." This is a part of God's "Care" which He reserves to His very own control. "He Careth for you" is no empty phrase. God has set "twelve hours" to every believer's "day" according as his "work" shall be, and no one who is "against us" can alter its length, though they marshall all the forces and furies of creation to their aid. The Lord God orders all the steps of a good man,

from the beginning of his pilgrimage to its end, and there are no steps in a responsive son's life which a loving Father allows other hands to order, so that when each child's "day" comes to its close, it is God's hand alone which rings the knell of closing day.

But due recognition of this tremendous truth should not dispose any child of God to rash or careless procedure at any time, least of all in these perilous days. Although Jesus knew there were "twelve hours" to His day, He did not presume upon His Father's providential care. He withdrew from the place of danger and went into a safer place. He did not unduly hazard His life nor fly into the face of danger. He performed one great work which raised a storm of passion and hatred—then quietly withdrew to allow the storm to subside. But when another challenging "sign" was due to be given He hesitated not to go back to the danger zone, knowing that the doing of His Father's "Work" would ensure to Him His Almighty Father's protection and care.

Our lesson is: **God keeps and protects those who have God's work to do.** That is a truth we must keep in mind to-day, when death may meet us at any street-corner. God has never guaranteed His saints unconditionally against calamities and violence, even in ordinary times. Those who lived the life of faith, even back to pre-Christian days, were always subject to the risks of human passion and bigotry, and many, of whom neither the Jewish Age nor the Gospel Age have been worthy, closed their eyes for the last time amid scenes of violence and bloodshed; but not before their allotted work was done. God kept them all until their little "day" was done. There were "twelve hours to every little day," and so it is to-day. God will keep His workmen here, and hedge them round with providential care until their work for Him is done. No opposing foe can interfere with God's work, and if the doing of God's work requires the presence of God's workman there, then Omnipotence can challenge every foe and control the fierce fury of both mob and fire.

But when God's work for any Age or occasion is accomplished and there is nothing more of the allotted task still to do, God's workman will go Home. When Jesus' work was done, God took the hedge away, and left Him to the dark forces of hate and sin. When His "Day" of work was ended, the night closed round Him, and what could not befall Him in the "day" befell Him when its "twelve hours"

were run. But Gethsemane was the prelude to Easter morn and Olivet, and God's "right hand." The "day's" work done, the Messianic workman went Home to enjoy His Father's smile.

If, to-day, God's allotted work for His Church is done, then the time has come for His workmen to go Home. God is under no promise or obligation to keep them here when the "twelve hours" are run. From the moment of full surrender their only reason for remaining here is to do God's work, in God's own way. That work accomplished, no reason then exists for God to keep them here. His great consideration is the outworking of His Plan, and as each stage arrives at its conclusion the workmen are removed and another stage, with other

men, then occupies the scene. If then, the Church's work is done, the time has come for the Church to go "Home," but if it is not yet done, then it is God's responsibility to keep His workmen here. And though the whole world becomes a howling mob, hurling destruction from the skies like torrential rain, the Hand of God can shield His child and keep him safe until the clock of Providence chimes the hour.

Let every child of God take courage then, and know within his heart of hearts that till his (or her) clock strikes "twelve," no weapon that is formed against him can reach its mark—he (or she) "is immortal till their work is done."



HE GOETH ON BEFORE



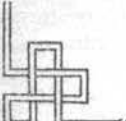
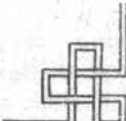
Dark is the sky! and veiled the unknown morrow!
Dark is life's way, for night is not yet o'er;
The longed-for glimpse I may not meanwhile borrow;
But, this I know, HE GOETH ON BEFORE.

Dangers are nigh! and fears my mind are shaking;
Heart seems to dread what life may hold in store;
But I am His—He knows the way I'm taking,
More blessed still—HE GOETH ON BEFORE.

Doubts cast their weird, unwelcome shadows o'er me,
Doubts that life's best—life's choicest things are o'er;
What but His Word can strengthen, can restore me,
And this blest fact; that still HE GOES BEFORE.

HE GOES BEFORE! Be this my consolation!
He goes before! On this my heart shall dwell!
He goes before! This guarantees salvation!
HE GOES BEFORE! And therefore all is well.

—(J. D. Smith)

A SIMPLE PRAYER.

A faithful and successful servant of God was once watched by his people, who sought to ascertain the secret of his inspiring ministry. He seemed to know every sorrow of his large congregation, and had learned how to speak the word to help. He seemed to read their hearts in every condition, and he knew how to soothe their wounds.

They watched him at his work far into the night as he turned over the pages of the Book of books, comparing this with that, and building up his message for a coming day. At length, in the still hours of the new-born day,

he closed his Book and brought his hands together, child-like, and offered his short prayer. His watchers listened eagerly to hear what he would say. Would it be some finely worded prayer? It was this—"My Gracious Heavenly Father, we are still on the same old terms! Thou art mine, and I am Thine, in Jesus' Name—Goodnight!"

How beautiful was this prayer. Familiar, but without undue familiarity; reserved and reverent, but saying everything that was best and necessary. God knew his heart, and accepted the renewing of his covenant as incense sweet.

It is not necessary to preach to God when we pray.



LUCIFER, THE PRINCE OF EVIL.



A study in the personality of the Devil.

Chapter 2.—Rebellion Against Holiness.

It was in the year of Jerusalem's destruction by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar that Ezekiel the priest, far away by the rivers of Assyria, uttered those memorable words of denunciation against the Phoenician city of Tyre which form the burden of the twentysixth to twenty-eighth chapters of his book. The idolatry of Tyre was an offence to every pious Israelite; the Tyrians' satisfaction at the miseries which came upon Israel during the closing years of the latter's national existence induced an antagonism which found comfort only in the thought that one day God Himself would intervene to punish the enemies and the traducers of Israel.

It was in this setting that Ezekiel presented his message. The idolatrous Tyrians were to suffer the same fate that had already overtaken Jerusalem. Their trade would be destroyed, their possessions taken from them, their city desolated. But unlike Jerusalem, which by the promise of God was one day to rise from the ruins and recover more than her former glory, Tyre, once overthrown would remain in oblivion for ever. Never again would she sit as mistress of the seas, her merchants trading with the four corners of the earth.

The dread prediction came true. Nearly three hundred years later Alexander the Great laid siege to Tyre and eventually captured the city and fulfilled Ezekiel's forecast to the letter. From that day to this Tyre has remained in oblivion; even as the ancient seer declared; "Never shalt thou be any more."

Now here is afforded a perfect setting for that deeper instruction to Christians of after days which was being recorded by the Holy Spirit. The first part of Ezekiel's denunciation clearly refers to the city and its inhabitants and their activities and institutions. Every detail is capable of a strictly literal application and its fulfilment is recorded in history. This part of the description concludes with an account of the woes which would come upon the prince of Tyre and chapter 28, verses 1-10, tell of the doom awaiting that potentate. At the 11th verse the prophet passes into a new denunciation which whilst addressed ostensibly to the ruler of Tyre, employs language and allusions which cannot be truthfully applicable to any earthly being. The point of corres-

pondency is that just as Tyre was to go into oblivion for ever, so will this one of whom the prophet now speaks, and addressing the King of Tyre as a symbol, so to speak, of the one he really has in mind, the prophet, speaking by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, records a vivid description of the creation and sin of Lucifer, the Prince of Evil.

A verse by verse examination of the passage will reveal the aptness of Ezekiel's words.

"**Thou seal most accurate, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty**" (Margolis). The reference is to Babylonian clay "seals"—little cylinders of baked clay with an intricate design embossed upon them and used by the owner to impress his distinctive mark or signature upon the clay tablets of that time. A "seal most accurate" would be one which was a faithful copy of the master seal, and by this reference Lucifer is pictured as having been originally a faithful copy of his Maker. Like man in later days, he was created "in the image and likeness of God." Leëser translates this phrase, "Thou wast complete in outline" which conveys much the same thought. Lucifer was created, like all that God has made, "very good," "full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty." The word "**tochnith**" translated "sum" in the A.V. means "pattern" and in its only other occurrence (Ezek. 43: 10) is so translated, referring then to the pattern or arrangement of the Temple buildings. Thus the A.V. rendering conveys the same idea as other translations—the accuracy of this copy of the Divine pattern which was represented in the personality of Lucifer. "**In Eden the garden of God didst thou abide.**" There seems no reason to doubt that this reference is to the new earthly creation described in Genesis. The story of man's original sinlessness and the introduction of evil is common to many ancient nations and the early peoples of Mesopotamia had a vivid belief in the original "garden" and the sacred tree, the curse of evil having been introduced by a serpent, thus in large measure confirming the Bible story. Lucifer's special commission had to do with the earth and its inhabitants.

"**Every precious stone was thy covering.**" The word translated "covering" is *mesukkah*, meaning a pavilion or a tabernacle, and the description of a pavilion bearing "every pre-

precious stone" brings to mind at once the description of the New Jerusalem in the book of Revelation, that glorious city of which it is said that the foundations were garnished with all manner of precious stones, its gates of pearls and its streets of gold. Remembering that this "New Jerusalem" is to restore to mankind that which was lost in Eden, it is not an unreasonable thing to picture Lucifer enthroned in that early day of man's innocence as the lord of earthly creation for man's guidance and instruction in the ways of God. The contrast between this one who, through ambition, misused a wonderful opportunity and the One Who, having humbled Himself, became obedient to death "even the death of the cross" and afterward is enthroned for all time as the Lord of all things in Heaven and on earth, is then a particularly striking one. This thought of Lucifer's royal state is further borne out by the next clause, **"The service of tabrets and flutes was prepared with thee in the day thou wast created."** The word translated in the A.V. "workmanship" is **"melakah,"** meaning work or business, in this case referring to the royal music, the "tabrets and flutes" of the text. Musical instruments were an essential adjunct of kingly state, and a similar reference to the "business" or "service" of the king's musicians occurs in Neh. 11: 22 and 13: 30, and in Dan. 8: 27, affording illustrations of the kingly rank with which Lucifer was invested at his creation.

Next comes a reference to Lucifer's priestly function, this combination of priest and king being particularly striking when one thinks of Melchisedek, a type of Christ, a "priest upon his throne." **"Thou wast a cherub with outspread wings, and I had set thee upon the holy mountain of God as thou wast. Thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the bright shining ones."** This is Leaser's rendering, the majority of other versions being in agreement—the final expression "stones of fire" being a Hebrew synonym for "bright shining ones," i.e., the angels. In that case there is an indication here that this heavenly being was accustomed to consort with the holy angels of God's spiritual creation; but more than that, he held high rank amongst them as an "anointed cherub" (A.V.) one therefore who exercised priestly functions. The general meaning of the entire passage, interpreting the "holy mountain of God" as referring to the perfect earthly creation in Eden, is that Lucifer was "set" to be a Priest and King to the human race, having access at all times to the presence

of God in the interests of this new addition to the Divine domains.

Now comes the dark shadow of sin. **"Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee. By the abundance of thy slander thou wast filled to thy centre with violence and thou didst sin."** In this verse the word "merchandise" is from the Hebrew **"rekullah"**—not **"maarab"** (barter) as in Ezekiel 27, nor **"sachar"** (gain) as in many other Scriptures, but is from a root which means "to go to and fro" either as a merchant or as a tale bearer or slanderer. Hence it is suggested by students that in determining the meaning to be attached to this word in harmony with its context the alternative meaning should be adopted, and the fitness of this is evident when it is remembered that one of the descriptions the Bible attaches to Satan is that of "slanderer" or "accuser."

How fitting then, is this verse, when one recalls the slander uttered in Eden; "God doth know...your eyes shall be opened" as though the Creator harboured base designs against His creatures. This verse may well include that great slander and famous lie first told in Eden and repeated for century after century through the ages, "Ye shall not surely die."

The nature of Lucifer's sin is not stated here; fuller details are afforded in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah; but there stands out in all its stark horror the dread declaration that this wonderful being who had commenced a life of such marvellous promise and had been so signally honoured by his Creator, had proven unfaithful to his trust. Sin had entered, and by the immutable laws of God, unless sin be eradicated, death must inevitably follow.

Hence that solemn enunciation of the only possible ending to this story, the fundamental truth that sin contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction. **"Therefore brought I forth fire from the midst of thee; this devoured thee, and I changed thee to ashes upon the earth before the eyes of all that saw thee—Thou art as though thou hast not been, and shall not be any more for ever."** Here is the doom of Satan; the fire of his own sin, proceeding from within himself, has severed him for ever from the presence and fellowship of God; and devoured by that fire, and in the end of time cast as ashes upon the earth, he will be as though he had never been "and shall not be any more for ever." The continual unrepentant state of the arch enemy of God and man is plainly inferred in these words. No

hint of repentance; no indication that there is in the mind of this fallen being anything else than a determination to continue in active rebellion against all that is good and true and

holy. A supreme example of the awful consequences of sin is provided by this story of Lucifer, the fallen archangel.

A PARABLE IN STONE

Buried in the jungles of Yucatan, Central America, men have found a marvellous feat of engineering skill; a road, thirty-two feet wide and between two and eight feet in height above the level of the surrounding country, built of great blocks of stone, dressed and cemented together, and running straight as a die for a distance of fifty miles.

Mile after mile it traverses the hot, steamy bush, passing groups of ruins here and there, until at last it enters the ancient city of Chichen-Itza, straight to the temple in the centre of the city, and down into a vast cavern to end on the shores of a deep subterranean lake.

Fourteen hundred years ago the country now covered with impenetrable jungle was a wide expanse of smiling maize fields studded with towns and villages, and every town with its temple; for religious observances played a great part in the life of the people. That great causeway was a ceremonial road for sacrifice. From time to time there passed by that way processions, youths and maidens who had given themselves to the service of the god they worshipped, and now on their way to the sacred city, there to plunge into the dark waters of that underground lake in full assurance that by so doing they would at once enter into eternal bliss in the presence of the god. With that fervent expectation they pressed along the way, forgetting the things that lay behind, thinking only of that which was before. The labourers in the fields by the roadside stopped their work to watch their passing; dwellers in the towns on the route ceased from their manifold activities to see the strange sight; but the pilgrims heeded them not. Neither the beauty of the world around them nor the entreaties of their friends,

the loves and desires and attractions of their day could draw them from their purpose; as men and women seeing something which is not of this earth they toiled on their way, mile after mile, day after day, until at length the sacred city appeared in sight.

Then with renewed energy they hastened their flagging steps. The great Temple, goal of their hopes, opened its gates before them. Down into the blackness of the gloomy cavern, a pause on the brink of that still dark water, a plunge; and they had come to the end of the way.

To-day their temples and their cities are in ruins. Their gods and their religions have perished. Fertile fields have yielded to the all-devouring jungle, and the people of the land are seen no more. **Only the road remains,** straight and true as in the days when the first pilgrims passed along its course.

So with our High Calling in Christ Jesus. The road is straight and true; it will lead us surely into the deep waters of death but beyond those waters there is "joy exceeding and full of glory." Dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, our Father waits for the home-coming of His children. Year after year, century after century, have they followed each other along that road, caring nothing for the attractions of the world through which they have passed. Now in our day that world is shaken to its foundations, the cities are crumbling to ruins, the old comforts of life are vanishing, the fair lands are becoming desolate, **but still the road remains.** Still does it lead straight to the city of God, still does it call us to the last act of faith, the losing of one's self in full confidence that our God is on the other side, waiting to receive the stalwart pilgrim who has come to the end of the way.

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

"INSTANT IN SEASON."

If while I walk the busy mart,
I find there one whose fainting heart
By some kind, sympathetic word
To new life might be stirred,
Lord, help me say it **now!**

Or, if upon the thorny road
I meet another 'neath a load
Of sorrow, which my tears might share,
And thus the burden bear,
Lord, help me shed them **now!**

If any ointment, rare and sweet,
I long to pour upon "His feet,"
To rest and soothe them by the way,
My hand let nothing stay,
Lord, help me bring it **now!**

(Gertrude W. Seibert).

A BURNING AND SHINING LIGHT.

One of old was declared to be a burning and shining light. There is force in this expression. Some lights are cold, austere, unsympathetic; but the kind approved by the Master was the burning kind—warm, glowing, sympathetic, helpful, intensive. The Master Himself furnishes the best of all illustrations of the principle enunciated. He was the light which came down from Heaven—undimmed, resplendent, shining forth to the utmost the light of Divine truth.

Not a cold, forbidding recluse was He, holding Himself aloof from the people with a haughty and disdainful spirit, telling coldly 'wonderful words of life.'

On the contrary, His entire life was sympathetic; wholesouled. One of the charges brought against Him by the cold Pharisees was, He receiveth sinners and eateth with them. Even His disciples were shocked that He should converse with a woman of Samaria. But the common people heard him gladly. While recognising that He was far above their plane—while beholding in Him the glories of an only-begotten of the Father, they nevertheless were drawn to Him because He was the burning as well as the shining light. And they declared of Him, 'Never man spake like this man.'—John 7 : 46.

The mist lies dim on the coming year,
I know not the way to go;
But my Captain standeth above the clouds—
'Tis enough for Him to know.

OUR BURDEN-BEARER.

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." (1 Pet. 5 : 7).

God is the most careful Being in the universe, we may be sure. He is not careful, in the sense in which the word is used in this text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but He is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading His people to cast their care upon Him, of bringing them closer to Himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of Him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without Him. But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon Him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a test of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in His love, faith in His promises.

*How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
"He cares for thee!"*

*Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou with tenderness Divine
Dost care for me!*

AT CLOSE OF DAY.

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying act, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind,
That fell like sunshine where it went
Then you may count that day well spent.
But if through all the livelong day
You've cheered no heart by yea or nay;
If through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace,
That brought the sunshine to one face;
No act most small,
That helped some soul at trifling cost—
Then count that day as worse than lost.

✻ THE STUDENTS' PAGE ✻

The Only Begotten of the Father."

The term "only-begotten son" was in use among the Jews as an expression descriptive of the "best-beloved" son. In both the Old and New Testaments it is used in this fashion. Genesis 22; 2, where Abraham's "only" son is referred to, is an example—for Isaac was not Abraham's only son in a literal sense. The Septuagint renders "only son" by "beloved son" in this Scripture. A New Testament instance is found in Heb. 11: 17. There are at least two examples in the writings of Josephus ("Antiquities of the Jews" Book 1, chap. 13; 1, and Book 20 Chap. 2; 1), which is a confirmation of the custom. How apt then is the reference in Scripture to Jesus being the only begotten or best beloved son—as the writer of Proverbs 8 has it, "daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him."

Into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Luke 23; 46.

It is said that this expression was included in the evening prayers of every Jewish boy. If this be so, we can well imagine the boy Jesus repeating these words nightly, and then in perfect confidence laying himself down to rest. So when the shades of death were closing round Him He repeated the same hallowed words, knowing that the Father in Whom He trusted would indeed put forth His mighty power to raise His Son from the dead.

"After their kind." Gen. 1.

The oft repeated phrase which describes God as creating birds, beasts, fishes, etc., "after their kind" means literally "in all their varieties." There are nearly 800,000 species of animals known to naturalists, and this wonderful variety of only one phase of the natural creation is but a fraction of the marvellous works of Him who is "perfect in knowledge." The Hebrew expression *leminehu* rendered in this chapter "after their kind" is met again throughout Lev. 11, where the context shows up much more clearly the accuracy of the literal rendering "in all their varieties."

Sunday in the Early Church.

Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, wrote "On Sunday all those of us who live in the same town or district assemble to-

gether, and there is read to us some part of the Memoirs of the Apostles, which are called Gospels, and the writings of the Prophets as much as time permits. Then whoever is presiding gives us a sermon, after which we rise for common prayer; afterwards bread and wine are brought."

The allusion to "rising" for prayer calls to mind the fact that it was the custom of Christians in the early centuries to **stand** whilst prayer was being made, the one who was offering prayer doing so with arms extended as if in blessing. Engravings in the Catacombs at Rome depict this usage in repeated instances and this in turn explains the words of 1 Tim. 2; 8, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, **lifting up** holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

'Out of Zion shall go forth the Law.'

Preparation for the educational aspect of Millennial life goes on. Even before television has come within the reach of ordinary people, further progress has been made in its possibilities, and there has now been demonstrated, in London, a television receiver which throws a picture in full colour upon a screen, twelve feet by eighteen. It is possible for a large audience to look upon events transpiring at that same moment many miles away. Years before either radio or television was known it was suggested that the Ancient Worthies might announce the laws of the new Kingdom from Jerusalem and all peoples be able to see and hear. *The seeming impossibility has now come well within the range of possibility.* "The law of the Lord shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

More Value than Many Sparrows.

The "sparrows" of Palestine are very numerous and are caught and destroyed in great numbers as a nuisance. To know this is to better appreciate the assurance that our Heavenly Father, Who takes care of all His creation so that not one sparrow can fall to the ground without His knowledge, will surely take heed to our welfare, who are "of more value than many sparrows." (Matt. 10; 29 and Luke 12; 7).



APOCALYPTIC ORIGINS.

No. 2. "The Throne and its Occupant."

Turning to the details of that wonderful scene displayed to John (Rev. 4), let us seek to ascertain the meaning of its symbolism.

The first thing described, which is the central feature of the scene, and of many subsequent scenes, is a THRONE. Very frequently we read of the throne of the Lord as the representation of the Sovereign Authority and Sublime Majesty of God. The Psalmist says that, "the Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom ruleth over all." (Psa. 103: 19).

Again, Isaiah described the grandeur of that throne as "high and lifted up" (Isa. 6). Everywhere, however, we are led to think of the power and authority of which the Throne is a symbol rather than of any particular form or structure. While a regal seat was shown to John, he does not attempt to describe it, only mentioning it as the source of lightnings and thunderings and voices.

John is not attempting to describe the Eternal Omnipotent seat of the Creator, a throne which was placed before time and worlds began. He sees this throne not as long since fixed, but as if it was just coming to rest in its place. The Greek here is said to denote unfinished action, reaching its climax at the time of seeing. This indicates that the throne belongs to a later time and another order of things, which is just about to begin. The thought is an exact parallel to Dan. 7: 9, both in its subject and phraseology. Daniel says, "I beheld till the thrones were 'set' (not 'cast down' as the A.V. says) and the Ancient of days did sit..." (The Chaldee word 'remah' means 'to set' or 'put into place' by casting, putting, or setting down. Many Eastern thrones were enlarged cushions, which could be set or placed by casting down). It was thus not the overturning, but the establishing of a throne, and John saw it in process of establishment.

On the throne was 'One' sitting, but John mentions no name, nor does he describe any form, but we need experience no difficulty in determining who was meant, in view of the last verse of this chapter. It was He who had created all things for His good pleasure. This royal Majesty was 'like a Jasper and a Sardine stone'—not in shape, but in colour and brilliancy. The Jasper—a rare gem—was a flash-

ing crystalline stone, dark green in colour with vivid red veins. The Sardine was of a brilliant red colour (the redder, the more valuable) and capable of a high and lasting polish. Combining the lustre of pure specimens of these stones, we would get the appearance of flames without smokiness, a rich deep flashing crystalline light, mainly of a reddish purple hue; as it were a fountain of living fire.

Around the throne was a rainbow, like in colour to an Emerald, a soothing living green. The rainbow is a token of God's promise never to destroy the world again. (Gen. 9: 11, 17). This would suggest that this throne is for the preservation of His people, even at the expense of their enemies. The colour bespeaks approachability, living green being the easiest colour for the human eye to rest upon.

From the throne, lightnings, voices and thunders proceeded. These terrific forces of Nature had frequently been the instruments of God's punitive measures, as in Egypt, when God sent "thunder (voices) and hail and fire upon the ground" (Ex. 9: 23-28). Again, when God desired to impress Israel with a due sense of disobedience and sin "there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount..." (Ex. 19: 16). Upon the Philistines God sent a great thunder, and discomfited them before Israel. (1 Sam. 7: 10). When Israel turned from God to seek an earthly king, Samuel said "The Lord shall send thunder and rain" (In time of wheat harvest).

"Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel." (1 Sam. 12: 17-18).

This shows that this Throne is one of judgment to some, but of mercy to others. In the language of symbolism, lightnings represent sharp flashes of light or knowledge, followed by the rumble of discussion and controversy, but all leading to the judgment of the transgressor, and relief for the oppressed. All these flashes of light, tending to bring the oppressor to judgment have their origin in this Divine Throne.

In the forefront of the Throne were seven torches of fire, which were said to be "the seven Spirits of God." According to the symbolism of numbers 'seven' indicates fullness or perfection; hence, the seven Spirits of God represent the plenitude of the Divine Power pledged to carry through this Judgment and pour out His flaming indignation upon all that oppressed His people. God will be a consuming fire to all wickedness, once His day of Judgment has begun. That is the picture herein shown. It is not fire as an illuminant, but fiery flame which will set the world on fire with His jealousy against all that savours of oppression,—"the day that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and it shall burn them up, root and branch." (Mal. 4: 1).

Also in the forefront or 'surround' of the Throne was a sea of glass. A 'Sea' is a representation of unruly disturbed conditions-wickedness. "The wicked is like a troubled sea" (Isa. 57: 20-21). Being transparent and crystalline shows that one could see through it, to conditions beyond. One of the most arresting features of all this amazing scene, is the presence of what, in a most unfortunate translation, our A.V. translators have called 'beasts.' The Greek word is 'Zoa' (plural); Zoon (singular). It is not an easy word to "get across" into our language. 'Living Creatures' is vague; 'living beings' brings them almost to the human level; 'living ones' is better, but if used in the singular, it needs using discreetly, because Jesus claims it as His Title to be "the Living One." (Rev. 1: 18).

It may help us to understand who or what is represented by these four 'living ones' if they are compared with Ezekiel's picture of 'four living creatures' (Ezek. 1: 10). Ezekiel's 'living creatures' had each four faces; John's 'living ones' had each but one. But each one of Ezekiel's 'living creatures' consists of the same four kinds of face, which John saw separately—though in slightly different order. Ezekiel's creatures had each the faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle.

John's four 'living ones'—placed in due rotation—have the faces of (1) a lion, (2) a calf (ox), (3) a man, (4) a flying eagle. They correspond in kind, but not in number.

The 'living ones' John saw had each six wings; the 'living creatures' Ezekiel saw had each four only; yet they are alike in that the 'living ones' and the 'living creatures' all have wings.

Another point of resemblance is that both the 'living ones' and the 'living creatures' are 'full of eyes' within (Rev. 4: 8. Ezek. 1: 18). That these are both pictorial representations of much the same thing, at different seasons, and adapted to different conditions is a reasonable deduction. In chapter 10: 19 and 20, Ezekiel calls these 'living creatures.'

'Cherubim'—"the cherubim lifted up their wings...this is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel...and I knew that they were cherubim." He also describes the throne-scene, of which these living creatures formed a part, as "the glory of God" (Ezek. 1: 28.) The throne-scene in Rev. 4: is similar, yet with differences suited to each occasion.

The identification of the 'living creatures' of Ezekiel, and the 'living ones' of Revelation with 'cherubim' carries our minds a stage further back along Israel's history. We find representations of Cherubim in the erection of the Temple, and further back still, at the installation of the Tabernacle ministry. The first occurrence of this word occurs in Gen. 3: after the expulsion of Adam from Eden. "So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east end of the garden of Eden, Cherubims; and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." The office of these Cherubim was to keep the way of the tree of life. 'To keep' means to preserve, to care for; to guard; in the same way that God set Adam to 'keep' the garden, before sin came in (Gen. 2: 15).

A further seed-thought here comes from the meaning of the word "placed." "He placed at the east end...cherubim." The Hebrew word "SHAKAN" here used means "to station (or dwell) in a tabernacle."

The cherubim were "stationed in a tabernacle" by Almighty God. The word 'Shekinah,' connected with Tabernacle and Temple, comes from this word "SHAKAN," and signifies God's dwelling in a Tabernacle. The word 'Cherubim' is not a translation, but a word transferred unchanged from the Hebrew (KEROOB). In this, its first setting, it signifies a guardian; a care-taker; a protector.

Ezekiel tells us that the Adversary (symbolised by the King of Tyrus—chap. 28: 11-19), had been "the cherub that covereth" in the garden of God; but instead of preserving man, seduced him into sin.

When God ordered the Tabernacle to be set up in Israel, it was that He might dwell (**shakan**) with them. Among the first things

constructed by Moses was the Ark of the Covenant, with its Mercy-seat, and its cherubim (Ex. 25: 10-13). Figures of Cherubim were woven into the Vail (26: 31 and 36: 35). God promised to meet Israel's High Priest and commune with him from between the cherubim (Ex. 25: 22). From between these cherubim God spoke; and there His Glory dwelt. (1 Sam. 4: 4. 2 Sam. 6: 2. Psa. 80; 1. Isa. 37: 16). Thus the cherubim were emblems of God's 'tabernacling' with Israel to protect, and guard and care for her welfare. Connected with Israel's day of Atonement, and uprising from the Mercy-seat they appear to stand for the token of God's Love and Power a-wing, waiting till the sprinkled blood had made it possible for them to fly to Israel's aid. The 'living ones' seen by John, and 'the living creatures' seen by Ezekiel correspond to these cherubim, and would carry the same thought of protection, care, and oversight. It tells of the employment of the Divine Attributes—Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power—on behalf of His people; for their safe-keeping, but for their oppressors' destruction.

Another point of correspondency in the vision of John with Tabernacle days is found in the facial forms of the 'living ones.' Jewish writers say that the banner of each tribe of Israel had wrought upon it a particular figure—a 'lion' for Judah; an 'ox' for Ephraim; a 'man' for Reuben; and an 'eagle' for Dan. These were the representative tribes—all the rest being marshalled under these four banners—(Num. 2:) Judah, with Issachar, and Zebulon, on the east; Reuben, with Simeon and

Gad, on the south; Ephraim, with Manasseh and Benjamin on the West; and Dan, with Asher and Naphtali, on the north.

In the centre of this four-sided encampment was the Tabernacle, and the tents of the Levites. In that formation Israel marched through the Wilderness under the four banners of the 'lion,' the 'young ox,' the 'man' and the 'flying eagle.' These were their ensigns, their guards, their protection, and the symbols of their power, for among them and over them was God. The standards were the symbols of the tribes; the cherubim were the symbols of God—together, they stood for that new relationship instituted at Sinai, wherein Israel were offered and accepted the high honour of being a 'kingdom of Priests and an holy nation' in the service of 'Him' who enthroned Himself on Sinai's top, amid flames and thick darkness, as their king and Law-Giver.

The presence of these 'banner-faces' in this majestic Throne-scene shows beyond question that it is the interests of Israel (as a whole) which are being served thereby,—the combination of these 'banner-faces' with the Cherubim (the living ones) indicates the presence and protection of God, all ready to aid His Ancient people, so soon as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah shall have taken and broken the seven-sealed Scroll, and redeemed the alienated inheritance for her. On the other hand, these same living ones call forth the forces of judgment upon Israel's oppressors and enemies (Chap. 6:) and it is from one of them that the vials of God's wrath are given to the seven angels (Rev. 15: 7).

The Peace of Christ. "My peace I give unto you."—John 14 : 27

Sweet gift of Christ! O blessed thought!
The peace of mind that God hath wrought!
No earthly passion's half so sweet,
No joy on earth is so complete,
As that the loving Father gives
To those in whom the spirit lives—
The peace of Christ.

O weary one upon life's sea,
That has no Christ to comfort thee,
Remember when the billows roll,
Surge upon surge, about thy soul,
That there's a harbour safe and sure,
Wherein thy heart may rest secure—
The peace of Christ.

O loving heart that trembles yet,
Half fearful that it may forget;
Afraid that it may miss the way,
Doubting wavering, all the day—
Remember that it is to thee
This gift of gifts is offered free—
The peace of Christ.

O Christian with the brow severe,
With eyes that seldom drop a tear,
With lips that smiling have forgot,
Remember that it is thy lot
To have within a joy Divine;
Open thy heart and make it thine—
The peace of Christ.

The love of God! How its dimension
Reaches above our comprehension;
And who of us can understand
The workings of His mighty Hand?
But rest, my soul, and quiet be,
Thou knowest this He giveth thee—
The peace of Christ.

So then, my soul, upon His breast
Thy troubles cast, and be at rest.
Though sorrow wrings the heart, and pain
Saps life and strength with steady drain,
O'er all these griefs and cares of thine
God pours the healing balm divine—
The peace of Christ.

—Selected.

Gathered Grain.

Let me remind you all, ye faithful believers in Christ, that ye are compared to trees—trees of the Lord's right-hand planting. Seek to grow as the tree grows. Pray that this year ye may grow downward; that ye may know more of your own nothingness; and so be rooted to humility. Pray that your roots may penetrate below the mere topsoil of truth, into the great rocks which underlie the uppermost stratum; that ye may get a good hold of the doctrines of eternal love, of immutable faithfulness, of complete satisfaction, of union to Christ, of the eternal purpose of God, which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the world was. This will be a growth which will not add to your fame, which will not minister to your vanity, but it will be invaluable in the hour of storm; a growth, the value of which no heart can conceive when the hurricane is tearing up the hypocrite. As ye root downward, seek to grow upward. Send out the topshoot of your love towards heaven. As the trees send out their spring shoot and their mid-summer shoot, and as you see upon the top of the fir that new green child of spring, the fresh shoot which lifts its hand towards the sun, so plan to have more love and greater desires after God, a nearer approach towards Him in prayer, a sweeter spirit of adoption, a more intense and intimate fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. This mounting upward will add to your beauty and to your delight. Then pray to grow on either side. Stretch out your branches; let the shadow of your holy influence extend as far as God has given you opportunities. But see to it also that ye grow in faithfulness, for to increase the bough without adding to the fruit is to diminish the beauty of the tree. Labour this year by God's grace to bring forth more fruit unto Him than ye have ever done. We would not be as the gleanings of the vintage when there is only here and there a cluster upon the uppermost bought, we would be as the Valley of Eschol, whose presses burst with new wine.

This is to grow in grace; to root downward, to shoot upward, to extend your influences like far-reaching branches, and to bring forth unto the Lord's glory.

C. H. Spurgeon.

* * *

There is no promise of Grace in advance of the need. God did not make a way through the Red Sea before Israel arrived on the shore. He did not divide the waters of Jordan while the people were at rest in their Camp, nor even when they first began to march.

He did not sow the wilderness with manna while Israel dwelt in Egypt. He did not send His Angel till the Syrians were at Jerusalem's gates. It was only as they came abreast of their need that the supply was ready—not one moment before!

Grace to help arrives at the same moment as the need! Grace synchronises with need.

* * *

A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE.

The sun sank behind the horizon in a blaze of glory. Fiery tints glinting across the placid sea struggled for an instant with a deeper reflection from darkening skies. Quietness descended upon the earth and the evening stars began to twinkle, shining with increasing brilliancy as the radiance died out of the western sky.

Down in the valley lights gleamed, and here and there doors closed as families came home for the evening meal. Up amongst the rhododendrons a pack of wolves wandered about a little and then snuggled down into the undergrowth and were at peace. Upon the still air came a faint sound of music from those houses in the valley.

**"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty
We thy children praise Thy Name and joy-
fully adore
Holiness triumphant reigns on earth before
thee
Peace on earth, goodwill to men shall be for-
evermore."**

The friendly stars shone from the velvet sky. One by one the lights in the valley disappeared. A gentle breeze ruffled the tree tops and the wolves stirred a little and were quiet. The earth slept; and angelic guardians, keeping ward from on high, watched over a sinless world in which everything that had breath lived only and for all time to the eternal praise of God Most High.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

Sister Eva James, of Brentwood, passed suddenly and unexpectedly into her rest on 13th January. Her death came as a shock to her relatives, but because they "sorrow not as others who have no hope," the shock was tempered with a confident assurance that our sister had fought a good fight, had finished the course, had kept the faith, and would assuredly receive a crown of righteousness. Sister was looked upon as a blend of Martha and Mary, always very active in her daily tasks but ever ready to sit at the feet of her Lord. Many will miss the fellowship of one who for twenty eight years had walked "in this way."

ANONYMOUS

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation the receipt of an anonymous donation of 10/- toward the work.

EVACUATION

Brethren living in a country district in Leicestershire have offered accommodation in their home for one or two friends who may be in need of such. They would be pleased, alternatively, to care for two children of brethren for the duration. Please write to the office in the first place if interested in this offer.

THE MEMORIAL

The Memorial date this year falls on the evening of Thursday, April 10th, to the evening of Friday, April 11th (Good Friday). In view of the prevailing circumstances some of the classes in large towns are arranging to hold their observance during the afternoon of Good Friday, and this fact is mentioned so that other friends who may be desirous of doing the same thing will be able to feel that they are celebrating with brethren of like faith at the same time.

For those who are isolated and unable to obtain the emblems for themselves easily, the customary provision is made and the emblems will be sent by post to friends who make application by April 3. This arrangement is intended for the ones and twos who will be celebrating by themselves, and it will be appreciated if the number of persons for whom emblems are required is stated when applying. These requests should be sent to 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTRIBUTORS.

Brethren are invited to submit items suitable for publication in the "Students Page" and "Gathered Grain" features of the B.S.M. A perusal of these features as they have appeared in recent months is recommended in order to form an idea of the type and length of these little items. It is preferred that "Students Page" items are original, but in any case items taken from other publications should have the fact mentioned, together with name of such publication and date of issue. Please send these contributions to Bro. A. O. Hudson, 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

AN EXPLANATION.

An occasional enquiry reaches us as to whether we are connected in any way with the organisation known in this country as the International Bible Students' Association. For the benefit of any who may be interested we would say that there is no connection whatsoever between the two movements. Whilst we extend to the I.B.S.A. and its members the same Christian courtesy that we extend to every movement which names the name of Christ, our own fellowship is based on different principles, a different understanding of the teachings of Christ and the Scriptures, and a different outlook toward existing Christian and civil institutions. The rather unfortunate similarity of names is perhaps justification for the enquiry and for this brief word of explanation.

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

Stocked by the Bookroom, except those marked *, which are obtained to order and can be sent within a few days.

TRANSLATIONS

	Price	Postage
Emphatic Diaglott (Greek and English) N.T.	13 0	7d
Weymouth (With notes)	6 0	7d
Weymouth (Without notes)	4 6	4d
Moffatt	4 0	7d
Rotherham	14 0	7d
Rotherham O.T.	35 0	10d
Leeser	10 6	7d
Margolis	6 3	7d
*Septuagint (Greek and English)	18 6	10d
Youngs Complete Bible	11 6	7d
Ferrar Fenton	11 6	7d
*Variusum (With notes)	16 6	8d
*Moffatt	22 0	8d

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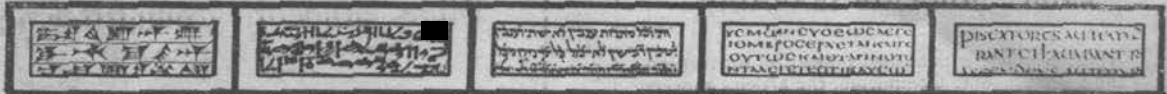
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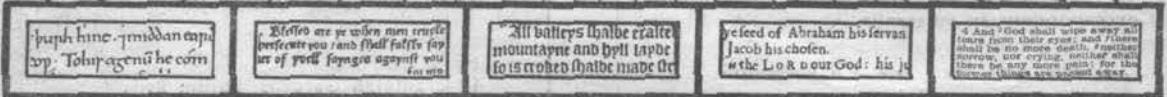
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BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



Vol. 18 No. 4

APRIL, 1941

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THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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Letters for attention of Committee or Secretary

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"YE DO SHOW THE LORD'S DEATH."

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come " I Cor. 11:26.

Again in the ordering of the Lord's providence the due time for gathering to the table of the Lord to remember in a special manner the death of our beloved Lord draws near. This special act of remembrance we will perform in compliance with our Lord's own direction. The story has been told so many times in past years that every phase of truth associated therewith cannot but be well understood by all who see, in its true light, that our Lord was the true Passover Lamb on the highest plane of God's purpose.

But the story will always bear repetition at this season, in order to stimulate to greater intensity our appreciation of that sacrifice, and what it did (and still does) for us, and to prompt us, with greater earnestness and sincerity to renew our own covenant with our God, to die with Christ Jesus our Lord.

Every year that goes brings us a step nearer "the year of My redeemed," when the greatest and grandest deliverance in all the annals of time will be brought to pass. Each passing year should invest the act of remembrance, therefore, with greater solemnity and beauty, enabling each participant to carry away a deeper sense of reverence and gratitude than from any preceding occasion. Another year's crucial experiences and refinements should have prepared our hearts to receive the emblems of our slain Lamb with deeper appreciation and satisfaction than hitherto.

The leadings of Divine providence should have created a keener appetite for the 'true bread of God'—a sharper hungering and thirsting for the privileges spread out on the Lord's table, and though we may eat and drink our daily portions to meet each day's spiritual needs throughout the year, the very special and sacred meaning attached by our Lord to the simple annual service of Remembrance should cause us to desire more ardently to approach, with deeply increased reverence, the Christian's festal board.

Carrying our minds back to that last eventful night when our Lord gathered the little company which God had given Him around the time-honoured Paschal board, we find them following first the ancient order of procedure, established away back in the days of Moses,

and revised and augmented as time went by.

They had met privately in a room prepared for them, on the anniversary of the actual night during which their fathers had also gone behind closed blood-sprinkled doors to eat the flesh of a slain lamb, and to wait, fully robed and shod for the Angel of God to pass through the land. Nothing that Jesus said or did in the early part of the night's proceedings changed the order or sequence or the meaning of the great event they were keeping in memory. They ate the Passover together exactly as their fathers had done down the centuries. Authorities (some of them Jewish) tell us that the Jews (in Jesus' day) partook of the flesh of a lamb, and unleavened bread, to remind them of the hasty meal prepared and eaten in Egypt; of a blend of herbs and vegetables (like a salad) consisting of coriander and endive, lettuce and horehound, thistle leaves and succory, to remind them of the bitterness of the bondage their fathers endured, and crushed fruit and nuts brought to table in shape of a brick, to impress on their minds the arduous labours of the mud-pits and the brick-kilns. They drank together the expressed juice of the vine, from a cup which from times long distant had been called "the Cup of the Covenant."

If this assortment of fruits, herbs, bread and flesh had become the established fare at the Paschal board, no valid reason exists for doubting that these were the ingredients that had been prepared by the owner of the room and set out in order by the two disciples (Mark 14: 13), Peter and John (Luke 22: 8) in readiness for the arrival later of Jesus and the rest of the band.

As they thus ate and drank and sang their way through the ancient feast they called to remembrance the slaying of the lamb, the sprinkling of the door-posts, the extraordinary postures of the participants, the angel's mid-night flight, the morning's early commotion as prince and peasant rushed to Pharaoh to tell of their sad loss, the royal audience accorded to Moses, and the imperative order to "be gone." They would remember that Israel's first-born sons had been "spared" as the angel, with flashing sword "passed over" their huts or tents. They would not fail to be reminded

that God had spared those first-borns for Himself, and that He hallowed them to Himself and His purposes in the dead of that eventful night. Then with the early flush of dawn the hosts of the Lord began their march of liberty and to life with God.

The old, old story was enshrined in every drop and particle on the Paschal board, and every year, each generation (when walking with God) drew forth the same meaning and purpose. It was a memorial—a looking back—a remembrancer of the great things which God had done.

This then was the object and meaning of the early part of the Paschal repast at this last Passover which Jesus had approached with such intense desire.

The usual procedure ended, Jesus then took a piece of the remaining bread, and raising over it a special prayer, passed it on to his disciples saying "Take this and eat it—this represents my body." He then took the cup, in which yet remained a quantity of the juice of the grape and again giving thanks to God, passed it to his brethren, with the words "Drink ye all of it. This is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26: 27-28).

This was new procedure, and had an entirely new meaning. Yet it was superimposed on the old. It was still intended to be "the Passover." It was still intended to presage deliverance. It was like going back to the night in Egypt to start it all over again, but on a higher plane. It still required a Lamb to be slain, it still required the sprinkling of the blood (1 Pet. 1: 2.) it still had special application to the first-borns (as a class) among the families of Israel. It was still intended to be the prelude to the breaking of bonds, and to the start of a journey towards the land of promise and of life with God. For the first-borns it still meant salvation (or safe-keeping) from the destroying angel's sword, when the final plague came to be poured out. For the remainder of the house of Israel it meant emancipation from a great and terrible taskmaster so that they could enter anew into covenant relationship with God.

The ultimate purpose of the Covenant is to constitute Israel a holy nation, and a kingdom of priests, that through them the outcast families of the earth may be regathered to God and blessed with eternal life. That great objective was and still is God's great purpose. But it needed a better Lamb than Israel's paschal lamb. It needed a better firstborn to be

brought forth on a higher plane, and to a higher ministry.

Jesus came to earth to be God's provided Paschal Lamb. Jesus went back to heaven the firstborn among many brethren, who, with Him, constitute the Church (the called-out company) of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven.

In that quiet upper room, a great change began. The old order, observed by Jesus to the very letter, came to its end. The new order then began. Jesus' act and claim to put Himself in place of the Paschal Lamb, and His invitation to His brethren (and followers) to eat the bread in lieu of eating Him, carried the Paschal idea and the Paschal work to a higher plane. His death that very day provided the slain Lamb for Israel's "Redemption" feast. His surrendered life (His blood) provided the Redemption blood. From that upper room on that eventful night, influences and opportunities went forth which yet will change the world. Already they have changed for good and all the lives of those few disciples, and of others who believed on Jesus through their word. And they will do much more as they constrain Israel and the nations into the way of God.

But here and now it is not this wider field of blessing and blessedness we seek to contemplate, but that one central fact on which the whole redemptive plan reposed. It required the death of the appointed Lamb, the death of our beloved Lord. There was no other way to effect release. Jesus, the Lamb of God, must die. No one in heaven or earth, or anywhere else in God's wide realms could meet the great need. All depended upon Him—upon Him alone!

Jesus knew all this. He knew the seriousness of all He said and did. He faced the greatest issue of His life, and of all time. But He was resolved to keep His covenant with God. No cost to Him was too great to ensure the success of His Father's plan. His death would make redemption sure; so He went to His death with open eyes and understanding heart. He offered Himself without spot or stain, a sacrifice of noblest worth. He poured out His soul to death.

For one night in the yearly round it is the Christian's privilege and delight to show forth the Lord's death, to think and speak of His voluntary surrender to the will of God, and commemorate the greatest sacrifice of all time. Each child of God knows and understands that every gracious privilege he or she enjoys flows

from that sacrifice. Reconciliation and redemption, hope and expectation all spring from that unique surrender. The resounding hosannas of a world restored trace back to that unblemished offering. (Rev. 5: 12-13).

That was the one event in the whole range of time which was inevitable and indispensable. "It had to be" for the honour of God's name. It was the one thing needed—the one thing all-essential to make God's "yea" YEA! God's promises, though immutable, were all made with this in view. He was accounted "slain" from the dawn of time.

It is no light thing which we do. It stands related to eternal things. Once for all the holy Lamb of God died. It can never occur again. In showing the Lord's death we make contact with the "imperatives" and "absolutes" of God's universal plan. We need to be humble and sincere in our approach to the table of the Lord. We need to purge out the least trace of the leaven of sin. We need to be hungry and athirst for Him, as the panting hart over the water brook. No matter how much the Cup may symbolise to each and all, apart from Him there could be no "bread," there could be no

cup.

Let brother and sister in the Lord search the chambers of their hearts, and see to it that no earthly stain or earth-born cloud shall make them unworthy of approach to these hallowed and hallowing symbols of their beloved Lord's momentous sufferings, remembering as they eat the bread and sip the wine that they so show the Lord's death till He be come as the great Deliverer of all who are in chains.

Let them remember that that which they do, shall be done by countless thousands when the story of His deathless love shall be made known to all, and that it is honour beyond compare to have a place among them in these dark days, to know their Lord and God, and walk in the footsteps of His worthy Son. Our opportunity to do this thing is nearly run. The outlook shows us that the Church's race is almost at an end. The last days should be the best, and to each and all, this coming commemoration should be the most solemnizing and encouraging of all. May the blessing of God be with each little group or each lonely soul, as we turn our eyes and hearts to Him who died for us, that we might live with Him.



IN THE UPPER ROOM.

A MEDITATION ON
THE LAST SUPPER



It was very quiet, up there in the cool and peacefulness of the upper room. A noisy crowd surged and jostled in the street below, sturdy countrymen up in Jerusalem for the feast rubbing shoulders with Greek merchants; truculent Galileans striding past the gentler Judean shepherds with glances of contempt and veiled hostility; whilst ever and anon a party of Roman soldiers stepped smartly along the centre of the highway, Pharisee and beggar alike hasting to give them free passage and combining after their passing to look upon their retreating backs with smouldering animosity. But upstairs, in the upper room, it was quiet and cool. Loving hands had been very busy setting out the table for those who were soon to meet around it in solemn observance of Israel's ancient Passover. The lamb, roast with fire, ready cut into his pieces, lay in the centre of the festal board. Little piles of unleavened bread—bitter herbs—cups of wine—the dish of "cheroseth" (fruit and nuts)—all stood ready against that time when twelve men and

their Master should enter the room and partake together

**"Silent, like men in solemn haste
Girded wayfarers of the waste
Passing out at the world's wide gate."**

In every home in Jerusalem that feast lay spread. In palace and in hovel, in the best rooms of every inn and within the Temple precincts where dwelt that priestly course whose turn it was that day to conduct the sacred service, the lamb, the bread, the bitter herbs, lay waiting, mute testimony to a night in olden time when the Destroying Angel passed over the land of Egypt, to the first-borns of the land a messenger of death, but those who were under the blood, deliverance—deliverance glorious and complete.

And now the door is opening, and men appear. One by one, until twelve have entered, they take their place around the table—waiting.

A quiet footfall on the threshold. Their Master enters and closes the door, and by that simple action shuts out the world and all its

cares and interests. The faint murmur of peoples rising from the street below dies down and is gone. The world is very far away and the disciples are with their Master—and alone.

Who among them but did not feel the solemnity of this night. Accustomed as they were to the Passover ceremonial, observing it year by year continually, it could not but be plain that after to-night things would never be the same. Not so, on those two previous occasions when they had partaken of the Passover lamb with their Master, had this consciousness of impending crisis filled their minds. Something was going to happen; they realised that instinctively, without knowing what it was to be, and yet mingled with that apprehension there was a strange triumphant joy, as though at last all the perplexities and misunderstandings of the past three years were to be resolved into a clear knowledge of the life which lay before them. That trouble and distress might yet lie beyond the bounds of this Passover evening they knew, but that God was with them in all their ways they were confident; and now His voice broke the silence. Tender tones, vibrant with rich feeling, searching their inmost souls and drawing their very hearts to an ecstasy of devotion and surrender.

"With desire I have desired to eat this pass-over with you before I suffer; for I say unto you, *I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.*"

Magic words. The Kingdom of God; so soon to come; the goal of all their hopes, the prayer of every child of Israel. Thrilling words—no more would He eat of the Passover with them until the Kingdom should have come. That was what He had said so lately on the summit of Mount Tabor—*some of them would not taste of death "until the Kingdom of God should come"*; and now that they had endured with Him in all His trials, surely the day of God's recompence was at hand and Messiah would declare himself... Eager thoughts are interrupted. The Master has taken a cup of wine in His right hand and is looking upward to Heaven. His voice breaks the stillness in solemn invocation.

"Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the universe, who hast created the fruit of the vine."

Silently, reverently, they all drank. The feast had begun. All eyes were turned to that beloved One at the centre of the table. Again He spoke.

"Hear, ye children of Abraham. This is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover. Who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. He sent Moses His servant, and Aaron, whom He had chosen. He brought them forth also with silver and gold, and there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad when they departed, for the fear of them fell upon them. He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light in the night, for He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant. And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness, that they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws. Therefore are we constrained to confess, to praise, to glorify, to extol, to magnify and to ascribe victory unto Him Who did unto our fathers and unto us all these signs, and Who brought us forth from servitude to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from darkness to marvellous light; and we say before Him, **Hallelujah.**"

In low tones the word passed from lip to lip. "**Hallelujah; Hallelujah,**" a murmur of reverent praise ascending to Israel's God. Then twelve voices joined in the recitation of familiar words.

"Let the name of the Lord be blessed from this present time and for ever. From the rising of the sun to his setting the name of the Lord is to be praised... At the going forth of Israel from Egypt... the earth trembled, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob."

"Hallelujah."

Once more the Lord's hands are moving over the table. Now He is breaking one of the cakes of unleavened bread. His quiet voice rises in the benediction.

"Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the King of the Universe, who bringest forth food out of the earth."

The little cakes passed from man to his neighbour. Reverent hands reached out to the dish upon which lay the lamb roast with fire. They ate, hastily, solemnly, as men fulfilling an ancient ritual. The room was very quiet—the flickering lamp cast strange shadows on the wall behind the Lord Jesus. As He raised His arms in blessing His shadow took a strange form... the form of a cross. But no, that could never be, for was He not a King? Had He not just told them in so many words that ere twelve short months had passed they would be reigning with Him in Kingly power; for He would

not again eat of the Passover until He ate with them in the Kingdom?

And yet.....

* * * *

"This is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me."

They took of the bread, sharing each with the other, wondering. The lamp flame flickered low in its vessel and the shadow of the cross grew longer and seemed to come nearer, bending over towards them.

* * * *

"This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins... Drink ye, all, of it."

They drank, a strange, fierce joy pervading their souls as realisation came that they were to be brothers indeed to the One they served as Lord. To have His blood run in their veins—His words meant nothing less than that. They were to receive life—rich, vital life,—from Him. The ancient blood-brotherhood covenant of olden time was invoked by this mystic symbol; now and for all time were they to be joined to Him they loved in a relationship that should never be severed, to serve Him and be with Him for ever. Surely now He would speak plainly and disperse the uncertainty and misunderstanding which had surrounded their hopes for so long. Now surely He would tell them all.

* * * *

"Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me."

They looked at each other fearfully. What horrifying calamity was this? How could any one of them even dream of betraying the Master and the Cause they loved so dearly? What did it mean? What dread portent lay behind those unexpected words?

"Is it I?"....."Is it I?"....."Is it I?".....
How could it be?

The question rippled round the table. It came to one whose hunted eyes looked every way for succour—for assurance—for denial. Surely this could not be real; this was not in very truth happening to him. Surely it had all been a nightmare; that visit to the Priests, that shameful bargain, the cynical congratulations of those whom he hated more than he hated any man. **And Jesus knew**; he was sure of that. Jesus knew all about that night visit; about the thirty pieces of silver, about his own desperate resolve to precipitate a climax to their three years preaching. He **knew**, and still He did not declare Himself... It was true then;

He did not intend to act until the last minute. He meant to wait until His enemies had actually arrested Him, and haled him before Pilate for judgment, and then—and THEN—at last—He would throw off the mask and defy the power of imperial Rome. There could be no doubt about it; He could dally no longer then, could not possibly postpone His revelation as the long promised Messiah when standing in the very shadow of the cross. One scornful word from His lips and that great Temple, centre of idolatry and evil would collapse in irretrievable ruin, its treasures scattered to the winds, its inner sanctuary opened to the profane gaze. One arm upraised to Heaven and God's artillery, fire and thunderbolt, would pour down upon the proud legions of Rome and annihilate them in an instant. The armies of the angels would descend as in olden days and crash the stately walls of Jerusalem headlong down the hillside to the valleys beneath. The earthquake of Uzziah, the hailstones of Joshua, the heavenly fire of Elijah, all would bring turmoil and destruction to the sinful, rebellious city which had rejected his Leader. Another flood—not of water as in the days of Noah, but of fire; an avalanche of fire to devour God's adversaries—would sweep Judea and Galilee and all the world with a besom of destruction. Jesus had the power—He knew that. He had seen enough of His miracles to be sure of that; and He would use it. He could not help Himself. And then, **at last**, would come the moment for which he had waited these many years, the moment for which his whole being craved. Seated upon a lofty throne, a friend of the Messiah, an executor of God's vengeance, he would crush to the earth those proud Pharisees and priests. Men would come to Judas and beg favours, and whom he would he would favour and enrich, and whom he would, he would cast down, despoil, reduce to beggary. Roman procurators and Greek merchants, the honourable and the rich of this world, would come into the presence of Judas of Kerioth with respect and awe. Jesus would do all this for him... He would do all this... But would He?.....**Would He?**

He lifted his eyes in sudden alarm, meeting other eyes across the table, regarding him with a burning intensity that seared his very soul. With a sudden shock he realised that the words his tortured brain had refused to receive those few minutes ago had indeed been uttered. **"One of you shall betray me."** This was no fantasy of the mind. It was dread reality. **And Jesus**

was not going to save Himself. He could see that now. Something had gone wrong...But how could it? The Messiah could not die. The Messiah was to live and reign for ever...But Jesus was going to die. He knew it. And he had betrayed Him. He had murdered the Messiah—

Those grave eyes regarded him still. The question had circled the assembly and men were looking at him, wonderingly, curiously. It was his turn now. His mouth worked strangely.

"Is it I"?....."Is it I"?.....

* * * *

"Thou hast said."

* * * *

The sound of a door, opening, and closing, quietly. Footsteps dying away down the stairway. Silence. Judas the betrayer was gone.

* * * *

"Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; and if God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews 'Whither I go, ye cannot come'; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. **By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**"

The soft cadences ceased. They sat silent, knowing now that their golden dreams were after all only dreams. Dimly they visualised a life without their Leader; a continuation of the toil and weariness of constant pilgrimage no longer illumined by the presence and companionship of the One they loved. Heads were bowed on breasts; they could not meet each other's eyes. He was going away, and they would never see Him again.

Peter—a strangely quiet and subdued Peter—broke the silence, a quiver in his voice.

"Lord...whither goest thou?"

* * * *

"Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God—believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you; and I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.....This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. And the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came

out from God."

A sign from those dear hands, and eleven men rose to their feet, eyes uplifted to Heaven, voices joined in the traditional hymn which was to conclude their feast. The solemn chant rose upon the night air and listening angels wondered at its note of triumph. The lamp burned up brightly in its last expiring flicker in the upper room—but the forces of evil were speeding fast away.

What shall I render unto the Lord

For all His benefits to me?

The cup of salvation will I take

And call upon His holy Name.

I will pay my vows unto Him now

In the presence of His people.

Precious and rare in His holy sight

Is the death of His holy ones.

Truly O Lord am I thy servant,

From my bond thou hast set me free.

To Thee will I offer thanksgiving

And call upon thy Holy name.

I will pay my vows unto Thee now

In the presence of Thy people.

O give thanks unto the Lord

Because His mercy endureth forever.

Let Israel now say,

Let the house of Aaron now say,

Let them now that fear the Lord say,

That His mercy endureth for ever.

I called upon the Lord in distress.

The Lord answered me,

The Lord is on my side,

The Lord taketh my part,

The Lord is my strength and song

And is become my salvation.

I shall not die, but live

And declare the works of the Lord.

Open to me the gates of righteousness

Into which the righteous shall enter.

The stone which the builders refused

Is become the head of the corner.

This is the work of our God,

It is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day which the Lord hath made,

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

O give thanks unto the Lord

For He is good

For His mercy endureth for ever.

And when they had sung their hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

ARE YE ABLE.

Are ye able to walk in the narrow, strait way,
With no friend by your side, and no arm for your stay?
Can ye bravely go on through the darkening night?
Can ye patiently wait till the Lord sends the light?

Ah, if thus ye can drink of the cup He shall pour,
And if never the banner of truth ye shall lower,
His beloved ye are, and His crown ye shall wear,
In His throne ye shall sit, and His glory shall share!

CHEERFULNESS.

Cheerfulness is one of the loveliest graces of the Christian character. It belongs to those noble natures whose very presence carries sunshine with them wherever they go.

Sometimes we look into a face which is so cold and repulsive, dark and gloomy, that it makes us feel almost unhappy to look at it, and which betokens no joy in the heart, no nobility in the soul, no generosity in the nature; the whole character is cold as an iceberg. And again we meet a face so bright, smiling, cheerful, happy, that one glimpse of it does our very soul good, and is like an inspiration to us. And we feel more cheerful ourselves. If we possess a hopeful spirit it will enable us to discern the silver lining of the darkest cloud, behind which ever shines the light of Divine promise and help.

True religion is not gloomy, "her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

(Selected).

"He led them through the depths as through the wilderness." (Psa. 106, 9).

Who doubteth but God can bring us to Heaven through adversity and suffering? When ye are come to the other side of the water, ye shall then be forced to say, "If God had done otherwise with me that He hath done, I had never come to the enjoying of this crown of glory." It is your part now to believe, suffer, and hope and wait on, for I protest that I would not want the sweet experience of the consolations of God but for the bitterness of affliction. Nay, whether God come to His children with a rod or a crown, if He come Himself with it, it is well. Believe God's love and power more than you believe your own feelings and experiences. Your Rock is Christ and it is not the Rock which ebbs and flows, but your sea.

(Samuel Rutherford).

NOW HIS WILL IS MINE.

Once I sought a blessing: now I've found my Lord;
Once I sought for feeling: now I've found His Word;
Once His gifts I wanted: now the Giver own;
Once I sought flesh-healing: now Himself alone.
Once it was my working: His it hence shall be;
Once I tried to use Him: now He uses me;
Once the power I wanted: now the Mighty One;
Once for self I laboured: now for Christ alone.
Once 'twas painful trying: now 'tis restful trust;
Once a half-salvation: now the uttermost;
Once 'twas ceaseless holding: now He holds me fast;
Once 'twas constant drifting: now my anchor's cast.
Once 'twas busy planning: now 'tis trustful prayer;
Once 'twas anxious caring: now He has the care;
Once 'twas what I wanted: now what Jesus says;
Once 'twas constant asking: now 'tis ceaseless praise.
Once I hoped in Jesus: now I know He's mine;
Once my lamps were dying: now they brightly shine;
Once for death I waited: now His presence hail,
And my hopes are anchored safe within the veil.

REAPING WHAT WE SOW.

Comparatively few realise to what extent we have the forming of our own characters—to what extent our minds, our affections, are gardens, in which we may plant either the thorns and thistles of sin, or plant the merely moral and practical qualities corresponding to the useful vegetables, or plant those seeds which will produce the fragrant and beautiful flowers which more particularly would represent the heavenly and spiritual graces. That which a man soweth he shall also reap in kind, whether he sow to the flesh or to the spirit. Whoever, therefore, seeks for the heavenly things, joint-heir ship in the kingdom, etc., must plant or set out in his mind, in his affections, those qualities and graces which the Lord marks out as essential to the development of characters such as will be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

—Col. 1:12.

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to judge itself. The transformation which it will experience will be so complete that a very small remnant will be found of what the world to-day calls its Philosophy.

"Thus wrote Frederic de Pougemon, the earnest Swiss pastor, nearly a generation ago, and behold, we are already standing upon the threshold of the days to which he alluded." (C. A. L. Totten).

LUCIFER, THE PRINCE OF EVIL.

A study in the personality of the Devil

Chapter 3.—The Fall of Lucifer.

A detailed story of the sin of Lucifer is recorded in the fourteenth chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah. That venerable statesman of Israel—Prime Minister, as we would say, in the days of King Hezekiah—adhered to the true principles of Hebrew prophecy when he embedded his revelation in the midst of a message concerning the King of Babylon. It is sometimes argued that there is no justification for applying this passage to any other than the King of Babylon in Isaiah's own day. A careful study of the entire chapter leads to the conclusion that the mediaeval theologians who first used these words as referring to Satan himself were perfectly justified in so doing. Chapter 13 speaks of the coming destruction of the nation and country of Babylon, a prophecy that was not completely fulfilled until many centuries after Isaiah's day. In continuation of this theme, the fourteenth chapter describes the time when God will have "mercy on Jacob," restoring Israel to his own land, and that by the hand of the nations who in former time oppressed them. It is when Israel is thus established and the former troubles are in process of being forgotten that they will take up a "proverb"—more correctly a "song of taunting"—against the king of Babylon. This song of taunting is written down in verse 4 to verse 11 and is composed in memory of the many sufferings of Israel at the hands of the Babylonian rulers. It is clear, however, that the language used is too extravagant to find its entire fulfilment in the person of any earthly monarch. The deliverance which Israel—and all the world—will be celebrating at that time will be deliverance from the power of Satan, and when viewed in this light the whole passage becomes charged with new meaning. The song of deliverance over, the next verses (12-15) describe the original sin of the fallen monarch and his ultimate fate, and the remainder of the chapter, to verse 27, details in symbolic language the destruction that is to overtake his empire. Verse 28 introduces a new subject and should rightly be the commencement of a new chapter.

Under symbol of the King of Babylon, therefore, these few verses impart information concerning the fall of a mighty spiritual being furnished nowhere else in Holy Writ.

There are two very definite pieces of internal evidence in this passage tending to confirm the view that it was not intended to refer literally to any actual king of Babylon. One is the fact that the central feature of the apostasy is Lucifer's declaration "I will be like the Most High." Now this is a very positive assumption of equality with God, and as such is a totally unthinkable statement to put into the mouth of a Babylonian or Assyrian king. The Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, and other ancient nations often identified their kings with their gods, but a definite peculiarity of the Mesopotamian rulers was their constant insistence that they were the "servants," the "sons" or the "priests" of their gods, Asshur, Bel-Marduk, Nebo, or others as the case may be, but never their equals. A Babylonian king would have considered it the height of blasphemy to be worshipped or esteemed as a god, as were many of the Roman emperors. Hence Lucifer's declaration "I will be like the Most High" could have found no fulfilment in the history of any king of Babylon.

The expression "Most High" is *El-Elyon*, a name attributed to the one supreme God from earliest times. The Hebrew aversion to coupling the name of God with that of a despised ruler of Gentiles such as Sargon II, the King of Assyria and Babylon at this time, would preclude any such application being intended by Isaiah himself. It may reasonably be held, therefore, that the passage is definitely intended to be taken as it reads, an apostrophe to Lucifer, the "morning star" who aspired to the heights, and fell to the depths.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning." "Son of the morning" is a poetic allusion to the morning star—the planet *Venus*—as is indicated by the A.V. margin. The word *Lucifer* was not originally intended to be a proper name, having been derived from a Babylonian word meaning "The shining one." Long custom, however, now justifies its use as the name of the one who, after his fall, became known as *Satan*—"the adversary."

A parallel reference confirming the usage of the appellative "morning star" as applied to the prince of evil before his fall is found in *Job* 38: 7. When describing the foundation of the

physical earth, at a time long before Job was born, the record declares that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The "parallelisms" of Hebrew poetry indicate that the "morning stars" thus referred to are intelligent beings complementary in some way with the "sons of God" mentioned in the same verse. Men had not then been created—quite evidently the "sons of God" who shouted for joy were the angelic hosts, observing with intense interest this new development in the Divine Plan. Similarly the "morning stars" were the two mighty beings each referred to elsewhere in Scripture by the same description; Jesus Christ, before he "became man," the "morning star" of Revelation 22, and Lucifer before his transgression, the "morning star" of Isaiah 14. Both were in complete harmony with each other and with their Father and Creator, the expression "sang together" denoting the harmonious joy with which they perceived this new creative activity approaching completion.

That harmony was shattered when one of the morning stars fell from heaven. The song was interrupted; the angels who were so interested in God's new earthly creation now looked with wondering eyes at the opening stages of the drama of sin and death. **"How art thou cut down to the ground (brought down to the earth) which didst weaken the nations."** Here comes a plain statement of the nature of that sin which has had such terrible consequences for angelic beings as well as for mankind. **"For thou hast said 'I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the Mount of the Assembly, in the uttermost parts of the north. I will be EQUAL to the Most High.'"** Pride, covetousness, unbridled ambition led Lucifer to aspire to a station far beyond that which was allotted him—and so blinded him to every aspect of his knowledge of God that he even aspired and expected to wrest an equal share of the sovereignty of the Universe from the Creator Himself. Such is the blinding influence of sin.

Be it noticed that in this verse there is further confirmation of the inference in Ezekiel 28 that Lucifer was invested with an order of kingship; of royal sovereignty—for he says "I will exalt my THRONE above the stars of God." That dominion over God's material creation which was his, he now aspired to extend into the spiritual realm and to wield power above and over the holy ones of celestial regions. The nature of those principalities and powers which

exist in the presence of God and amongst His holy angels is not revealed to men, but this reference to the "Mount of the Assembly, in the farthest end of the North" seems to hint at a Supreme Council or administration from which the spiritual realms are controlled, and that Lucifer, as Vice-gerent of Earth, aspired to take his place, uninvited, by right of force, in that august assembly. More, he even dreamed of reigning co-equally with the "Majesty on High" and to intrude his way into the Divine Presence, claiming the right of joint rulership over all the vast dominion of creation.

It is probable that Paul had this event in mind when he described the attitude of the Lord Jesus Christ "Who, being in God's form, yet did not meditate a usurpation to be like God, but divested Himself, taking a bondman's form, having been made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2; 6-7, Diaglott). There is a marvellous contrast here. On the one hand, a mighty being of the spiritual creation asserts his power against his God, and challenges the authority of the Author of all creation. On the other hand, the first-begotten Son of God, daily the delight of His Father (Prov. 8; 30) so conformed Himself to the Father's Will that He willingly laid aside every vestige of His former glory and became a man, for the suffering of death, that the evil effects of Lucifer's deflection might be nullified and overcome.

Then comes the dread sentence **"Yet thou shalt be brought down to Sheol, to the sides of the pit."** The one who aspired to the highest of all positions is hurled down to the lowest depths. The power of righteousness is proof against all the assaults of evil, and the end of the story comes when Lucifer, star of the morning, descends into impenetrable night; and the glorious radiance of Christ, the bright and morning star of Revelation, sheds its effulgence over a world made new.

AS VIEWED BY OTHERS.

"The time will come when Bible prophecy with its chronology will be confirmed by history in so exact and signal a manner that malice and infidelity alone will be able to deny its inspiration. Then, too, the world will have had its last say, impiety will have let fall its last mask, intolerance will have practiced its last cruelties, superstition will have descended the lowest round of idolatry, faith will have won on the scaffold its most brilliant victories, and in presence of the last great revolution history will have learned from prophecy to comprehend and

(Concluded on page 43)



APOCALYPTIC ORIGINS.

No. 3. "The Twenty-four Elders."

A further important section of the Heavenly Throne-scene now invites our attention.

Around this transcendent central Throne was a circle of twenty-four subordinate thrones, on which sat twenty-four Elders. Without being specifically informed who they were, John identifies them readily enough, and describes them by a term very familiar in Israel.

Who were these Elders? What was their office? and why just twenty-four in this circle? To answer, we must look back into the sacred records of Israel, but first let it be noted that our Authorised Version translation says "... round about the Throne were four-and-twenty seats" (Rev. 4: 4). There is no just reason for making this distinction between the central Throne and the twenty-four, for the same Greek word (*Thronos*) is used for the twenty-four as for the one. They may have been less in size, and lower in position; and were certainly less elaborate in design; but for all that they were 'thrones,' and they who sat on them wore crowns. Hence, both 'crown' and 'throne' bore testimony to their kingliness. Additionally they held harps, and carried golden bowls full of incense.

The word (*phialas*) translated "vials" is used in the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures for vessels belonging to the altar (Ex. 25: 23-29. 27: 3. 37: 10-16). This shows that these Elders possessed priestly privileges, in that they offered the odours, or incense of saints, to the Occupant of the central Throne. They have harps also, which reveals them as the leaders of worship—the sweet singers before God. Thus they are shown to possess the privileges of the Priesthood, with access to the Temple, and the right of entry into the Holy Place and the golden Altar.

To discover the Scriptural basis for the official position of these Elders we first find them functioning in the court of Pharaoh, around the person of Joseph, their Hebrew Prime Minister, and were evidently the representatives at court of all the peoples of Egypt. They accompanied Joseph and his brethren to the land of Canaan to bury their father Jacob there. (Gen. 50: 9-13).

Evidently the people of Israel copied this institution from the Egyptians, for when Moses came under the Lord's commission to lead them forth from Egypt, God said to him, "...Go, and gather the 'Elders' of Israel together and

say unto them..." (Ex. 3: 16). "And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the 'elders' of the children of Israel" (Ex. 4: 29). After the Lord had spoken all the 'Words' of the Law from the top of Mount Sinai, Moses came and called for the 'elders' of the people, and laid before their faces all these words. (Ex. 19: 7). Again when Moses had sprinkled the 'book' of the 'Words' and the people, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu and seventy of the 'elders' of the people went up into the mount, and saw there a representation of God. (Ex. 24: 9-11). Here they are mentioned as a company, seventy strong. Also here they are called 'nobles'; and need to be distinguished from the 'princes,' of whom there were but twelve (Num. 1: 5-16). Further reference to this body of Elders is found throughout their later history, and in every case denotes a body who have some measure of control in Israel,—governors of cities and villages.

But for the origin of the Elders of the type set before us in this Throne-scene we must go back to the days of David, when he set in order the courses of the Priests in readiness for the new Temple that was to be erected in place of the tabernacle. A most remarkable thing about this preparatory arrangement was that David received his instructions direct from God. Addressing Solomon, when abdicating in his favour, David said "All this the Lord made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." (1 Chron. 28: 19). Like Moses, who was commanded to make the Tabernacle according to the pattern showed to him in the Holy mount, so David was given a pattern of the Temple structure, with the orders of the Priesthood and Levites for its services. Hence, these instructions have the sanction of Divine Authority and inspiration; and were to be followed precisely and carefully, for this was to be a 'copy' of a heavenly original.

The only institution in Israel throughout its whole history which consisted of twenty-four sections was the Priestly constitution for the new Temple. The tribes, minus Levi, were twelve; and their princes twelve. It is thought that their secular Elders numbered seventy or seventy-two; and that this body gave rise, after the Captivity, to the Sanhedrin. The number twenty-four therefore, excludes both the princes and secular Elders from this Throne-

scene company. In 1 Chron. 24: is set out the record of the installation of the twenty-four courses of priests in their due order.

David distributed these services—under God's direction—sixteen courses for the sons of Eleazer and eight for the sons of Ithamar (the two surviving sons of Aaron); twenty-four courses in all. In 1 Chron. 23: 3-4, the record is given of the introduction of twenty-four thousand Levites to set forward the work of the Lord, at the rate of one thousand to each course of priests.

The singers were also ordained in twenty-four courses, with twelve in each course (1 Chron. 25: 8-31). Two hundred and eighty-eight persons in all, to lead the praise and song in the Temple service. Over each course of Priests, Levites, and Singers was placed a governor or Elder (1 Chron. 24: 4) as an Elder priest, subject to the supreme authority of the High Priest. This is the identical number seen in vision by Ezekiel, within the inner court of the Lord's House, worshipping with their backs to the Temple of the Lord, and their faces to the east, committing their abominations. (Ezekiel 8: 15-18) and for which the glory of the Lord left its place in the Temple of Jerusalem (Chap. 10: 18), which was then given over to destruction.

In the Septuagint version the word for Elder is 'presbuteros'—'chief men'; and was differentiated from 'presbutos'—'old men.' We still retain this term in our modern official title 'Alderman,' which carries with it a special precedence over other members of our municipal councils. The word 'Elder' does not therefore in itself indicate a 'priestly-prince' but its association with the number 'twenty-four' most certainly does. This official class among the priests is referred to in Isa. 37: 2, as Elders of the Priests; and in Jer. 19: 1, as the 'Ancients of the Priests.'

John saw this full priestly constitution gathered in holy conclave—the full twenty-four Elders, each the head of his course; each representing his course; The priestly function is represented by the vials full of odours (bowls full of incense) the sweet singers by the harp and their song; but, in addition, over and above all other adornments is their royal crown—these are 'Kings' as well as Priests. Accordingly, we may see in these twenty-four crowned priests the symbolical heads of the twenty-four courses, representing the thousands of this high and privileged class of Priests, Levites, and Singers.

Now let us get this priestly class in its proper

relationship to Israel. Under the Covenant terms, Israel was taken from among the nations to be God's first-born (Ex. 4: 22-23). They were to be a kingdom of Priests through whom other nations were to be introduced to God. They were a 'called-out' people, separated from among the nations of the world. But the priestly class was an additionally separated class—an election within an election, and brought specially near to God, to approach Him, and to serve their brethren in a special way. With the establishment of the Temple, this special class was divided into twenty-four courses, in order to foreshadow the Heavenly Priesthood, prepared to minister in the real Temple condition between God and restored Israel, and ultimately all men.

The twenty-four Elders upon their twenty-four thrones, crowned with gold, and robed in white, represent all the true Priesthood, who will be accepted as priests and kings under Jesus, the great High Priest. They will be pure and holy, wearing white which is the "righteousness of the saints."

When the time came for the supersession of the Aaronic priesthood and their carnal sacrifices by the higher and better priesthood and sacrifices, the temporary arrangement which gave the privileges of the Priesthood to Levi, instead of the first-born, was withdrawn, and the system reverted to its original form. Henceforth, from among all the tribes of Israel, all who believed in Jesus as the Redeemer, and surrendered their lives to Him in full consecration, were accepted as the first-fruits—the first-borns; and became the Church of the First-born, whose names were written in Heaven. This very term links them with the whole family (Heb. 12: 22-24) and betokens also others to follow after. It shows distinctly that they are still part of the 'Israel' constitution (though destined for a higher station than their later brethren) and take the place of a superseded Aaronic priesthood.

This royal priesthood, constituted of the remnant from Israel, and of such from among the Gentiles, who accept Jesus and consecrate their lives to Him is represented by the twenty-four Elders in this heavenly scene, not as individuals, but as a complete body and are found awaiting the coming of the Kinsman-Redeemer to take the Scroll.

They are to be the witnesses of the Redemption of the purchased possession, to support the verdict, and testify that it has transpired, and cause the glad tidings to pass to Angels; to

Israel; and to lead the Hallelujah chorus of the nations, to the earth's remotest bounds.

They sing a new song; in this they correspond with the 144,000 (Rev. 14: 3). The twenty-four Elders seem to symbolise the place and

position of God's first-born, priestly class as a whole; while the 144,000 sealed ones seem to picture them as units, or as a congregation of units.

THESE MANY YEARS. Deut. 8, 2.

These many years! What lessons they unfold
 Of grace and guidance through the wilderness,
 From the same God that Israel of old
 In the Shekinah glory did possess.
 How faithful He, through all my griefs and fears
 And constant murmurings, these many years!

God of the Covenant! From first to last,
 From when I stood within that sprinkled door
 And o'er my guilt the avenging angel passed,
 Thy better angel has gone on before,
 And naught but goodness all the way appears,
 Unmerited and free, these many years!

Thy presence wrought a pathway through the sea,
 Thy presence made the bitter water sweet,
 And daily have Thy hands prepared for me
 Sweet, precious morsels—lying at my feet.
 'Twas but to stoop and taste the grace that cheers,
 And start refreshed, through all these many years!

What time I thirsted and earth's streams were dry,
 What time I wandered and my hope was gone,
 Thy hand has brought a pure and full supply,
 And, by a loving pressure, lured me on.
 How oft that hand hath wiped away my tears
 And written "Pardoned!" all these many years!

And what of discipline thy love ordained
 Fell ever gently on this heart of mine,
 Around its briars was my spirit trained
 To bring forth fruits of righteousness Divine,
 Wisdom in every check, and love appears
 In every stroke throughout these many years!

Thine be the glory! Thou shalt have the praise
 For all thy dealings, to my latest breath,
 A daily Ebenezer will I raise,
 And sing salvation through the vale of death—
 To where the palm, the golden harp, appears,
 There to rehearse thy love through endless years.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

Brother Thomas Gibson, latterly of Gateshead, but better known to the friends as of Blackpool, has gone home. He had attained the age of 78 years, and now for some months has been rapidly losing strength until at the end he just "simply slept." The faith that had sustained him for many years was his at the end, and his conversation remained always centred around that most precious of all themes, the call of the Church. Many will remember the sterling labours of Brother and Sister Gibson in the interests of the Truth, and their prayers will now go up on behalf of our sister who is left to await the glad re-union, "at that day."

ANONYMOUS

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation an anonymous donation of £1.

THE MEMORIAL

The Memorial date this year falls on the evening of Thursday, April 10th, to the evening of Friday, April 11th (Good Friday). In view of the prevailing circumstances some of the classes in large towns are arranging to hold their observance during the afternoon of Good Friday, and this fact is mentioned so that other friends who may be desirous of doing the same thing will be able to feel that they are celebrating with brethren of like faith at the same time.

DEWSBURY EASTER GATHERING.

This proposed gathering has been abandoned in favour of an Easter gathering to be held at Warrington. Details of this latter gathering can be obtained from the office or from Brother D. Stanley, 42, Euclid Avenue, Crappenhall Road, Warrington, Lancs.

AN OPPORTUNITY.

A few tinted photographs of Brother Russell, 8" x 6", are on hand, and will be sent while they last, at 6d. each post free, or two for 9d.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTRIBUTORS.

Brethren are invited to submit items suitable for publication in the "Students Page" and "Gathered Grain" features of the B.S.M. A perusal of these features as they have appeared in recent months is recommended in order to form an idea of the type and length of these little items. It is preferred that "Students Page" items are original, but in any case items taken from other publications should have the fact mentioned, together with name of such publication and date of issue. Please send these contributions to Bro. A. O. Hudson, 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

THE DECEMBER "HERALD" AND "DAWN."

It is hoped that by now all readers of these magazines have received their copies from America. If anyone has been missed, please notify the office. The failure of any copies of this issue to arrive in this country led us to presume total loss at sea, and the American brethren were therefore asked if it was possible to replace the missing copies. The Dawn brethren were able to respond at once and send a copy of the December issue to all subscribers, and for this promptitude their English readers will be very grateful.

The Pastoral Bible Institute were not in the same fortunate position, since the type for the December issue had been broken up again, and therefore, with a loving zeal which must surely elicit our deep appreciation, they had the type reset and a new edition printed and despatched. In both cases, therefore, our brethren across the ocean have been involved in additional expense upon our behalf, and these few words of acknowledgment will surely express the unspoken thoughts of many who in this country look for the spiritual stimulus which comes to them through the medium of these two journals, and who rejoice in this evidence of brotherly love from the "other side."

AN URGENT REQUEST.

In connection with our remittances to America in payment for "Herald" and "Dawn" subscriptions, the Exchange Control authorities have requested us to furnish, in future, supporting evidence in the form of a proportion of the wrappers in which these magazines are sent to this country, when making application for permission to transfer funds. We shall much appreciate it therefore if friends seeing this notice will retrieve such wrappers of both "Herald" and "Dawn" as may not have been destroyed, and also save those in which future issues are sent, and send them to the office. Perhaps groups of friends in association with one another could put all their wrappers in one envelope and so save postage.

At the moment we are in need of "Herald" wrappers, and we shall be glad to receive these as soon as possible. "Dawn" wrappers will not be needed for two or three months and so friends can save these at home and forward them all at once when announcement is made in the B.S.M. that they are required.

We feel confident that the brethren will respond to this appeal, realising that under prevailing conditions we are fortunate in being allowed to send money out of the country at all.

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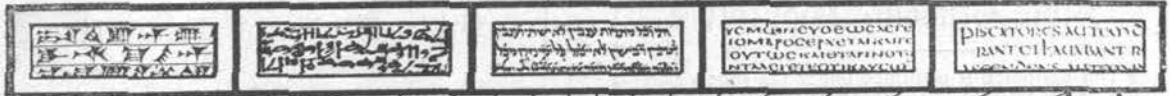
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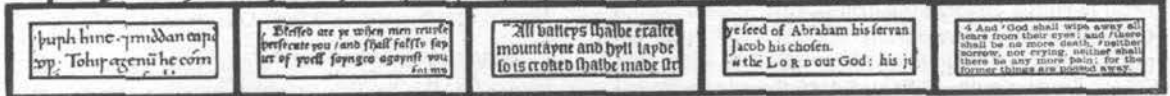
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BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



Vol. 18 No. 5

MAY, 1941

Threepence

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THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

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Please address all correspondence as follows:—

Subscriptions, Books and Literature
Bible Students Committee
20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

Letters for attention of Committee or Secretary

Mr. A. O. Hudson,
129 Doncaster Road, Leicester

Benevolent Relief Fund

Mr. G. A. Ford
13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds

Bible Students Monthly Editorial

Mr. A. O. Hudson
129 Doncaster Road, Leicester

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SPECIAL NOTICE TO CLASS SECRETARIES

Nomination forms for B.S.C. election are NOT being distributed to classes through the post this year, and all secretaries are requested to read the adjacent notice and bring the matter before the notice of their class, sending in names of brethren whom the class wishes to nominate to Bro. Absalom in the usual manner.

Voting forms will be sent by post to classes sending in nominations but to no other classes unless a request to that effect is received by the office before June 30. Every copy of the July B.S.M. will include a voting form and any brother or sister desiring another copy for use may receive one if postal request is made by June 30.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE.

The friends are invited to submit NOMINATIONS for the Committee which is to take office on August 1, 1941. All who are nominated and are willing to serve if elected will be submitted to ballot and the seven brothers receiving the highest number of votes will constitute the new Committee.

Please send names and addresses (or home town if name is not known) of the brothers you wish to nominate to:—

Mr. G. Absalom,
The Square,
Beeston,
Notts.

BY MAY 31. Nominations close on that date.

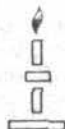
A voting form will be included in the July issue of the B.S.M., containing the names of all who are willing to serve. The brethren will be asked to express their judgment on these names.

The election will be supervised by brethren at Beeston, Notts; who will report the result.

The result of the election will be announced in the August B.S.M.

CHARACTER STUDIES

FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.



I. JACOB and ESAU.

How a Schemer became a Saint.

The characters of Jacob and Esau were entirely different. Esau was a skilful hunter and man of the field. Generous and warm-hearted, he attracts our sympathy. He cared only for the pleasures of the moment; was worldly, irreligious, indifferent to parents' wishes, uninterested in the Divine Covenant and unmindful of its privileges and responsibilities. Heb. 12: 16 says he was *profane and Weymouth* renders this 'ungodly.' Esau was the favourite with Isaac.

Jacob was "mother's darling," he stayed at home, followed domestic occupations and busied himself with flocks and cattle. His interests centred in his home. Although crafty, subtle, mean and deceitful he showed strength of character, patient endurance and warmth of affection. Long years of discipline and suffering were needed to purify him and make him worthy of the Divine Covenant and Blessing and to turn him from a schemer into a saint. He believed in and sought after his father's God and held spiritual things in reverence. At Bethel, Haran and Peniel he showed his conviction that God was with him to guide and bless. He conquered himself at last and proved himself a "Prince with God."

Esau was in some respects the better man; a fine country gentleman popular with all. Still he never prayed; a secular soul, he never built an altar—never felt the need of one. He was just a man of the world. Jacob on the other hand was a bargainer and incites our contempt, but he had one redeeming feature; deep down in that clever calculating heart there was devotion—he never went anywhere without building an altar and praying to God. The result was that Jacob grew finer and better while Esau grew coarser and sank into obscurity. Jacob became one of the outstanding figures in Jewish history. The passion for spiritual things proved to be Jacob's salvation. All lives to be successful must be lives of one desire; the greatest desire of all is worship and service.

One day, weary after the chase and faint with hunger, Esau found Jacob preparing a pottage of lentils. He cried, "Feed me I pray thee with the red, this red." The verb expresses eagerness extreme and he added no noun but pointed to the steaming dish. (Gen.

25: 30), verse 34 says, "he did eat and drink and rose up and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright." These words describe graphically Esau's complete indifference to spiritual privileges—no regret, no sad feeling that he had prolonged his life at too high a cost. If Jacob was cunning and mean in taking advantage still it must be said he valued the privileges which Esau despised.

God had marked out Jacob as the heir to the promises but Isaac struggled against God's will and his assent was obtained by craft. Is there any excuse for Jacob's subtlety? Jacob sought no earthly good; it was not the elder brother's share of the father's wealth that he wanted. All that was Isaac's he resigned to Esau and went away penniless. But Rebekah and Jacob should have trusted God to bring about what He had predetermined. Had Rebekah's faith been pure and exalted she would have known that God would somehow fulfil His word without her help, but the fault began with Isaac and Rebekah probably considered she was preventing a grievous wrong.

In order to obtain Isaac's blessing Jacob impersonated Esau, but he did not keep up his acting well for when Isaac asked how he had obtained the venison so quickly he replied, "because the Lord thy God brought it to me." It was not Esau's character to see anything providential in his success in hunting and this as well as the short delay, may have aroused Isaac's suspicions.

When, later, Esau revealed what Jacob had done, we read (Gen. 27: 33), "Isaac trembled very exceedingly." This was not mere vexation at having been deceived but he felt he had been resisting God. He persisted no longer in his sin; acknowledging the Divine purpose he had no word of blame for Rebekah and Jacob but confirmed to him the blessing.

"Is he not rightly named Jacob?" (a supplanter) said Esau, and in thus playing upon his brother's name Esau has had a lasting revenge for the bad sense which he put upon the name has clung to it. Originally the name Jacob meant one who follows at another's heels (Gen. 25: 26).

Rebekah, advising Jacob to flee to Laban at Haran, said, "tarry with him a few days until

thy brother's fury turn away" but she saw Jacob no more for he was away forty years.

Evidently on the way Jacob's thoughts were very full. *Would God confirm him in the possession of that which he had secured by fraud and cunning?* Thus meditating he had drawn near to God. Then he had a dream which assured him that though in distress and fleeing for his life yet he was the object of God's love and care. He was to learn that all that was to happen was a part of the working out of Divine Providence. One object of the dream was to show that Jehovah watches over the whole earth and that messengers to and fro come from Him and return to Him. Jacob vowed a vow (Gen. 28: 20), the translation of which is poor and gives a wrong sense. The revised version margin is better. Jacob did not say, "if God will be with me . . . then shall the Lord be my God" but his vow implies no doubt on his part but is his acceptance of the terms of the covenant. "If the Lord will be with me . . . so that I come again to my father's house in peace and the Lord will be my God then this stone . . . shall be God's house; and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth to Thee." Surely a vow of gratitude.

The Divine care and blessing promised at Bethel are shown in the account of his sojourn at Haran from whence Jacob returned blessed with numerous family and rich in goods. Equally marked is the severe discipline in order that the darker features of his character might be purified and that he might learn to put his reliance not in unworthy scheming but in simple faith in the love and blessing of God. While at Haran Jacob the deceiver was deceived; he served fourteen years for his wives and stayed another long period without any settled hire. At the end of this period Jacob's trust and faith in God are seen in Gen. 31: 5, "The God of my father hath been with me."

On the homeward journey God gave Jacob another vision of angels (Gen. 32:1). What a sense of protection they must have afforded, yet when approaching Esau he took all reasonable precautions and prayed. His message to Esau was humble; he called Esau his lord and himself a servant and enumerated his wealth and thus showed he required no aid nor need claim even a share in Isaac's property, but Esau made no answer. Jacob's extreme distress in spite of Divine encouragement repeatedly given him shows his faith was very feeble, but it was real, and he sought refuge in prayer. His prayer was a pattern of humility, earnestness, and

faith and shows grateful acknowledgment of past mercies, confession of unworthiness, believing and pleading of God's promises and a plea for protection. Having quieted his mind by prayer he used his best judgment. Gen. 32: 14, says that he sent five hundred and fifty head of cattle in five droves as a present.

A crisis in his life was approaching. Jacob was to receive the final lesson which humbled and broke down his selfwill and convinced him that he could not snatch the blessing from God's hand but must accept it as a gift of grace.

Jacob was alone and there wrestled a man with him. (Gen. 32: 24). A Man—such he seemed to be to Jacob but Hosea (12: 4) calls him an angel and in verse 30, Jacob recognised in him a manifestation of God.

We often speak of Jacob wrestling with God but this is only a half truth; at the outset it was God wrestling with Jacob. He had come to the land God had covenanted to give him and was about to enter into possession. All his life long Jacob had leaned on his own cleverness; his quick mind had already planned how best Esau's wrath might be appeased. Suddenly he was caught by an antagonist, someone he did not know but who evidently meant to humble him. God could not allow Jacob to think that his cunning was winning the land; God must resist Jacob till he was willing to receive the land as a gift. The angel disabled Jacob by touching the hollow (the socket into which the end of the thigh bone is inserted). Probably the muscle was strained but Jacob had a persistent nature and fought on doggedly though he was practically defeated.

We cannot doubt that the angel who had the advantage could have hurried away from the man he had humbled but God does not act that way. Jacob, emptied of self, clung to his antagonist and God took pleasure in Jacob and lingered in his presence. So long as Jacob in self satisfaction demanded the surrender of Canaan God barred his progress but as soon as Jacob acknowledged his powerlessness and became a lowly suppliant God stayed in his company. His sole quarrel had been with Jacob's arrogance which would seize as a prize what could only be bestowed as a gift but when arrogance was smitten the Victor remained to bless. Jacob's wrestling began where God's finished but it was no more the wrestling of self confidence. Jacob would not let Him go without obtaining from Him a blessing. He who was beaten back in his wealth now

carried all before him in his poverty. The old name which commemorated his crooked dealing was changed to Israel, "Perseverer with God." "As a prince hast thou prevailed."

As he passed over Penueel the sun rose upon him. Why this small detail? It was bright full day within and without; to Jacob nature had a

radiance it never had before because the breach was healed between himself and God. The shadows had fled and there was sunlight in nature and sunlight in his soul.

(Next month: "Micaiah; a prophet who was faithful.")

THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE FAMILY.

The Bible reveals this fact; that as a result of the permission of evil, and since the death of our Lord, God intends to take out from the peoples of the earth a class to reign with Christ. The number of this family being clearly stated as fore-ordained and predestinated by God to that position, their qualities are likewise foretold; what they were by birth or upbringing and finally into what they develop as the direct result of God working in them, the time taken in selecting them and the events in the earth associated with their entrance into office.

That they are called to be of the Divine nature is also taught in the Scriptures, the first to attain this position being Christ. (Heb. 1: 3). "Who being the brightness of His Glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His Power, when He had by Himself purged our sins sat down on the right Hand of the Majesty on High") and as the Church are to follow in His steps and finally be His joint heirs (Rom. 8: 17), they will therefore be of the Divine nature (II Pet. 1: 4, I John 3: 2).

Further we know that immortality is not inherent in man but is offered as a reward for faithfulness, as stated by Paul in Rom. 2: 7. In the previous verse Jesus is presented to us as rewarding every man according to his deeds: to those who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honour and immortality. To seek for anything is proof that we do not possess it; further, that it is 'according to deeds' suggests that our present activities have some relation to the future glory.

So important is this class in the Divine scheme of things that to take away what the Bible has to declare about it would cut out a large part of the New Testament and much of the Old Testament. The Bible, to a large extent, is written of them with its types, illus-

trations, figures and pictures, not only from a future standpoint but also as respects the present life of this class.

To be raised then to such a high position suggests that they will obviously require to have much in common with God, with Christ and with each other, for at least "a thousand years." Reason alone would teach us the truth of the above statement. For example, they will have a oneness of nature, a oneness of station, a oneness of mind, have a definiteness of heart and mind, will and purpose, a family interest in the plans and purposes of God, and most remarkable of all a oneness of fellowship.

We may reason further and again come to the conclusion that to some degree at least those qualities of heart and mind will require to be in evidence during their trial state if they would ultimately reach that select and honoured position in the spiritual phase of the Kingdom of God; but we are not left to reason alone on such an important matter. No, the Bible has too much to say on the subject for us either to ignore it, to treat it too lightly, or to depend on our judgment alone.

The oneness of this class. Its present importance and prominence.

Our Lord and Saviour on that memorable night in the world's history when He was rejected by His own people, betrayed by one of His followers and unjustly treated by both Jew and Gentile prayed for this very thing. Jesus, as recorded in John 14; 17, brings to our attention many precious truths teaching the wonderful relationship that can be possible to those who now follow in His footsteps, and no grander truth than that of John 17. Jesus as it were opens up His heart and mind to us revealing some of the blessed thoughts He had for those who were with Him then, and for all who would respond to the call of this Gospel

Age. Jesus singled out the Church for a special place in the plan of God, evidently with His Father's understanding and full support, with every assurance that His requests would be fulfilled. It is a blessed thought Jesus has left us, that on this night when His mind could have been taken up with other things of the immediate future He could offer such a prayer, even to the extent of praying for us who are living at the end of the Age.

Many of the saints must have received great comfort and encouragement from the thought that Jesus prayed for them. Have we also faith to associate ourselves with it?

For what then did Jesus pray?

1st point. John 17; 22. "The Glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be one, even as We are One."

What Glory has Jesus passed on to the Church?

Not the glory of the human, since none of us are outstanding examples of manhood or womanhood. Not the glory of character, because that is a thing to be developed as a result of God working in us. What then? Surely He must mean the honour and privilege of being His Representatives. "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you."

How faithfully Jesus fulfilled His mission. He could truthfully say "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." "I do not Mine own will but the will of Him that sent Me." "I can of mine own self do nothing. The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."

Paul sums this up by declaring that God was "Manifest in the flesh" and Jesus prays that we may be one even as They were One.

Chosen by Jesus to bear His name, to tell the world of His Love, to tell the world something of the love and character of our Heavenly Father. What a privilege! What an honour!

This is no menial task that Jesus has passed on, but the greatest and noblest privilege ever bestowed upon any member of the human family, to be God's representatives, God's witnesses, God's mouthpieces. Jesus has always had His representatives in the earth, those who are endeavouring to walk in His footsteps, to copy Him in every way, and not by word or deed to give a wrong impression of Him who so loved them as to die on their behalf. (Gal. 2; 20).

Paul speaks of being an ambassador of Christ, one who was fitted to speak of the country and people whom he represented. How well he fulfilled his office! Such a thought if

digested properly, should lead us to carefully watch our steps lest anyone gets a wrong impression of the character of either our Heavenly Father or our loving Saviour. The task is not an easy one, since neither the one we represent or the message we give are very popular. Jesus warns us of our reception by the world, lest we get discouraged. "Marvel not if the world hate you, you know it hated Me before it hated you." To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Only one reason could be given for this treatment. The message of Jesus was a constant rebuke to the people of His generation. The Jews had both violated the covenant given to their fathers and given a wrong impression of the character and plan of their God. The Gospel Age has seen a repetition of these same conditions.

Jesus' commission to His disciples has been passed down the Age from body members to body members, in all "A Little flock," the same message "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." It will be given and will fulfill its purpose as a witness to the world and in calling out a people for God's name.

To-day we see evidences of the faithfulness of those representatives of Christ, and as the work progresses we may receive similar evidences of faithfulness by others coming into and rejoicing in the same truths in which we now rejoice.

That co-operation on our part is necessary is taught by the Apostle Paul when he mentions the blessed thought of being co-labourers with God. God invites our help. That He is willing to have our assistance to use us and to bless the efforts of His children is a source of great delight to anyone of this humble class. Surely no greater reward is looked for, or no sacrifice is too great, to interest even one in the plans and purposes of God.

One of the qualifications necessary to carry out this work successfully is the possession of Spirit of God. Jesus taught this truth in His own ministry. He quoted from the Old Testament in these words "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, For the Lord hath anointed me to preach" adding "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." This was our Lord's authority, whether His message was received or rejected in His generation, and we think it is the seal of office given to all whom He chooses. Part of that prophecy was left out by Jesus, for the time was then future when the second part was to be fulfilled, but it also teaches that others along with Jesus would share in the seal of office; and Paul goes further and tells us

that all the Church receive this anointing (11 Cor. 1; 21).

Prominence too is given to the importance of this class and their work by the statement of Jesus that they are all "taught of God." We see the need and reason for this, so that no mistakes may be made in either the work to be done or the message to be given forth. The Apostle Paul connects our activities with our service when He says "Holding forth the word of Life as ye have been taught." The word of God is spoken of as a two-edged sword dividing between the thoughts and intents of the heart; as a message of life to some or the opposite to others; as doing a separating work. In the hands of those without authority we can visualise the damage that can be done; no wonder then, that to fulfil this mission the Church are exhorted to learn from the example of their Saviour and copy Him in every way; surely a worthy yet very responsible commission given to us so freely by the Head of the Church.

2nd Point. John 17; 21. "That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they may also be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Had the Jewish nation not been influenced, prejudiced and led away by their leaders, they must have concluded that no one could have performed the miracles that Jesus did and carried out such a covenant as He did without God's aid, constant care and protection. Of Him it is recorded "No Man spake as this Man with such authority." Jesus told them on more than one occasion not to believe him on his own witness but to examine the works which he performed, "The works that I do are not my works, the words that I speak are not mine. The Father testifieth of me" the decision of the Jews was their own responsibility.

Jesus in his talks to His disciples said "Learn of Me" and so well must the early disciples have taken His advice and put into practice His lessons that the Jews noticed that they (the disciples) had been with Jesus and learned of Him.

The miraculous change that took place in the hearts and minds and lives of the disciples and the power with which they delivered their message was such as led one of the leaders of that time to say, "Refrain from these men and let them alone, for if this work be of men it will come to naught, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it"; and so they let the disciples go.

As we examine the history of the Gospel Age, we see the same effect upon others who have responded to the call, to follow in the steps of the Master. We who read of these acknowledge the power of a resurrected Christ working in them and through them. No human power could enable the Church to do what the Bible declares would be done. Have we any doubts of a similar witness being given in our day and generation? If we do not hinder surely Christ can make us to the peoples of this time what the disciples were in their day. A witness to the transforming influence, upon our hearts and minds, of a resurrected Christ; that in their time and judgment this generation will confess from whence this class who witnessed to them of the plans and purposes of God, got their inspiration, their courage to endure, their strength to conquer; this wonderful faith and hope of the future. A Oneness of this nature cannot be accomplished without Christ having free access to our hearts and lives, not only as individuals but as we meet for fellowship from time to time. The effects cannot be otherwise but a witness to the world of our oneness with God and with Christ.

Paul's prayer is very appropriate "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection." May it be the sentiments of our hearts also.

3rd Point. John 17; 23. "I in them and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me."

Jesus goes a stage further in this verse, progressing not only from the point of believing, but to the ultimate conviction that the world will understand fully as they look back on the present lives of the Church; of Christ having been sent of God to redeem this class and also that they themselves have rejected the message of redemption given so fully to them.

Jesus tells us what this witness should be "That they may be made perfect in one." This suggests that the Church should be evidence of the redemption work going on in their hearts. Does not the Bible speak of our being epistles of Christ and as a gazing stock both to men and angels (11 Cor. 3; 3. 1 Cor. 4; 9. Heb. 10; 33).

Our Lord has delivered His followers from many doubts and fears that are common worries of the world of mankind; fears concerning their present needs being one of many, but most important we can say are the fears asso-

ciated with the hereafter. Does not Heb. 2; 14, speak of Jesus delivering us from the fear of death, and the present bondage linked up with it? If it be only in this one thing, we give a witness. The world must recognise that the "Child of God" has something which it does not possess, but our Lord tells us something more, "That the world may know that Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me."

Paul reminds us of the fact that the Body Members are to God a sweet smelling savour of Jesus Christ, as if the Heavenly Father is again seeing the devotion, the zeal, the self sacrifice of His beloved Son as He observes those who are endeavouring to walk in the footsteps of

the Master. Paul said, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "The fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death, True of Him? Yes, and true of all." (Rev. 12; 11).

To these God manifests the same watch care as, responding to His invitation, the call to joint heirship, they are earnestly trying to do His will. Sacrificing all present and future hopes of earthly things, they with joy in their hearts take up the Cross daily and follow their Teacher, and to these, Jesus said, God manifests the same love and the world will one day know it.

(To be concluded).

✧ The Ministry of Evil ✧

Thoughts inspired by the
130th Psalm.

The life of every human being has its lights and shadows, its seasons of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up the warp and woof of experience, and the web of character that flows from the active loom of life will be fine and beautiful, or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual appropriates and weaves into it the thread of experience. In every life, under the present reign of sin and evil, the sombre shades predominate; and to such an extent that the Scriptures aptly describe humanity in its present condition as a "groaning creation." Nor is the Christian exempt from these conditions that are upon the whole world; for "we also groan within ourselves, waiting for deliverance." Rom. 8; 22, 23.

But while we are waiting for the deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive and use them should be a matter of deepest concern to us; for, according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or adversity and trial bears to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increase or friends multiply, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds satisfaction in earthly things; but, on the other hand when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment are felt, when riches fail and friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural temptation is to despondency and despair.

Just here is an important part of the great battle of Christian life. He must fight the

natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently claim and anticipate the victory in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burden of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward.

Sorrows indeed may, and often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord is our helper in all these things. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws specially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when, in deep affliction, he cried to the Lord and reasoned of his righteousness, saying: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice: let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications." Feeling his own shortcomings and longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying the bountiful provisions of the Divine plan of salvation through Christ, he adds: "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities (imputing them to us), O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared (reverenced)."

How blessed are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities and

of its inability to measure up to the perfect law of righteousness. When the heart is true and loyal, God does not mark our infirmities in a record against us. They are not imputed to us, but are freely forgiven through Christ in Whose merit we trust and Whose righteousness is our glorious dress—arrayed in which we may come with humble boldness, even into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If God thus ignores the infirmities of our flesh and receives and communes with us as new creatures in Christ, His children should also regard one another, considering not, and charging not against each other, the infirmities of the flesh, which all humbly confess and by the grace of God strive daily to overcome. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are cultivated, indulged and justified that the errors may be continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily "judge ourselves," the Lord will judge and chasten us. 1 Cor. 11: 31, 32.

"I wait for the Lord," the Psalmist continues, "my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." How necessary is this patient waiting for the Lord! In the midst of cares, perplexities, difficulties and infirmities we may remember that all the jarring discords of this life are working together for good to them that love the Lord, to the called according to His purpose. But for the consummation of this purpose of God toward us we must "wait," and while waiting patiently, endure hardness as good soldiers. "Trust in the Lord and wait patiently for Him, and He will bring it to pass." Time is an important element in all God's plans: we are not, therefore, to be disappointed when the test of endurance is applied while the blessings we crave tarry long. God took time to frame the world and to fit it for human habitation; time (6,000 years) to give the world its necessary experience with evil; time (4,000 years) to prepare for the advent of Christ as the world's Redeemer; time (2,000 years) for the preparation of the church to share in His glorious reign; and time must be allowed for the shaping and adjusting of the individual affairs of all His people. God has not forgotten when the answers to our prayers seem to tarry long. He who heeds the sparrow's fall and numbers the very hairs of our heads is not indifferent to the faintest call or the smallest necessity of His humblest child.

"More than they that wait for the morning."

"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the Morning—I say more than they that wait for the Morning."

The "brethren" are not in darkness respecting the dawn of the Millennial morning, because taught thereof by the Comforter (see 1 Thess. 5: 4), and because to their eyes of faith the Day Star (the Day-bringer—Christ) has already appeared, and they rejoice in the inspired testimony that, although "weeping may endure for the night (of sin's predominance), joy cometh in the morning" of the great day of the Lord. And as the dawn of the new day, "the day of Christ," becomes more and more distant, many besides the "brethren" can and do see signs that "the night is far spent and the day is at hand;" and by and by, notwithstanding the dark clouds and terrible storm of trouble that will temporarily hide the signs of morning from them, all the world will awake to the fact that "The morn at last is breaking."

But many of those who are now watching for the morning from the standpoint of earthly philosophies are not waiting for the Lord; in fact, they do not know the Lord, His character and His kingdom having been so sadly misrepresented by those who claimed to be His mouthpieces. They rejoice in the morning, because it ushers in the age of human equality, general education, decreased toil, and increased privileges, comforts and luxuries. "God is not in all their thoughts" when they look for the morning. Looking from a more or less selfish standpoint, and unguided by the Divine revelation—for no man knoweth the mind of God save he who has the spirit of God (1 Cor. 2: 11, 12)—they fail to see the real object and chief characteristic of the coming age of blessing, and are merely championing the interests of the masses as against the present special advantages of the wealthy. They see not the greatest blessings of the dawning day; that with earthly comforts and privileges it will bring the great blessing of a trial for everlasting life; that it will be the world's Judgment Day, to determine who, under those favourable conditions, will develop characters in harmony with God's character.

But with the "brethren" it is different. While they appreciate the coming earthly blessings none the less, but the more intelligently, the Lord, His character and the work which will be accomplished by men for the great Physician—as Prophet, Priest and King—these more weighty and more valuable considerations outweigh by far the earthly favours which will

attend His kingdom's rule. Yes, the "brethren" wait for the Lord Himself, longing to see the King in His beauty—the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. Yes, truly our souls "wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning."

Then let all the Israel of God hope in the

Lord (verses 7, 8), for with the Lord there is mercy; mercy not only in dealing with our infirmities, but also in shielding from overwhelming trials and in granting grace to help in every time of need—to those who abide in the Vine by faith and obedience.

Gathered Grain.

He Cometh—to judge the earth.

Hills of the North, rejoice;
 River and mountain-spring,
 Hark to the advent voice;
 Valley and lowland, sing;
 Though absent long, your Lord is nigh;
 He judgment brings and victory.

Isles of the Southern seas,
 Deep in your coral caves
 Pent be each warring breeze,
 Lulled be your restless waves:
 He comes to reign with boundless sway,
 And make your wastes His great highway.

Lands of the East, awake,
 Soon shall your sons be free;
 The sleep of ages break,
 And rise to liberty,
 On your far hills, long, cold and grey,
 Shall dawn the everlasting day.

Shores of the utmost West,
 Ye that have waited long,
 Unvisited, unblest,
 Break forth to swelling song;
 High raise the note, that Jesus died,
 Yet lives and reigns, the Crucified.

Shout, while ye journey home;
 Songs be in every mouth;
 Lo, from the North they come,
 From East and West and South.
 "City of God, the bond are free,
 They come to live in peace in Thee."

My Message.

I DO NOT ASK, nor even wish for thee, that thy way may be as a bed of roses, nor that on thy path there be but cloudless sunshine—each day as one fair radiant dawn;

FOR I HAVE LEARNT that oft in darkest hours, in deepest sorrow, and in keen distress, life's brightest joys are born.

BUT I WOULD ASK FOR THEE, *LOVE*, yea an overflowing love for God, a deep appreciation of His glorious Plan;

HIS WILL TO KNOW, and grace to serve, that in thy love abundant thou mightest cause some other heart with love to glow.

WALK THOU WITH GOD, and let Him walk with thee, so shall thy love still more abundant be, and thy heart shall rejoice in hope—so full and free;

AND WHEN — WHEN thine earthly course is run, then thou shalt hear His sweet "well done" and thou shalt wear the Victor's crown eternally.

Love Divine.

Love divine, all love excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down:
 Thou hast made with us thy dwelling, love doth all thy favours crown.

As the Christian progresses toward His glory home he should expand in love, grow more liberal in heart and broader in mind. He will learn that the truth cannot be received and held like as a sponge absorbs and holds water. He will see that in God's great plan there is a definite purpose, and he will desire to enter fully into the spirit thereof. As he grows in appreciation of the truth he will become more Godlike; and this will mean he will want to do, and try to do something for others. In no other way can one develop the spirit of perfect love.

It was the perfect expression of unselfishness that caused Jehovah to give the dearest treasure of his heart, his beloved Son, that man might benefit therefrom. It was a perfect expression of unselfishness that led Jesus to the Cross. A perfect expression of unselfishness involves some sacrifice. This we call love. No one will be forever with the Lord unless that one is perfected in love.

—1 John, 4: 7-21.

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

CHRIST IN YOU.

"Wondrous mystery, long concealed,
Unto us has been revealed.
Herald wide the gracious story—
'Christ in you, the hope of glory!
Christ in you the world's sore need,
Christ in you the promised Seed.
Canst receive it? Then thou art
Of the Christ, indeed, a part."

OUR PRIZE CERTAIN.

Those who strive for earthly prizes do so in the face of much uncertainty. Every politician admits the strong probability of his defeat; every one who seeks wealth will acknowledge a strong probability that he will fail in his fight for it; but not so with the soldiers of the cross. The prize is not only superlatively great and grand and incorruptible, but it is a certainty, as the Apostle says, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." We know that faithfulness as followers of our Captain will bring results not only blessed to ourselves, but results which will be under the Lord's providences a blessing to all the families of the earth.

TEMPTATIONS.

"Temptations never give us notice. Can we expect them to do so? The sailor does not expect to have notice of every gale of wind that blows upon him. The soldier in battle does not reckon to have notice of every bullet that is coming his way. By what apparatus could we be kept aware of every advance of the evil one? The very essence of temptation often lies in the suddenness of it. We are carried off our feet before we are aware. Yet we must not say, because of this 'I cannot help it;' for we ought to be all the more watchful, and live all the nearer to God in prayer. We are bound to stand against a sudden temptation, as much as against a slower mode of attack. We must look to the Lord to be kept from the arrow which flieth by day and the pestilence which walketh in darkness. We are to cry to God for grace, that, let the gusts of temptation come how and when they may, we may always be found in Christ, resting in HIM, covered with His Divine power."

(C. H. Spurgeon).

FULNESS OF JOY.

The Apostle says, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise," (Gal. 4: 28) Christ, our Head, and we, His members, are the antitype of him who was called "Laughter," or "Joyous." And do we not have more joy than others, even in this present time? True, we have a full share in the trials and difficulties and sorrows and disappointments that cause the whole creation to groan and travail in pain together; yet we have what they do not have—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts" and enabling us to be "joyful in tribulation also." And if this name Joyous, applies to us in such a degree in the present time, what shall we say of the glorious future, when joined to our Master in the glories of His Kingdom we shall cause the knowledge and blessing of the Lord to fill the whole earth, and bring laughter and joy to a world of mankind, now weak and groaning under the administration of sin and death?

THE BOND OF PERFECTNESS.

The Apostle Paul, as the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit, is a thorough instructor: not only does he tell us in Col. 3: 5-7 what *dis-graces* to put off, and in 12-14 what *graces* to put on, but viewing the Lord's body arrayed in these glorious qualities of heart, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patient endurance, forbearance and forgiveness, he adds, "And *above* all these put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Love is thus pictured as the "girdle" which binds and holds in place the folds of the robe of Christ's righteousness, with its various graces. In other words, the Apostle would have us see that forbearance, meekness, patience, etc., must not be matters of courtesy merely, or matters of policy merely, but however much they might partake of these qualities at the beginning, the wearers will not be perfected in heart, not be fit for the Kingdom, until they have reached the place where these various graces of their wills, or intentions, are bound to them by the cords of love—love for the Lord, love for righteousness, love for the "brethren," and sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation. Love is indeed the bond of perfectness, the very spirit of the Lord.

* * * *

"Love suffereth long, and is kind. Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked. Bearing all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth."



APOCALYPTIC ORIGINS.

No. 4. "The Slain Lamb."

It must have occasioned John considerable surprise as he looked up in response to the elder's encouragement to see in the centre of the Assembly, a Lamb standing there. It could easily be presumed that after hearing the elder's words, he might have expected to see a 'Lion Rampant,' or some other heraldic symbol of victory move into the midst of the stately scene, and advance to take the book from the hand of Him who sat on the central throne. But it was "a Lamb" which had come to stand there; and the Lamb had an appearance as though it had just been slain. In addition, it had other peculiarities which gave it a singular appearance—it had seven eyes and seven horns.

From this point onwards, in these Apocalyptic scenes, it is this singular Lamb which is the chief executant of all that transpires from the Divine side of things. He breaks the seven seals which bound the little book; he leads and feeds a great multitude which came out of the great tribulation (Rev. 7: 17); He is seen standing on Mount Zion with 144,000 associates (Rev. 14: 1-5); He leads the armies of God to battle against God's enemies (Rev. 17: 14, 19; 11-21). He is seen as the husband of the New Jerusalem, and enthroned with God in the Holy City as it comes to dwell with men. (Rev. 22: 3). Thus the 'prevailing' of the Lion is continued and carried forward by the Lamb till the authority of God is established in the earth, and God becomes "All-in-all" to all.

There is but little reference to this symbol of a Lamb in the New Testament other than in this book of Revelation. John the Baptist uses the term when pointing Jesus out to some of his disciples. "Behold the Lamb of God" said John, on two successive days (John 1: 29 and 36). And Peter tells his brethren they had been redeemed from their old manner of life by the precious blood of Christ AS OF a Lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Pet. 1: 18-19). A further reference is made by Paul, though without using the term itself, when he says "For even Christ our Passover is slain for us, therefore let us keep the feast. . . ." (1 Cor. 5: 7-9). Thus, though the use of this term had come into vogue, its use among the early Christians does not seem to have become very extensive. Among the many 'faithful sayings' which passed from lip to lip, in the

little Christian communities, no one of them which has come down to us through New Testament sources, epitomises any teaching centreing around this figure of a Lamb.

Nor is there much testimony regarding the Lamb in the Prophets. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" says Isaiah of God's suffering servant (Isa. 53: 7). Isaiah says "He is brought as a Lamb"—that is, He was brought like a lamb would be brought to the slaughter-table. Isaiah does not say "He is a Lamb," but that His unremonstrant yielding to his persecutors was like that of a lamb in the arms of its offerer. To be like a 'lamb' does not mean that one is a lamb. It was left to His fore-runner, to say, with definiteness and precision that Jesus was the Lamb of God, and for Paul to supplement him by calling Christ Jesus our 'Passover' (Lamb) slain for us.

This latter Scripture (1 Cor. 5: 7) is a valuable pointer which directs our minds to the Old Testament evidences which are required to show the origins of this title. In the annals of the Hebrew people there was one lamb, above all others, which was enshrined in their experience and history. Though for every day save one of each year, at least two lambs were sacrificed to God (one in the morning, and the other in the evening) it was not the victim of this oft-repeated sacrifice which was so diligently remembered in song and story. It was the Lamb slain in Egypt to protect the Hebrew's first-born—the Passover Lamb—that was kept ever fresh in their memory. That was a Lamb of redemption and deliverance. That Lamb redeemed some of their number to God, for thenceforth all firstborns were claimed and appropriated by God; and the firstborns redeemed in the dead of night were the harbingers of the deliverance that came for all with morning light. That this is the right lamb to be taken as the root and origin of this title is suggested by the words of Rev. 15: 3, where the name of Moses is coupled with the title of the Lamb. "And they sing the song of Moses . . . and the song of the Lamb saying . . ." This is really a song of deliverance, extolling God for His mighty works upon His enemies (enumerated in verse 2) and is reminiscent of the song of Moses, as the Israelites stood on the farther side of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:) after their marvellous deliverance from Egyptian bondage. "Thou, in Thy mercy hast led forth the people

which **Thou hast redeemed** . . . which Thou hast purchased . . ." (vv. 13-16). In support of this David says "what one nation in the earth is like Thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to Himself . . . which Thou redeemest to Thee from Egypt. . . ." (2 Sam. 7: 23).

That deliverance, and the Lamb's death that preceded it, is the source of origin for much of the sublime imagery of Revelation. In both type and antitype redemption from the hands of the oppressor is the theme; and in both cases redemption is shown to be accomplished through the blood of a slain Lamb.

But this Apocalyptic Lamb was **alive again** after its death. It now stood in the midst of the illustrious throng, "as it had been slain." To find a counterpart to this we must go back to the experience of Isaac on Mount Moriah. "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering" asked the lad, "God will provide Himself a lamb" (Gen. 22: 7-8). And a male lamb (a ram) was found at hand when the right time came. But before the provided lamb died, Isaac too had been slain (in his faithful father's intention). Isaac died (in a figure) and was also raised again. "By faith Abraham . . . offered up Isaac . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, **from whence also he received him in a figure.**" (Heb. 11: 17 and 19).

God wanted Isaac to be offered in sacrifice, and Abraham hesitated not to lay him on the altar. In God's sight (and in Abraham's intention) Isaac died and was raised again.

The connecting point of this incident to our study is that both the lad and his father spoke of the appropriate animal for such a sacrifice as a 'lamb,' and when God provided the animal to release Isaac from the altar God provided a male lamb. Thus the lamb which God desired in sacrifice (Isaac himself) was accounted "**as if he had been slain**" and raised again.

Thus these Old Testament evidences, so far as the lamb itself is concerned, tell the story of surrender and dedication to the Will of God—of its death and resurrection; but insofar as the purpose accomplished by the death of a lamb, it tells of redemption and deliverance of a people.

These are the thoughts enshrined in Hebrew song and story which helped to mould the conceptions and devotions of the most zealous in Israel. Thus Isaiah, one of the most spiritual prophets, saw another suffering servant of God go Isaac-like (as a lamb) to the slaughter. But

to John on Patmos it was given to know that that Lamb came forth to victory and achievement.

A captive people came forth to nationhood in consequence of the slain Paschal Lamb,—that same people will come forth again to nationhood, by reason of this better Lamb, slain, but alive again.

This is revealed in the remarkable endowment of this victorious Lamb. It had seven horns and seven eyes!

Concerning the 'seven eyes' we are reminded of the prophecy of Zechariah. Zechariah was sent by God to encourage Joshua and Zerubbabel to proceed with the re-building of the Temple after their return from Babylonian exile. Their enemies had prevented them engaging in this work, but the prophet's vision goes behind these human enemies and sees Satan acting as the accuser and opposer. Joshua (the High Priest, representative of the Priesthood) was dressed in filthy clothes, and Zerubbabel (the prince of Judah, representative of royalty) were needing encouragement to undertake a great task. To Joshua the Prophet said "Behold I will bring forth my servant the **BRANCH**, for behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be **seven eyes**; behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Chap. 3: 8 and 9).

To Zerubbabel the Prophet was commissioned to say, that as he had laid the foundation stones of the Temple, his hand should also finish it, and that though it was a day of small things in that the Temple he would erect would be poor and insignificant compared with the Temple Nebuchadnezzar destroyed, yet the Spirit and power of God would be with him in his work. On a particular headstone were to be "the seven eyes of the Lord which run to and fro through the whole world." This, of course, has deeper significance than as a mere message to Zerubbabel and Joshua, in the re-building of their "small" temple, but it would reveal to them that God was watching over them and their work, and that they would be prospered in their attempt, spite of all their enemies opposition. Success would be achieved "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." (Zech. 4: 6 and 7).

Thus, the eyes of the Lord survey the scene wherein the omnipotent Spirit of God prepares to accomplish His work. God is building a great Temple, and in this Temple will be one

Stone, which God will have graven and prepared, upon which will be 'seven eyes'—and that stone will be the headstone thereof. For the purpose of this Revelation picture, that 'Stone' has become "a Lamb, as it had been slain." That Stone had undergone its "graving" and was ready for its place. That Lamb was possessed of "All-seeing Eyes"—"Visibility" to survey the whole scene wherein the Spirit of God was about to operate. It would 'see' everything as these 'eyes of the Lord' ran to and fro throughout the whole earth. That Lamb had seven 'horns.' From time immemorial a horn has been a symbol of power. *Seven horns means that it has perfect or complete power—"All power in heaven and in earth."* These seven eyes and seven horns represent "the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

This phrase reminds us of Isaiah's description of the spiritual equipment of the 'Branch' which will spring from Jesse's Root, in Isa. 11: 3 and 4; "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and (the spirit) of understanding; the spirit of counsel and (the spirit) of might; the spirit of knowledge and (the spirit) of the fear of the Lord," and shall make Him to possess (the spirit) of "quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." Thus does inspired prophecy seem to identify and describe in advance these "seven Spirits of God"—the ability to "see" and "understand" everything. The "seven horns" show the fullness of executive power, backed by 'the seven

eyes' the fulness of spiritual understanding and discernment.

What a wonderful Redeemer was that which came forth to answer the challenging Angel's call "Who is worthy to open the book?" That great soul for whom God framed His great Plan, big enough to compassionate a world in sin, the bringer of peace and righteousness to a war-worn earth, "Shiloh"—the Prince of "Shalom"—; the Root of Majesty from which sprang David's royal Throne; the Prince of all Princes of Judah's stock; the One only Being in heaven and earth able to answer the imperious 'Call,' and when He came to view He came as a Lamb to be slain!

The "Seed" of the Promise, like Isaac, and yet more truly so than Isaac; Laid on the Altar by His Father, like Isaac, and yet more truly and actually so than Isaac; and raised from the dead, but not in figure as was Isaac; the real, true, all-worthy Lamb of God, prototype of all lambs slain by men, for men, since the world began—*Majesty come down to bear a Cross; Royalty descended to be set at nought, but now Majesty and Royalty triumphant, for "the Lion of the Tribe of Juda hath prevailed to open the book, and . . . a Lamb, as it had been slain . . . came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the Throne."*

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour and glory and blessing."

May God help our hearts and tongues to join that universal refrain!

Little Points in a Big Programme.

- (1) A little more love for everybody.
- (2) A little closer cleaving to God's Word as my guide.
- (3) A little wider open purse in helping to support God's cause.
- (4) A little softer heart towards sufferers around me.
- (5) A little more readiness to see the viewpoints of others.
- (6) A little more freedom from the poison of prejudice and ignorance.
- (7) A little better remembering of the Lord's Day (every day) as a day of spiritual privileges.
- (8) A little more time spent in prayer and meditation in the Scriptures.
- (9) A little more obedience to the commands of the Lord in His Word.
- (10) A little sweeter heart towards those who antagonise me.

A Note on Luke 15; 16.

The "husks" which the swine did eat, and with which the prodigal son would fain have eaten also in his extremity, were large, fleshy pods about ten inches long and one inch across, the fruit of the "kharub," a small bushy tree, which grows in profusion in Syria. The swine eat this fruit with relish, and the natives in the East used to grind up the pods and make a species of sweetmeat from the thick, sticky juice which was thus obtained. To thus partake of the food which was gathered for the swine was degradation indeed to any honest hearted child of Israel, and so it was that when he found himself reduced to this state, the prodigal "came to himself" and realised at last how far he had fallen from his former estate.

Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Proverbs 27 : 1.

Ye know not what shall be on the morrow.

James 4 : 14.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

Another dear sister "passed over" recently when Sister Edith Morris, of the Bilbie Street class, Nottingham, died after a short illness. Sister had been a fully consecrated child of God for many years, and loved the Truth and the Lord very dearly. Her influence, though of the quiet type, was felt both by the brethren and her work-a-day acquaintances, as a power for righteousness — an influence which will be missed by many. Those who knew her best know that she was one of the Lord's jewels.

ANONYMOUS

The Committee wishes to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the anonymous receipt of £1, 30/- and £2, the latter donation being accompanied by a request that it be applied to the Benevolent Relief Fund, which has been done.

EVACUATION.

A sister in the Bagshot district (Surrey) would be pleased to have another sister with her in her quiet country house to share expenses, home duties, and companionship. In the same district also a widow has three rooms available with use of usual amenities.

Enquiries from brethren interested should be sent to the office in the first place.

OFFICE ADDRESS.

Will friends please note that letters intended for the B.S.C. office should be sent to 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex, and not to 24 Darwin Road, Welling. Although the office address was changed four months ago some friends still send their letters to the latter place, and some delay is liable to be occasioned when this is done since such letters have to be forwarded.

Friends are also asked to note that the Secretary, Bro. A. O. Hudson, has removed from 24 Darwin Road, and that his private address is now 129 Doncaster Road, Leicester.

AN OPPORTUNITY.

We have on hand several hundred copies of the booklet "God's Covenants," published by the Committee seven or eight years ago. In order to dispose of this stock we shall be pleased to send these booklets free of charge to anyone who would like a few copies if

they will defray the cost of postage and packing. This offer only applies within Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Eire. For a single copy send 2d., for six copies send 6d., and for twenty-five copies send 1/-.

AN URGENT REQUEST.

In connection with our remittances to America in payment for "Herald" and "Dawn" subscriptions, the Exchange Control authorities have requested us to furnish, in future, supporting evidence in the form of a proportion of the wrappers in which these magazines are sent to this country, when making application for permission to transfer funds. We shall much appreciate it therefore if friends seeing this notice will retrieve such wrappers of both "Herald" and "Dawn" as may not have been destroyed, and also save those in which future issues are sent, and send them to the office. Perhaps groups of friends in association with one another could put all their wrappers in one envelope and so save postage.

At the moment we are in need of "Herald" wrappers, and we shall be glad to receive these as soon as possible. "Dawn" wrappers will not be needed for two or three months and so friends can save these at home and forward them all at once when announcement is made in the B.S.M. that they are required.

We feel confident that the brethren will respond to this appeal, realising that under prevailing conditions we are fortunate in being allowed to send money out of the country at all.

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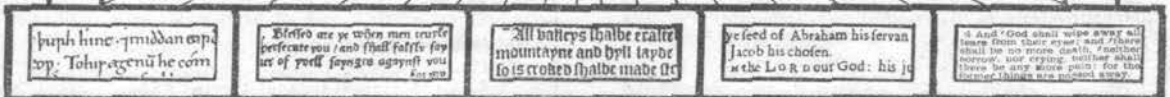
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BIBLE STUDENT'S MONTHLY



Vol. 18 No. 6

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Threepence

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THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

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Please address all correspondence as follows:—

Subscriptions, Books and Literature

Bible Students Committee
20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

Letters for attention of Committee or Secretary

Mr. A. O. Hudson,
129 Doncaster Road, Leicester

Benevolent Relief Fund

Mr. G. A. Ford
13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds

Bible Students Monthly Editorial

Mr. A. O. Hudson
129 Doncaster Road, Leicester

Public Meetings

Mr. C. T. Ward
58 Gordon Street, Kettering, Northants

SPECIAL NOTICE

TO

CLASS SECRETARIES

Nominations of brethren for election to the Committee closed on May 31. A voting form will be sent, by July 1, to each class from which nominations have been received. Should there be any classes which have not submitted nominations, but which desire nevertheless to take part in the voting, will their secretaries please apply for class voting forms by June 30. The form will be sent by return.

Request for voting forms should be addressed to 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

ANNUAL ELECTION

OF

BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE.

Voting forms will be included in the July issue of the B.S.M. and brethren are invited to register their choice of seven names to constitute the Committee taking office on August 1 next. Any number of brethren may use one voting paper but the number of persons voting must be indicated in the space provided.

Any friend wishing to vote but having no copy of the voting form may obtain one by making application to the office before June 30 (or immediately after receipt of July B.S.M. should the form have been inadvertently omitted from any particular copy.)

THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE FAMILY.

(Continued from last issue).

Does this oneness mean uniformity? We answer, "No." Variety is the keynote of all we see around us. The botanists have divided the vegetation in the world into families according to their individual characteristics. In the same natural order we may have creeping plants, upright plants, climbers and other varieties. What then is his reason for putting these in one definite order. It may be the shape of the leaf, or the way the leaves may grow on the stem. It may be the shape of the flower or how it grows on the stem. Some plants, though different in flower, may be grouped together according to the veining in the leaf. Nevertheless there is a general principle in all plants which is true of all, but only in this aspect is there a oneness.

Variety also is manifest in all the other beauties of nature which frequently pass unnoticed.

The human family is even more diversified than the vegetable or animal kingdom, yet they have much in common. They all come from our first parents. Whatever the colour of skin or mode of life, they are all subject to the same natural laws. The law of heredity affects the black as well as the white races. They have all one blood (and it is interesting to note that the blood of human beings is different in composition to that of animals). Their organs are the same, their bodies function in the same way, the only difference in their makeup is the question of education, religious belief or the development of the mind.

When we consider also that God is choosing out of this varied class a number who will ultimately be rulers over the world, should we not think that the same variety will be seen in them as the subjects they are to reign over? Reason would lead us to conclude that such must be the case. The Ancient Worthies also are to be associated with the Church in the dispensing of blessings to all the families of the earth. Are ye all of the same type? One has only to examine the character of these men and women to see how different they were in their makeup. Nevertheless there was a oneness among them that separated them from all others so much so that the Bible speaks of them as examples, a cloud of witnesses from whom the Church can

learn many lessons of zeal, endurance and faith. Peter speaks of them as having one thing in common; they all spake of the times of restitution (Acts 3-21). In Hebrews it mentions something more that was common to all (1) They all died in faith. (2) They looked for a city whose Maker and Builder was God. (3) They confessed they were pilgrims and strangers in the earth. Then we have the various pictures of the Church developed during the Gospel Age, teaching the same lesson of variety in the Little Flock. Even in the pictures of the glorified Christ this same thought is illustrated. We call to mind the words of our Lord, "He that would be greatest in the Kingdom, let him be the servant of all"; the fact that He uses the word "greatest" would convey to our minds that there will be some not so great. Our Lord's answer to the mother of James and John teaches us the same truth. She said "when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom, grant that one shall sit on Thy right hand and the other on the left." Jesus answered her and said that the authority to place the members in the glorified Church was in the Father's own Hand. Again, the Apostle Paul, in discussing the resurrection of the dead, and particularly the resurrection of the Church, says that a star differeth from star in the heavens (they are all glorious) so will the resurrection of the dead be. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." 1 Cor. 15, 43-44. (A oneness, yet diversity). What then is this oneness for which our Lord prayed? The essentials to it are brought to our attention in the 4th chapter of Ephesians. These words must evidently apply not only to the early church, to whom the letter was written, but to all who would claim to be footstep followers of Christ. Some may claim to live up to some of these points raised by Paul, but to those to whom it applies, each Christian must be able to come up to the standard mentioned in all the verses. Seven is the number brought to our notice and these we will examine in the order given.

1st Point. One Body.

The development of the Church during the Gospel Age is likened to a human body (1 Cor. 12, 27: "Now ye are the body of Christ")

Eph. 4, 15-16. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." In this body there are all nationalities, various tongues, members from all conditions and stations of life; but in Christ racial distinctions cease, even different earthly natures are broken down; we are all one in Christ Jesus, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond or free, male or female, neither do we come into this mystical body of Christ because of what we were in the flesh, but because we are begotten by the word of truth and by the will of God (James 1, 18. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth.") (John 1, 13. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God.") So important has this functioning of the body to be fulfilled during this age of grace that Paul states God sets the members in the body as it pleases Him. The lesson then for us, if of that privileged company, is this, to discern what the Lord expects of each one of us, to ask His unerring guidance that we may function in that position with all the zeal and earnestness humanly possible, asking Him for grace and help to that end. All function. There is something for everyone to do.

Christ is the Head and example to the others, and to know that He is deeply interested in His body members, one has but to recall the experience of Saul of Tarsus, and the truth taught by Christ in the parable of the Sheep and Goats. As the world treats the Church, Christ accepts as their treatment of Himself. For example, Jesus said "He that receives you receives Me, and He that receives Me receives Him that sent me." Contrawise, he that rejects the message of this class, Jesus said, are rejecting Him and the One who sent Him. The importance of this truth cannot be overestimated, but is an exhortation to us to endeavour to do all we can to help our brethren and pray lest we might unconsciously put a stumbling block in the way of one who may be earnestly seeking and striving to do the will of God. This body is a living organism—using the language of Paul in Ephesians, "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh in-

crease of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Such are the comprehensive pictures of the Church from the time of Pentecost until the last members are glorified to be with their Head.

2nd Point. One Spirit.

This may be viewed in two ways, **First**, it is a spiritual class that the Bible speaks of as composing this company, begotten by God's Spirit. This class are to have a spiritual inheritance; a heavenly inheritance. "That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." God gives them of His spirit and judges them according to the spirit. They are exhorted to live in the spirit and not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh; to walk in the Spirit towards their spiritual home; to set their affections, not on earthly, but on spiritual things. They are exhorted to mind spiritual things. God deals with them as "in the spirit" and supplies the needed grace to enable them to make their calling and election sure. "For by One Spirit are we all baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12, 13). This being true of all the called ones, the same character effects will be seen in our day as we observe so markedly in the early church. **Second**. The spirit that animates the body of Christ. Of Jesus we see early evidence of the remarkable zeal he had for God and His work. At the age of twelve we hear him remark "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business." At the age of thirty "I come, as in the volume of the book it is written of Me, to do Thy will." "I delight to do Thy will, O my God. Thy law is written in my heart." Still later in His earthly pilgrimage the disciples noted the fulfilment of the prophecy, "The zeal of thine house hath consumed me." Will the Church manifest the same disposition?

The Apostle Paul states it must be so. "If any man hath not the mind (disposition) of Christ he is none of His." May it be true of us, as stated by Paul, that we are to God a sweet savour of Christ as if God would see exemplified in those who claim to follow the Lamb the devotion, zeal and sacrifice so wonderfully shown in Christ.

The spirit then is earnestly desiring to do God's will, to further His purpose and be keenly interested in His work, sacrificing all for His sake and bending all our energies, human power and abilities in this one direction. God judges us according to the spirit in which we do anything for Him. May we be willing to spend and be spent in His service.

3rd Point. One Hope of our Calling.

This may be viewed in many ways. First as the definite call of the Gospel Age. God is on a visit to the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name; a class to be seated on the throne with Christ; a reward for them if they in turn will fulfil the conditions associated with the call. To those who were representative of all this class Jesus said: "Ye are they that have been with me in my temptations I covenant with you a Kingdom as my Father hath covenanted with me, and ye" (and this is the hope) "shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." That this promise is not confined to the apostles is supported by, first the statement in Rev. 3, 2, "To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me on my throne," and secondly by the statement in Rev. 20 where all the saints are spoken of as being made "Kings" and reigning with Christ during the thousand years. Added to this we have the picture given to us in Daniel (7th Chapter), where Jesus is mentioned as coming to the Ancient of Days to receive a Kingdom, and in similar language the saints also, coming and receiving a Kingdom. These promises are recorded to inspire the Church to faithfulness, to energise their zeal and sacrifice and to ultimate victory (by the Grace of God) over anything and everything that would come in their way. O let this hope of the future sustain us in the present

evil time.

Called to be of the little flock.

This is the expressed will of God to those who respond during the Gospel Age. The Church requires a stimulus and surely no grander hope than this is needed to encourage us to greater effort in the narrow way. Another hope is opened up to us by John along this line. He says, "Now are we the Sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is" and John continues, "He that hath this hope in him" (part of his make up, constantly before his mind) "Purifieth himself even as he is pure."

God is calling us to the highest station ever offered to members of the fallen race, and the Bible exhorts us to keep this thought ever before our minds lest we slacken our hand, become lukewarm, lose interest, give up trying and possibly faint by the way. A Christian without this hope is like a human without life, having no interest in anything (1 Cor. 15, 19, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.") Let our hope then be definite; a living thing, stirring us up to constant effort in the way of the Lord; for faithful is He who has promised and who is able to perform it.

(To be concluded).



APOCALYPTIC ORIGINS.

No. 5. "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah."

"Weep not, behold the Lion of the Tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev. 5: 5).

One of the most arresting features of this wonderful Throne-Scene is the appearance in the midst of this august assembly of a most unusual creature, for whose coming the assembled Court had long been waiting. A mighty angel had interrogated heaven and earth in an endeavour to discover some worthy agent who had become qualified to take, from the hands of Him that sat upon the Throne, the Sealed Book, and having taken it to break its seals. But no one had been found worthy to undertake the task. "I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon," says John. While thus overcome with grief one of the

Elders, comforting him, said "Weep not, behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seals thereof."

Responding to this encouragement John turned to look again at the hitherto waiting scene, "and lo, in the midst of the Throne and of the four Beasts, and of the Elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain." The Elder said a 'lion' had prevailed to take the book, yet it was a 'Lamb as it had been slain' that came forward to receive it! The Elder said the Lion had won the honour of loosing the seals, yet it was the Lamb which actually did so! Evidently there must be some close connection between the 'Lion' and the 'Lamb' for the Lamb becomes participator in the Lion's victory. From that point on the Lion is mentioned no more, and all that follows in the breaking of

the seals is accomplished by the Lamb alone. Thus it seems that the Lamb becomes both successor and superseder of the Lion, enjoying the fruits of the Lion's victory, to which fruits it added its own (Rev. 5: 7-10).

John was not permitted to see the Lion in the act of prevailing—for the fact of its victory was made known only by the words of an Elder. But how, when or where it had prevailed was not made known, nor was it disclosed over who or what it had prevailed! That information is left to seek, when the inner meaning concerning Judah's Lion has been ascertained.

What does this title indicate? Why is the Lion of Judah introduced so briefly behind the scenes and then withdrawn, leaving to the Lamb all the praise and adoration from the Elders and the vast angelic throng?

There is no other reference to the Lion of Judah throughout the Book of Revelation, nor for that matter through the whole New Testament. Hence we must seek for evidences concerning it elsewhere—in the ancient records of the Fathers.

It is the death-bed scene of Jacob to which we must turn to begin the enquiry. (Gen. 49). Here, for the first time in Holy Writ, the name of Judah is conjoined with the characteristics of a lion, and here, under the designation of 'Shiloh' is made known the later 'coming' of the One for whom Judah's brethren would wait, and to whom, when He came, his people would be gathered.

The opening sentence of the aged patriarch's words should not be overlooked. Calling his children round his dying bed, the old man said "Gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days" (v. 1). Speaking under inspiration the fast-failing father told his sons of things that lay far forward on the stream of time, yet, in so doing, he interwove the characteristics and experiences of each son, as he, their father, saw and knew them, into the prophetic outline of their tribal development. The Spirit of God through Jacob's lips was pointing to a far future day when the outstanding characteristics of each son would have developed into the traits and qualities of whole tribes, sprung respectively from each son. Jacob spake to and of each son, as each son then was—some action, some peculiarity which distinguished each son from each other son, but beyond the paternal intent, the Spirit of God gave prophecies of greater depth which only later ages

are able to appreciate. Thus he chided Reuben for 'disrespect to his own father's honour; but along with the chiding are words of prophetic meaning. He denounced Simeon and Levi for one ruthless experience that dishonoured Jacob's name (Gen. 34: 25-30), but added words prophetic of later days.

For Judah he had only words of praise to utter and went on to outline a royal future for Judah's seed. "Judah" he said "thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise . . . thy father's children shall bow down before thee, . . . the Sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh come, and to him shall the gathering of the people be." Royal dignity was thus foretold for Judah's seed.

This regality was based upon a trait visible in the life and conduct of Judah himself. "Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; he stooped down, he couched down as a lion, and as an old lion who shall rouse him up?" As a lion among its prey, swift, strong, invincible—dangerous to challenge or arouse,—so was Judah, in his father's eyes, among his brethren. This may be seen in his initiative and suggestion to sell rather than agree to the killing of Joseph as reprisal for his dreams. Wicked and despicable though the sale of Joseph really was, it turned aside the more wicked intentions of some seven or eight of his less worthy brethren. To sell him would keep him alive, and might afford some opportunity of release or rescue later. Again, in Egypt, when Jacob's sons had bought their corn, and Pharaoh's cup was found in Benjamin's sack, necessitating Benjamin to stay behind, Judah, it was, who rose to the occasion and offered himself as substitute to obtain Benjamin's release. Already he had pledged himself to his father as Benjamin's security (Gen. 43, 8), accepting the life-long blame should he fail to restore the lad safely to his doting sire. When Jacob sought to send them again to buy more corn, unaccompanied by Benjamin, he replied respectfully but firmly, "If thou wilt not send him with us, we will **not go down**" (Gen. 43: 5). Against the traditional claims of patriarchal authority, this was a daring thing to do, yet he performed it with such tact and force, that he won his father's consent. Thus, in many ways, Judah was shown to be dominant among his brethren, possessed of leadership and spokesman-ship of quick initiative and resolute purpose. Even at that time his brethren "gathered" to him, and, at need, he turned their baser motives to

better ends. He was endowed with those very gifts which bloomed into beauty in his descendant, David,—and which will reach its fullest bloom in David's greater Son.

But Judah's greatest quality is recorded for us in the words "Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up..." (Gen. 49: 9). Here is a word-picture of a young lion, having taken its 'fill' from its father's 'kill,' seeking a likely spot to sleep it off. Coiling itself up in its lair, it dares any of its brother-whelps to rouse or disturb it. Judah as 'a lion's whelp' was the son of the aged lion, Jacob, who had had a choice carcass on which to feed. He had had God's ample promises, and particularly the re-affirmed Oath-bound Covenant as his portion, and on this portion Judah was eager to feed, even in the presence of the old lion. Jacob's portion contained, among various other things, the promise of future royalty for his seed. "... kings shall come out of thy loins" said the Most High to Jacob (Gen. 35: 11). This was not exactly a new feature of the Covenant, for the same thing had been affirmed by God to Abraham and Sarah when He made promise to them of a son, "... kings of people shall be of her" God said to them concerning Sarah (Gen. 17: 16). "Kings shall come out of thee," God said to Abraham (Gen. 17: 6).

Woven into the warp of that great Covenant of promise, which promised first a 'seed' through which to bless, and then a blessing for all nations through that 'seed,' was the golden strand of royalty. God purposed that of Sarah's seed kings should be born, and that her lineage should govern and control. This purpose was re-affirmed to Jacob, for his seed, and was (in contrast to Esau), among the dearest treasures of his heart. Looking forward down the years, the while he gazed upon his sons, he saw Judah as the fittest man to inherit this kingly promise, and thus with God's hand upon him the aged man passed on his inheritance in the Abrahamic-Sarah promise to his son. Thus the promise of a royal line passed from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob to Judah his assertive great-grandson. And Judah had shown himself a vigorous 'whelp' in appropriating and feeding upon that royal expectation, daring his brethren to deprive him of his 'meat,' or challenge him for the leadership.

Thus the expectation concerning future 'Kings,' and of a seed competent to bless the nations of whom God spake to Abraham and

Sarah, centred itself in Judah's line and should never leave that line till the "Bringer of Peace" could come.

It was thus provided that Judah's commanding and directing personal traits portended the ampler development of the kingly characteristics as time passed by. Judah himself was a 'lion' among his brethren, yet a greater than Judah, but of his lineage, was destined to come, who would be Sarah's kingliest child, and Judah's most lion-like Son, of whom David and Jerusalem's noblest kings were but as signposts by the way. Not Judah, nor David, nor 'Solomon in all his glory,' nor any other king among God's ancient people was the real focus of the Divine intent, but One, greater than all, who was the Lion dominant above all of Judah's line. He it was (**Shiloh**) who would bring peace (**Shalom**) to the divided warring nations of the world,—for "to Him shall the gathering of the people be." The 'Lion of the Tribe of Juda' indicates royal power and expectation, and connects that unwitnessed Conqueror (of whom the Elder spake) back to that wondrous day when God told the childless pair that Sarah should yet bear a son. It connects also to Jacob's inheritance in that promise, and to Judah's, then to David's also. Thus it comes about that Judah's royal Lion is also David's primal 'Root.' In God's intent, 'Shiloh' was before them all. "Before Abraham was Shiloh was." Thus when He had come to earth, our Lord could say "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8: 58). But in Judah's distant day Shiloh was yet to come—and for long years men spake of him as "He that shall come." In the beginnings of things in ancient time God set forth to begin a great work, and for that work He designed among other things to bring forward a great Commander and King. This Divine intention, revealed to Abraham and Sarah first, repeated to Jacob next, and passed on to Judah for his seed, envisaging this great One yet to come, was the deep root from which sprang David's Throne.

Connected with the Throne-Scene, therefore, was the greatest Son of Judah's royal line. That royal line had failed at many points throughout its long career. David himself—God's chosen man—carried war, not peace, throughout the land (2 Sam. 17: 8; 2 Sam. 22: 35-45). He was a man of 'blood' (1 Chron. 28: 3). He was not Shiloh. Most of his successors too were men of war, and failed utterly to reach up to God's great ideal. But the promise cannot fail, for the mouth of the

(Concluded on page 72.)

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

BEGIN THE DAY WITH GOD.

Begin the day with God!
 He is thy Sun and Day!
 His is the radiance of thy dawn;
 To Him address thy lay.
 Sing a new song at morn!
 Join the glad woods and hills;
 Join the fresh winds and seas and plains,
 Join the bright flowers and rills.
 Sing thy first song to God!
 Not to thy fellow men;
 Not to the creatures of His hand,
 But to the glorious One.
 Take thy first walk with God!
 Let Him go forth with thee;
 By stream, or sea, or mountain path,
 Seek still His company.
 Thy first transaction be
 With God Himself above;
 So shall thy business prosper well,
 And all the day be love

Horatius Bonar.

THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER.

Prayer is a privilege, Jesus did not command His disciples to pray, nor did He even give them a form of prayer until they requested it. "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." The Lord's people must feel their need of Divine grace and help in order to appreciate the privilege of approaching the throne of Heavenly grace. The trials and difficulties, the sorrows and temptations of life frequently impel God's children to prayers. It marks a better, a higher Christian development when they love to come to the throne of grace, not only in their sorrows, but also in their joys to give thanks, to praise, to worship, to adore.

"BEHOLD HE PRAYS" (Acts 9:11).

Ananias, apprised of this in Saul, had full evidence of the change in his character, and was convinced that he ought to lay aside all his former views and at once to seek him and acknowledge him as a brother. It is a sufficient indication of the character of any man to say, "Behold he prays." It at once tells us, better than volumes would without this, his real character. Knowing this we know all about him. It is at once an indication of his state with God and the pledge that he will do his duty to men.

(Selected).

BE OF GOOD CHEER, IT IS I (Matt. 14:27).

The disciples in their fishing boats experienced contrary winds and found the rowing toilsome. In the night they saw what they supposed to be an apparition, a spirit manifestation in human form, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass by their boat. They cried out, for all saw it and felt troubled. Then they heard a voice saying, "It is I, be not afraid." Jesus got into the boat with them and the wind ceased, to their amazement, for they had already forgotten the lesson of the previous afternoon—the feeding of the five thousand with the five loaves and two fishes.

In addition to seeing in this a further manifestation of Divine power operating through the Redeemer, we may see a further suggestion of a spiritual lesson. No doubt, after the Master's ascension, the disciples felt themselves very much alone in the midst of a contrary people and found progress difficult and all their experiences stormy.

It would help them to look back to this occasion and to remember the Master's ability to come to them off the troubled seas, and how His coming brought peace and quiet.

Thus their hearts may have been led to look for Him who said to them, "I will never leave or forsake thee;" and again, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." And this precious lesson still holds good for all the Lord's people, He is with them continually to sanctify to them their deepest distress.

* * * *

The hammer of Thy discipline, O Lord,
 Strikes fast and hard. Life's anvil rings again
 To Thy strong strokes. And yet we know 'tis then
 That from the heart's hot iron all abroad
 The rich glow spreads. Great Fashioner Divine,
 Who spareth not, in Thy far-seeing plan,
 The blows that shape the character of man,
 Or fire that makes him yield to touch of Thine,
 Strike on, then, if Thou wilt! For Thou alone
 Canst rightly test the temper of our will,
 Or tell how these base metals may fulfil
 Thy purpose—making all our life Thine own.
 Only we do beseech Thee, let the pain
 Of fiery ordeals through which we go
 Shed all around us such a warmth and glow,
 Such cheerful showers of sparks in golden rain,
 That hard hearts may be melted, cold hearts fired,
 And callous hearts be taught to feel and see
 That discipline is more to be desired
 Than all the ease that keeps us back from Thee.

A FURTHER SUGGESTION on MATTHEW 27; 52-53

These notes have been submitted by a contributor as an examination of these verses from an angle not touched upon in the article in February issue.

To students of the Bible this scripture has been difficult to reconcile with other features of the Divine Plan. The late Pastor Russell had doubts concerning the authenticity of the passage but he was unable, in spite of exhaustive enquiry to find evidence which would warrant its rejection as a whole; and he recommended its acceptance in the form given in the Sinaitic MS.

The preferred reading is:—

"And the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and many bodies of the saints who had slept aroused, and (coming out of the tombs after his rousing into the holy city) appeared unto many."

There is, of course no punctuation in the Sinaitic MS, but as KAI (and) is missing after the word "city" the parenthesis appears necessary to present the text to the English reader. The **punctuation** suggested above should be accepted with all reserve.

It is possible to understand the verse to imply **either** that He was raised to the Holy city or that the saints went to the holy city.

The terms used strongly suggest that the description is that of a **vision**. This will be clear if the account is compared with that of the "vision on the mount." (Matt. 17; 1-9). In both instances the event is recorded as **seen by the witnesses**. In both cases **nothing more is witnessed after the occurrence**.

Jesus told Peter, James and John not to tell the vision to anyone, the vision (like that of Daniel) to be kept a secret until a later time.

The vision of the awakened saints was not again seen after it had been recorded on the minds of the witnesses.

It is significant that the raising (whether of the saints or the Lord) is **into the holy city**. If the saints walked the streets of Jerusalem, why is that not stated? The term "holy city" directs our attention to the "holy city," "New Jerusalem." Rev. 21; 2.

The word from which "appeared" is translated is **emphanizo** which is **never used to describe an ocular demonstration**.

Emphanizo is translated "declare plainly," once; "inform" three times; "manifest," twice; "show," once; "signify," once; and "appear," twice. The passages in which **emphanizo** is

used are:—

1. For they that say such things **declare plainly** that they seek a country. (Heb. 11; 14).

2. A certain orator, Tertullus, who **informed** the governor against Paul. (Acts 24; 1).

3. The Jews **informed** against Paul. (Acts 25; 12).

4. The chief priests and elders **informed** me. (Acts 25; 15).

5. I will love him and **manifest** myself to him. (John 14; 21).

6. Judas said, . . . Lord, how is it that thou wilt **manifest** thyself unto us, and not to the world. (John 14; 22).

7. So the Chief captain let the young man depart and charged him, see thou tell no man that thou has **showed** me these things. (Acts 23; 22). (The things "shown" were the things told to the chief captain).

8. Now therefore . . . **signify** to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you tomorrow. (Acts 23; 15).

9. Now to **appear** in the presence of God for us. (Heb. 9; 24). (To "appear" in this case is to **officiate** as advocate).

Visions are rather like luggage labelled "not wanted on the voyage." Such luggage is often the most valuable and when the voyage is over the carefully packed treasures are brought to light for display and use.

The vision of the rising saints (holy ones) is descriptive of the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." (Rev. 20; 6).

Notice also the promise to the Church in Philadelphia: "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem."

Students who have studied the Parallel Dispensations will remember how the Jewish Age and the Gospel Age follow similar courses, and that the "harvest is the end of the Age."

The events of our Lord's time on earth have their counterpart or fulfilment when He comes again, and we should look for the fulfilment of those things He taught by parable, sign and vision. Our Lord, when he spake, was often misunderstood because His words were obscure. He purposely spoke in parables to **hide** His meaning, but He did not speak needlessly, because He said the word which men rejected would judge them in the last day. (John 12; 48).

CHARACTER STUDIES

FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.



2. MICAIAH.

A Prophet who was truthful.

In order to understand the account given in 1 Kings 22, we need to consider first the conditions prevailing at the time. Ahab King of Israel is at war with Syria. In 1 Kings 20, Benhadad, a luxurious and insolent braggart, has demanded the unconditional surrender and plunder of Samaria and Ahab has refused. A prophet of God assures him of successful resistance. It would seem that Jezebel's influence has temporarily waned, for we find prophetic authority being exercised and a large school of the prophets in existence. Apparently Baal worship has declined and the worship of Jehovah in a very imperfect way has been restored.

The Syrians are defeated twice with great slaughter and the King, Benhadad, captured. Some of the leading Syrians come in abject humility to Ahab to plead for the best terms possible. Ahab shows an unexpected clemency, makes a treaty with Benhadad and, after extracting a promise from the Syrian King to restore certain cities to Israel, lets him go free.

Instructed by the Lord, a prophet disguises himself as a wounded soldier with bandage over his head and appears before Ahab with the strange tale that while the battle was raging a Syrian prisoner had been entrusted to his care, with the warning that if the man was allowed to escape the keeper's life would be forfeited, and the disguised prophet says, very naively, "And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." The King very naturally replies, "Well, you have pronounced your own fate. Your life must go for his life." Then the prophet takes off the bandage and his disguise and discloses himself as a prophet and explains his acted parable. "Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life and thy people for his people." The historian adds "And the King of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased and came to Samaria."

It is three years later that we come to the events of 1 Kings 22; the story of Micaiah the son of Imlah. During these years there had been reigning in the neighbouring Kingdom of Judah a man of a distinctly different type, Jehoshaphat. He was a good king, walking in the righteous way of David his ancestor. The

Lord prospered his reign and he became rich and powerful, but during this rise to prosperity he had thought it wise to cement a friendship with his powerful ally Ahab by marrying his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah, and now, eight years after that event, Jehoshaphat goes down to Samaria on a friendly visit. Ahab receives him with royal hospitality, kills sheep and oxen in abundance. This is part of a deliberate plan for obtaining Jehoshaphat's cooperation in the projected campaign against the Syrians. Ramoth Gilead, an Israelite town, was still in the hands of the Syrians, who, according to the unfortunate treaty made with Benhadad, had agreed to restore it but had not done so. Ahab asks Jehoshaphat if he will join with him in the expedition and Jehoshaphat consents but would like to have prophetic advice. Ahab probably thought this a foolish weakness of his ally but strove to humour him, so four hundred prophets are summoned. These would not be Baal prophets or those of Ashereth such as Elijah had contended with. These spoke in the name of the Lord as verse 12 indicates, but Jehoshaphat is not satisfied. Perplexed by the din it is clear that they were not in his view true prophets of Jehovah. He is accustomed to enquiring of the Lord through the person of **one** man, the High Priest at the temple. They had used the word **Adonai** which might mean the Supreme God of any religion and Jehoshaphat, struck with their shrinking from the distinctive name **Jehovah**, asks, "Is there not here a prophet of Jehovah? One who is not ashamed or afraid to speak in **His** awful name?"

Ahab's keen discernment read at once Jehoshaphat's secret dissatisfaction. He knew where to find such a prophet but he would not willingly produce him. He had had some bitter experience with that man Micaiah. He recalled to mind the day when he had sent Benhadad away in peace and had been suddenly confronted by a prophet. How often the words had recurred to him since "thy life shall go for his life." No wonder with a burst of anger Ahab says, "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me but evil." Jehoshaphat's courteous disclaimer is an irresistible demand for his presence, so Micaiah is sum-

moned, probably from prison. An officer is sent to fetch him.

Elijah's trial at Carmel was in some respects easier than Micaiah's. In that case it was the servant of Jehovah against the sham gods, Baal and Ashteroth. Elijah had stood single handed against four hundred and fifty prophets, the King and his court, and triumphed. Micaiah's test was far subtler of approach and so far more difficult, for these men professed themselves prophets of the Lord. In the name of Jehovah they had uttered their predictions (verse 12). Probably to many, if not to all of them, there had been a time when the true voice visited them; the gift, like all God's gifts, could be turned by the receiver to evil use. He might trifle with it, dumb its utterance through fear of man, pervert it for gifts and rewards, like Balaam, and as he thus trifled with the great power he drove away its presence and an evil spirit came and dwelt there. He became a false prophet, a prophet of lies. We read not so much of the false prophets prophesying consciously a lie as of their seeing lying visions and so uttering deceptions. Micah portrays this condition of things in Micah 3: 5-7.

While the officer has gone to fetch Micaiah, verse 11 tells of one of these false prophets, Zedekiah. As the name means "Righteousness of Jehovah," it is quite possible that he was once a true prophet of God but had lost the true vision by a desire to curry royal favour. Anyway he joins in the unanimous voice of the other prophets and declares that the expedition against the Syrians will be successful. Their united reiteration of the cry, evidently with increasing excitement, reminds us of the repeated, "O Baal, hear us" of Mount Carmel and stands in similar contrast with the calm stern utterance of the true prophet.

In verse 13 the man who has gone to summon Micaiah appears to give the prisoner friendly advice. He acquaints him with what is going on, tells him of the united advice of the prophets and advises him for his own safety and possible release from prison to agree with the popular voice. There is in the whole incident, especially in the words of this officer, evidence of the strange confusion of ideas so common in superstition at all times, which in some sense believes in the inspiration of the prophets as coming from God, yet fancies that they can direct it as they will and that accordingly they can be bribed or beguiled or coerced to speak smooth things. The extreme form of this infatuation is exemplified in the case of

Simon Magus, who believed the Apostles were the medium for conferring the highest spiritual gifts from God and yet madly persuaded himself that this power could be bought for money (Acts 8: 18). The delusion is silenced by the stern reply of Micaiah, "As the Lord liveth, what Jehovah saith unto me, that will I speak."

Micaiah is brought out of the darkness of his prison into the full glare of a Syrian noon day sun. It is a magnificent scene; there are the two Kings resplendent in their robes of silk and purple and gold, surrounded by all the glint of pomp and ceremonial display. Courtiers, magnificent in their dress and overbearing in their pride are numerous, and at a respectful distance are the prophets keeping up their repeated adjurations to the Kings to go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper. All around are the people and probably the troops.

Amidst this crowd the single prophet stood. To him the dull stillness of the dungeon has been suddenly exchanged for the eager interrogation of the King, the angry taunts of the prophets and the deep expectant hum of the people. All around an eager sea of faces. A weaker heart might have fainted under the heaviness of the burden laid upon him. Not so Micaiah; he was strong in the power of Jehovah and felt no fear.

The King puts the formal question and Micaiah repeats the refrain of the prophets with their exact words, "Go, and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the King." Micaiah is a true disciple of Elijah in the defiant irony of the tone in which he takes up and mocks the utterance of the false prophets so bitterly as at once to show Ahab his scorn of them and him.

In verse 17 Micaiah drops the bantering tone and prophesies the defeat of the army which has become leaderless, and the King's worst fears are confirmed; Micaiah has as usual prophesied evil. But Micaiah is not finished; he has more to say from the Lord (verses 19-23). "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee."

Zedekiah shows his contempt by striking Micaiah on the cheek. He professes indignation at words of blasphemy against God and of contempt for His prophets and sarcastically enquires how Micaiah came to know the secret dealings and counsels of God, with the idea of turning Micaiah's words into ridicule, but Micaiah ignores his words and merely declares

the shame and terror with which Zedekiah shall find out, hereafter, the truth of his words.

Ahab's affectation of disbelief, which his subsequent conduct shows to be but affectation, simply draws down a plainer and sterner prediction accompanied by an appeal to the whole assembly to bear witness of it. "If you return at all in peace, Jehovah hath not spoken by me. Hearken O people, everyone of you."

What courage, what bravery! He was resolute in face of danger. A few hours later all was accomplished. The session is ended, the royal train rolls proudly back to the ivory

palace of Ahab, the company of the prophets whose voice of counsel has prevailed sweeps triumphantly away and the crowd melts and disperses. The one man with whom was Jehovah's presence is led back, dishonoured, smitten and reviled to eat prison bread and drink its water.

A few days later, a King, dying on Gilead's mountains, an army slaughtered and scattered and fugitive attested the truth of Micaiah's words "If thou return at all in peace the Lord hath not spoken by me."



LUCIFER, THE PRINCE OF EVIL.



Chapter 4. *The Wages of Sin*

Looking down from his spiritual habitation on high, Lucifer saw the idyllic happiness of man and woman, as they entered upon their task of subduing the earth and making it fruitful. No shadow of sin was there, no suspicion of the terrible calamity which was about to befall them and shatter the felicity of Paradise; but with joy and peace they went about their daily tasks and interests, all oblivious of the sullen brooding of the "covering cherub" gazing down upon a world he hoped soon to conquer for himself.

So rises the curtain upon the drama of sin and death. "And the serpent was more subtil than any of the beasts of the field which the Lord God had made." Thus wrote the ancient historian who first recorded the tragedy of those far-off days. "The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty" says Paul (II Cor. 2: 3), and again "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (I, Tim. 2: 14). These plain statements are sufficient assurance that sin entered into the world as the result of a deliberate deception practised by one who used his superior powers to first captivate and then capture the man and woman whom God had created.

The simplicity of the story commends itself to every reader. God told Adam in effect what Paul said to the Romans many thousands of years later; "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6: 23). The promise to Adam was one of continued life in his Edenic home whilst he obeyed the laws of his being, the laws of Nature, the laws of his Creator and God; and the result of disobedience could only be death—an ending of conscious existence and all part in its possibilities and blessings. A direct con-

tradiction to the words of God was offered by what has been described as "Satan's monumental lie." "Ye shall not surely die" and the grim story of death throughout the ages has amply demonstrated its falsity. "He was a liar and a murderer from the beginning" said our Lord (John 8: 44) and from the day that Abel lay, a corpse, upon the ground, men have known that sin and death go hand in hand together.

The baseness of Satan's character is nowhere more manifest than in the story of Job. "There was a day" says the ancient chronicler "when the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them" (Job 1: 6). It is quite possible to translate this word by "adversary," as though one opposing spirit was found in the company of this angelic throng, but the fact that the story centres around a dialogue between the Most High and this "Satan" who appeared among the angelic sons of God, leads to the conclusion that we have here a "tableau" depicting Good and Evil face to face with each other over the question of man and his destiny—and that just as the one figure is that of God Himself, the Creator and preserver of man, so the other is man's enemy and destroyer, Satan, Prince of Evil. Job himself would then represent mankind, originally constituted prosperous and wealthy and in full harmony with God.

It is across this pleasant picture that the voice of the Accuser cuts like a whiplash, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" The sneering innuendo comes to us down the ages with all the malignance of its original tones. "Touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job 1: 11). By Divine permission, the

machinations of Satan bore fruit in the loss of all mankind's rich possessions in the earth and the giving over of man himself to the corrupting influences of disease and death.

At this point Satan disappears from the story. It is note-worthy that he is not pictured as being present to witness the ultimate restoration of Job to life, health and prosperity. This fact is an additional indication of the doom which awaits the great enemy of God. He contrived the fall into sin, and has witnessed its course through thousands of years of human history; but he will not see that glorious condition of things beyond the ending of the Millennial Age, when "all that hath breath shall praise the Lord." Rev. 20; 10, speaks of the devil being cast into the fiery lake—the second death—prior to the time when, evil having been completely banished, mankind will be ushered into the "inheritance prepared for them from before the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25; 34).

If Satan is shown as the enemy of mankind, of the world at large, in the book of Job, it seems equally certain that he is shown as the enemy of the Church in the book of Zechariah. Here again the presentation is in the form of an allegory, or as students of the Bible would say, in symbolic language. Moreover the setting is one which suggests that the Church of Christ is pictured. In the case of Job the setting is exclusively earthly. The patriarch himself is enjoying all the good things of this life—wife, children, houses, lands, possessions of all kinds; loses them all by reason of the machinations of Satan; and eventually receives them back in richer measure than before. All this is a perfect picture of man's happiness in Eden, his subsequent loss of all things by reason of the Fall, and his eventual attainment of even greater blessings of an earthly nature when the "Times of Restitution" have done their work. But in the Zechariah account (Zech. chap. 3) the picture is entirely different—it is only Satan, the accuser, who still appears unchanged. "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" (Zech. 3; 1-2).

The Joshua here referred to was High Priest of Israel in Zechariah's own day. The general purpose of the Book of Zechariah is the an-

nouncement of God's intention to restore and build Israel in the land and to cleanse the people from all their unrighteousness. Some portions of the prophecy find their fulfilment in the rebuilding of Israel's national existence after the return from Babylon, but its grandest flights belong unmistakably to the events which culminate in the Millennial Age and the universal Kingdom of "righteousness. Hence much of the prophecy takes on the form of a symbolic portrayal in which the actors and characters each point forward to some greater anti-type. In this chapter Joshua prefigures the Church of the Gospel Age. We have the reference in verse 2, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire" and also the intimation in verse 3, "Joshua was clothed in filthy garments." Joshua is clothed with change of raiment and a "pure" mitre set upon his head, ceremonially cleansed and all his iniquity caused to pass from him (verse 4). Then comes the Divine charge in verse 7, "If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also keep my courts—" which finds its parallel in the promises, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne"; "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world." Satan is pictured standing by as if to prevent this symbolic clothing of Joshua with the new and clean raiment, just as the great enemy endeavours to prevent each member of the Church of this Age from receiving and retaining that "robe of righteousness" which is the Divine gift. Nevertheless as in the case of Job, so in this story; Satan disappears from view and is not seen when the end of the vision is related, when those here prefigured by Joshua have attained their exalted station to be kings and priests with Christ and the final scene of the vision is fulfilled (vs. 9 & 10), in a "day" when the iniquity of the land is removed and every man is called to sit under his own vine and fig-tree. The power of Satan to deceive any man will then be broken, for he himself will have been cast into the abyss to deceive the nations no more. (Rev. 20; 2).

This picture in Zechariah therefore tells the same story as that in Job, that Satan is permitted to bring all his powers to bear on both the Church and world in the endeavour to draw them away from faith in and loyalty to God. He does not succeed. In the case of the Church, whose trial is during this Age, his efforts are finally frustrated when, at the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus

Christ, the last members of His Church are "changed" to be with Him and "shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13; 43), forever beyond the power of Satan. So far as mankind generally are concerned, the twentieth chapter of Revelation makes it plain that during the Millennial Age when all men are walking in the light of God's kingdom upon earth, Satan is to be bound, restrained, unable to deceive the nations. The same wonderful imagery goes on to picture a time when Satan, released for "a little season" (Rev. 20; 3) from his prison, will attempt to deceive and enslave the nations once again. Still unrepentant, still set in irrevocable rebellion against God, he will go out as did the hosts of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel's day, with the intention of utterly destroying and laying waste the fair Millennial world.

But this time the Divine permission will be withdrawn. He who, for a wise and far-seeing purpose, permitted Satan to ensnare and enslave mankind at the outset of their existence upon earth, and allowed him to hold men in the grip of sin and death throughout the long millenniums of human history, will now bring

to bear all the force of His outraged justice upon the one who has perpetuated sin through the ages. One short, sharp testing time, and all who, despite the full light and knowledge of that blessed day, choose the side of sin and Satan will in company with that archangel of evil enter into the death from which there is no awakening. They will have despised and misused the Divine gift of life. Their continued existence would give no glory to God and bring no happiness to themselves. For all such, as for Lucifer himself, there remains nothing but the blackness of darkness for ever.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning; how are thou cut down to the ground, which didst destroy the nations . . . For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit in the Mount of the Assembly, in the uttermost parts of the north; I will be equal to the Most High . . . Yet thou shalt be brought down to Sheol, to the sides of the pit. Thou shalt be consumed as ashes upon the earth, and never shalt thou be any more."

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES TO SATAN.

His Creation Ezek 28
 " fall Isa 14 Ezek 28 Luke 10; 18
 " ultimate fate Ezek 28; 19 Matt. 25 41 Rom 16;20
 Heb. 2; 10 Rev. 12; 9-12 20; 2-10
 The adversary of Jesus Matt 4; 10 Mark 1; 13
 " the Church Zech. 3; 1-2 Mark
 4; 15 Rom. 16: 20
 I Pet. 5; 8 II Cor. 2; 11 11; 14
 12; 7 I Thess. 2; 18 Rev. 2; 10
 Power in world affairs I Cor. 5; 5 II Thess. 2; 9 I Tim
 1; 20 Rev. 2; 13 12; 9
 " over mankind Job 1; 42 Luke 4; 6 13; 16 Acts
 5; 3 10; 38 26; 18 I Cor. 5; 5 7; 5 II Cor.
 4; 4 I Tim. 1; 20 5; 15 Rev. 2; 9, 13, 24
 3; 9 12; 9
 " over fallen angels Eph. 6; 12 Matt. 25; 41
 Jesus' victory over Satan Matt. 4; 10 Mark 1; 13 Luke
 4; 38 Heb. 2; 14 I Jno. 3; 8
 Church's victory over Satan Rom. 16; 20 Eph. 4; 27
 6; 11 I Tim. 3; 6-7 II Tim 2; 26 Jas. 4; 7
 I Pet. 5; 8 Acts 26; 18
 His opposition to Kingdom of God Matt 4; 10 12; 26
 Mark 4; 15
 Satan and Ananias Acts 5; 3
 " Job Job 1; 6 2; 7
 " Judas Jno. 13; 27 Luke 22; 3
 " Michael Jude 9
 " Peter Lu'e 22; 31
 " woman bound 18 years Luke 13; 15
 Beguiled Eve Gen. 3 II Cor 11; 3 I Tim. 2; 14
 Casting out Satan Matt. 12; 26 Mark 3; 23-26 Luke
 11; 18
 Cause of Sin Gen. 3 Luke 13; 16 II Cor. 11; 3
 I Jno. 3; 8

Children of Satan Jno. 8; 44 Acts 13; 10 I Jno. 3; 8-10
 Fall from heaven Luke 10; 18
 His subtlety Gen. 3; 1 II Cor. 11; 3, 14 I Tim.
 2; 14 II Thes. 2; 9
 His synagogue Rev. 2; 9
 Murderer from
 beginning Jno. 8; 44 I Jno. 3; 8
 Plucks good seed Mark 4; 15
 Prince of this
 world Luke 4; 6 II Cor. 4; 4
 Sowed tares Matt. 13; 39
 Temptation in
 wilderness Matt. 4; 10 Mark 1; 13 Luke 4; 8
 "Satan" translated "adversary" or equivalent
 Num. 22; 32 I Sam. 29; 4 II Sam.
 19; 22 I Kin. 5; 4, 11; 14, 23, 25
 Psa. 71; 13, 109; 20, 29
 David tempted by Satan I Chron. 21; 1 compare with
 David tempted by God II Sam. 24; 1

(Concluded from page 65)

Lord hath spoken. A Son of Judah came at last (Heb. 7: 14) who, though not revealed as King, was the Lion of the Tribe of Juda. In Him all that was best in Judah reached its zenith and its destined end.

He who, as Juda's Lion, came as Israel's King, came also as a Lamb to die,—and thus it was that when John looked up expecting to see a Lion victorious and triumphant, he saw instead, a "Lamb as it had been slain."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

The death occurred on Monday, 14th April, of Bro. Frank Barber, of Stockport, aged 40 years. In August, 1917, while working as an apprentice electrician, Bro. Barber met with a serious accident, resulting in a fracture of the spine, and for over 20 years he had been confined to bed, able only to move the upper part of the body. Although often suffering great pain, our dear brother was a living testimony of patient endurance and consistent courage, never faltering in his loyalty and faithfulness to the Lord, and retaining to the last a keen and joyful interest in the Truth. His deliverance from "this body of flesh" into the fuller life beyond, marks the culmination of a hope which has burned undimmed through long years of physical suffering, and which has proved an inspiration to those who have been privileged to know him during his earthly pilgrimage.

We feel sure that the love and sympathy of all the Lord's people will go out to Sister Barber (mother) and the other members of the family who will feel the separation after so many years of loving care, but who, we know, must find cause for deep thankfulness that at last the sufferings of their dear one are finished and he has been called to that glorious reward which is laid up for all who walk faithfully in the Master's footsteps.

The funeral of Bro. Frank took place on April 18th.

OFFICE ADDRESS.

Will friends please note that letters intended for the B.S.C. office should be sent to 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex, and not to 24 Darwin Road, Welling. Although the office address was changed four months ago some friends still send their letters to the latter place, and some delay is liable to be occasioned when this is done since such letters have to be forwarded.

Friends are also asked to note that the Secretary, Bro. A. O. Hudson, has removed from 24 Darwin Road, and that his private address is now 129 Doncaster Road, Leicester.

AN OPPORTUNITY.

We have on hand several hundred copies of the booklet "God's Covenants," published by the Committee seven or eight years ago. In order to dispose of this stock we shall be pleased to send these booklets free of charge to anyone who would like a few copies if they will defray the cost of postage and packing. This offer only applies within Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Eire. For a single copy send 2d., for six copies send 6d., and for twenty-five copies send 1/-.

KINGDOM CARDS.

Although the office address has been changed it is still in order to distribute Kingdom Cards bearing the Welling address, arrangements to deal with these cards having been made until the stocks in possession of the friends are exhausted.

In this connection, should any friends be holding quantities of Kingdom Cards which they do not find possible to distribute, it will be much appreciated if they will send them to 20 Sunnymede Drive, for use by other friends who are asking for same.

THE "DAWN."

We are advised by the Dawn brethren that with a view to minimising disappointment to English readers, two copies of every issue will be sent to every English reader, by different boats, in the hope that if one copy fails to reach England the other one will. It may happen therefore in some cases that both copies will reach the addressee safely, and in such case we suggest that the extra copy be passed to other friends who may be interested. We feel that an expression of appreciation of the Dawn brethren's action in this matter will be supported by many in this country.

EVACUATION.

A sister living on the outskirts of a quiet South Midlands town would be pleased to have another (middle-aged) sister with her in her quiet home, for companionship, to share home duties and either board herself or board residence.

Enquiries relating to this offer should be sent to the office in the first place.

SENDING MONEY TO AMERICA.

It is learned from time to time that quite a few friends are under the impression that they can no longer send money to America in payment for "Herald" or "Dawn". Whilst it is true that post offices usually decline to issue money orders for this purpose, or, if issued, they are generally returned by the Censor, we wish it to be widely known that the Bible Students Committee is still able to send money to America for this purpose, and friends renewing their subscriptions through the Committee can be confident that the money will reach its destination. There is also no danger of loss in transit since the transfer is handled between British and American banks, and no cash actually crosses the Atlantic. We would therefore urge the friends not to allow thoughts of difficulty or loss deter them from renewing their subscriptions; but would point out that by sending their postal orders to the B.S.C. office they can share in the above-mentioned advantages.

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BIBLE STUDENT'S

MONTHLY

בְּרִיךְ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּרִיךְ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Blessed are ye when men curse persecute you / and shall praise say us of you / for ye shall receive the reward of the Kingdom of Heaven / for so was it written בְּרִיךְ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	All valleys shall be exalted mountains and hills shall be broken / for the Kingdom of God shall come / and the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of David / and he shall reign / for ever אֲמֵן	ye seed of Abraham his servant Jacob his chosen / in the LORD our God / his blessing be upon you / for ever אֲמֵן	And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes / and there shall be no more death / sorrow / nor crying / neither shall there be any more pain / for the former things are passed away
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JULY, 1941

Threepence

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Bible Students Committee
20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.
Telephone: VAentine 1502

Letters for attention of Committee or Secretary

Mr. A. O. Hudson,
129 Doncaster Road, Leicester

Benevolent Relief Fund

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ANNUAL ELECTION

OF

BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE.

The Election Scrutineers report that no names apart from those of brethren now serving on the Committee have been nominated. No election is possible therefore. Under the terms of the Constitution the present Committee must remain in office until a fresh one is appointed. The position thus created will be considered by the Committee and a further announcement made in due course.



APOCALYPTIC ORIGINS.

No. 6. "The Root of David." (Rev. 5; 5)

"The Lion of the Tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed . . ." So stated the re-assuring Elder to the weeping Apostle. In this statement the evident implication is that the unseen conqueror who bore the title 'the Lion of Juda' was also styled 'the Root of David'; and the implication also is that the unseen contestant prevailed both as the Lion of Judah and as the Root of David, even though he may have engaged in but one single contest.

Let us not misconstrue the text to say that the Victor became either the Lion of Judah or the Root of David as a consequence of His prevailing; as though it were 'reward for his victory. The plain intimation is that He was both 'Lion' and 'Root' while in the act of prevailing—that is, while in the act of contending. This, in turn, further implies that He was both Lion and Root prior to His prevailing, and that He entered upon His contest as the bearer of both these titles. It was as the 'Lion of the Tribe of Judah,' and as the 'Root of David' that He had fought and won.

In drawing our conclusions it will be shown that both these titles were applicable to Jesus of Nazareth prior to his crucifixion and resurrection and that the time of the 'prevailing' was during the days of His earthly ministry.

It is usual to assume that He was David's Seed, not David's Root, during His earthly life; and there are many Scriptures which teach this as a fact. That, of course, is the line of fleshly descent, and shows Jesus as descended from King David, on his mother's side. Without warrant some of the translations seek to deduce that thought from this text (see Ferrar Fenton, Twentieth Century, and Moffatt), by the introduction of the word 'scion' instead of 'root.' A careful survey of the Greek text (in Emphatic Diaglott) will show that this unseen Victor does not grow 'out of' David, but is Himself David's Root. The Greek 'Rhiza' means 'root' not an outgrowth from a root. This fact can be demonstrated by reference to both Young's and Strong's Concordances, and to Liddell and Scott's Lexicon. There is no warranty for these translations to say that He who is the Lion of Judah comes out of the Root of David.

Rotherham, Weymouth and the Diaglott translate correctly, and say that the 'Lion of

Judah,' 'the Root of David' has prevailed. As the one verb 'prevailed' covers both phrases, it must be taken that He who is the Lion of Judah is the Root of David.

The twofold aspect where one man bears relationship as 'Root' to one Divine Servant, but is Himself the outgrowth of another earlier Root, is set out in Isaiah 11: 1 and 10. In verse 1, the Prophet says: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." Here Jesse is root and stem. In verse 10, Isaiah says: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek. . . ."

Verse 1, refers to a descendant of Jesse; verse 10 refers to one from whom Jesse is descended. The Hebrew word, 'Khoter' in verse 1 means a 'twig' or 'shoot'; "Shehresh" (in verse 10) means 'to root'—'to strike down into the soil,' hence refers to the main taproot of a tree which goes downwards into the earth.

This is an exact parallel to the twofold relationship of David and this unseen conqueror, that is, if we take this unseen conqueror to be Jesus of Nazareth. As a man, Jesus was a descendant of David. David was Root, and Jesus was Branch.

But as a New Creature—the Messiah, the Christ—possessing all the prerogatives of God's anointed One, Jesus was David's Lord (Matt. 22: 41-46), and as such was David's Root, not his Son. This relationship was one the Pharisees could not account for when questioned by Jesus. They could not understand how David's Son could be his Lord.

The underlying fact of the problem is that it is not David's fleshly or paternal relationship which is under consideration in our text. It is His official or kingly standing before God and Israel to which reference is made.

It was because David bore special relationship to God and Israel that both his person and name were so important, and could be singled out from all others for the purpose of this title. David's unique position among all the kings of Israel arose out of the fact that God specifically chose him out of all Israel, and swore an oath to him that his house and kingdom should be established forever (Psa. 89: 20-37). The Prophet Nathan said ". . . thy kingdom shall be established for ever" (2 Sam.

7: 16). Later kings reigned over Judah because they were David's seed—they reigned for their father's sake, but David was chosen for his own sake (2 Sam. 7: 8).

David's throne was the 'Throne of the Lord.' (2 Chron. 29: 23). At the same time it was the result of the crystallisation of thought and desire among the tribes of Israel over several centuries of ineffective tribe-life. Long after their entry into the Promised Land the tribal rather than the national outlook prevailed. Apart from the Priesthood, with its centre at Hebron or Shiloh, there was neither man nor institution which could serve as a rallying-centre for all the tribes, to gather them as an effective striking force for the defence of their common fatherland. They dwelt together like clans, each with separate interests during most of the "Judges" period, combining only when some strong personality arose to 'judge' Israel.

The rise of strong 'powers' among the people adjacent to their borders at last drove the whole people to ask for a king who could lead them to battle and establish ordered justice among them (1 Sam. 8). The first king was a failure. God removed him and then set up David in his place. By this time the idea of having a king and a central throne had taken deep root. Co-incident with the growth of this idea there grew up also the sense of nationhood. The tribal interest gave place to the national interest, and thus they attained, under their two illustrious kings, to greatness and predominance in the earth.

David's 'throne' was, at once, the representation of their national unity and greatness, and additionally of the Lord's choice and appointment. The nation's desire for a king, and God's choice of its ruler found their mutual expression in the person of David—the man who, officially, was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13: 14. Acts 13: 22).

This crystallisation of the national desire occurred because they shared together mutual expectations. At the beginning of their tribal existence they enjoyed mutually certain promises bequeathed to them by their illustrious Father, who told them that they would one day be gathered into closer union under the banner of a great Commander and King.

On his death-bed Jacob had made reference to the coming of One to whom the gathering of the people should take place. (Gen. 49: 10).

In the expansive reign of David, as nation after nation became tributary to David, or sought alliance with Israel, it could have seemed

to Israel as though Jacob's promise were come to fruition. But not so, for after David's death and Solomon's glorious reign the nation became divided, and the rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah came into being. Never again did they unite either inside or outside the Promised Land, nor will they do so till the times of Restoration have fully come.

The kingship which came to its maturity and zenith in David had its roots deeply sunk in the oath-bound (Covenant) promise made to their great Father, Abraham.

It was because of the 'royalty' promise made to Abraham and Sarah that the 'Throne of David' had to arise. God's promise to that worthy pair, and its subsequent re-affirmation to Isaac and Jacob, taught them to know that Divine intent purposed and had created an office (a post, or position) of great authority before the Almighty had brought forward the man to fill it. God explained to them what that office would accomplish, and how it would perform its task. This patriarchal knowledge was summarised and set forth in striking language by Jacob when blessing his sons as he lay a-dying. "The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver (or commander's staff,—**Rotherham**) from between his feet until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. 49: 10).

Jacob needed not to tell his sons what Shiloh meant. He spoke about Shiloh as men speak to each other who all have mutual and common knowledge of the subject discussed. His sons knew that Shiloh would come in due time. Doubtless this was an item of common knowledge among these descendants of Abraham, and needed not to be specifically explained by Jacob when making this last prophetic utterance. Already the patriarch had instructed his sons about the wonderful promise made to his grand-father and father, and renewed again to himself, that it implied the coming, some day, of a Great One who would reverse the calamity that occurred at Shinar. He would re-gather what was scattered, and re-unite what then was dispersed.

'Shiloh' may be a difficult word for us to interpret to-day, but it caused no such difficulty to these sons of the patriarch. Translators offer a variety of meanings to us, some of whom consider it a proper name, which may, with propriety, be transferred into our tongue as a proper name. Others think of it as indicative of a state of tranquillity and peace, into which state all the people will eventually be gathered,

But man's inability to break down all separating barriers and restore peace among the nations implies the need for help from outside human-kind. The re-establishment of peace requires a 'Peace-bringer,' and that was exactly what God had promised to Abraham, to his son and to his grand-son. This 'peace-bringer' was the leading theme of their fervent hope. The patriarchs, catching the spirit of the Covenant of blessing, fervently desired the reign of peace in the earth; and to their understanding, the Coming One who could bring the greatly needed *Shalom* (peace) was indeed the greatly longed-for 'Shiloh.' The coming of '*Shalom*' necessitated the presence of 'Shiloh.' Thus these sons of Jacob knew that God would intervene one day, and break through into human life to set wrong things right, and warring men at peace.

God's oath-bound (Covenant) promise to the patriarchs, that He would accomplish this greatly needed reconciliation and reconstruction through their Seed, had thus taught them to realise that the Divine intent had already made provision for the great office of blesser and reconciler, before He had created the Man to fill it, but when at last the Man should arrive, he would trace descent from them. Abraham lived and died cherishing this hope; Isaac inherited this hope; Jacob received this hope, and at his death bequeathed it under God's control to Judah, his most dominant son. Thus the hope of the Coming One, passed from Abraham to Judah, and thus from Judah, the worthy David was born. The Throne of David was provided for in that great Covenant, and traces back its root, not exactly to any particular man, not Judah, nor Jacob, nor Isaac, nor even Abraham, but to the Royal Deliverer purposed by the Divine intent, Who in due time would bring peace and harmony to all people who would gather to His Throne.

That Royal Deliverer found a temporary shadowing-forth therefore in David and Solomon. From the soil of that wonderful promise there came forth the royal House of David. Its deep root, was that ideal essential Man who was big enough to take on his shoulders the reclamation and government of a world in sin—a man big enough of soul to fill the onerous office created by the Divine intent. 'Root' and 'Stem' therefore, is here a relationship primarily of office, and not merely of lineage. It is David's throne rather than David's person which forms the subject of the development, and David's throne was the outgrowth of that Divine inten-

tion enshrined in that basic promise to that worthy father and mother, who under hopeless circumstances, hoped on, and believed God could do all that He had said.

That great Covenant envisaged another Son of promise, other than Isaac. It was framed in such a way as to necessitate the coming of Christ, for whose advent into the world it prepared the way. The 'man' for whom that royal office was incorporated in the Covenant was called in the days of his flesh Jesus of Nazareth—He who to Jacob and his sons, was 'Shiloh'; to Moses and his House, 'the Messiah'; to us and all the wide world the 'Root' out of which all blessing will grow. Later generations invested this Coming One with ever new dignities, as He was seen to fill a bigger part in the Divine programme, but when all these honours and activities are traced back to their source, they trace back to the great promise made to Abraham and to the Divine intention which conceived and backed that promise with its own immutability (Heb. 6: 16).

In the Divine intention that royal Deliverer ante-dated David, and Judah, and Jacob, and even Abraham. He was part of the Plan from its beginning, in the same way that the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world. For that reason Jesus could say "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8: 58). That royal Deliverer was the 'original' of which even royal David was but a faint copy, and of whose kingdom even David's kingdom (with Israel almost at its zenith) was only a shadow. This is a vital and fundamental point, and should be carefully considered by those who think that our returning Lord will be a 'man,' and will sit upon the earthly throne of His father David. His sceptre is of greater majesty than David's; His commander's staff is of greater antiquity than David's; for it goes back to the beginning when the Plan was formed, and Abraham, Jacob, Judah, and David were but stages in His 'coming.' For Him all the Ages were framed (Heb. 1: 2), and worthy Abraham and royal David were but means to bring Him into the human world.

David was the first in whom the ancient promise blossomed into royalty. Thus David stands forth as type of that royal majesty purposed by Almighty God which would gather and unite a faithless people and through them, a fallen world. The beloved Apostle was comforted by the announcement that that royal majesty had come, and had conquered, and had presented Himself at the Court of Forfeited In-

heritances, to lay claim to the ancient heritage of His chosen people.

That royal Conqueror was hidden from the Apostle's sight. So it was in all reality. Nothing else but type and shadow had been seen. The 'Real' had been veiled. Not even they who told of 'His appearing' had any conception of His Majesty. At best they thought of Him as another David, as David's Son, and though a super-man, still only man. The 'Reality' was always behind the scenes; ever unseen, at all times undisclosed.

That which John, looking up, saw was a Lamb—a Lamb as it had been slain: When the royal Majesty came down to earth, linking Himself to Abraham and his seed (Heb. 2: 14-16) to David and his throne, it was as a 'Man' to suffer and die. The Majesty was concealed beneath the 'Sacrifice.' He who was 'big enough of soul' to compassionate a world in sin, came to bear a Cross; He whose right it was to rule, was set at naught by those He came to bless. "Behold the Lamb of God" was the highest tribute to His inestimable worth, and as "the 'Lamb' once slain" He has been thus far seen by saintliest eyes. But He was the King, greater than any of David's line—the Root from which even David's Throne came forth.

But where did He who had come down to earth 'prevail'? "If thou wilt worship me, all shall be thine" (Luke 4: 7), so said the prince of this world, as he tested Jesus' fidelity to God. "All the kingdoms of this world are mine; I give them to whom I will . . . If thou wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

The kingdoms of this world; or the Kingdom of David? The kingdom of Satan without death; or the Kingdom of God, and the pangs of death? Which would He choose? He Who was the rightful King, whose 'right it was' to reign, for whose coming all creation longed and waited, chose to become a Lamb, and gain entrance to His Kingdom through the tomb. "The Lion of Judah, the Root of David" met the great opposer, and prevailed once for all in that wilderness waste when the Man of Sorrows said "Get thee hence, Satan" and chose to stand before God and the world as "the Lamb for the slaughter." But in so doing, He made possible the great deliverance, for now He will draw all men unto Him. In very deed, He who was David's Son, entered into His sphere as David's Lord and Root. He chose David's people and David's throne, and in so doing stepped up to a greater and eternal Throne, "and to Him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. 49: 10; Isa. 11: 10).

Romans Twelve and Twelve.

There are many who, though aliens from the faith, nevertheless manifest cheerfulness, toleration and perseverance; and the Apostle could properly have incited the church to these characteristics, but he wished also to urge those virtues which the Christian must associate with joy, patience and perseverance. How can we suppose the joy of the Christian without recalling the source of his joy—hope? How can we think of his patience without remembering the tribulation that proves his patience? Or his perseverance without keeping in mind that in one thing at least he must continue without ceasing—prayer? The Christian differs from his fellow-man in that he has cause of rejoicing not enjoyed by him; distresses unknown to him; and prayers the import of which he does not fathom. The difference arises from the belief of the Christian in the sure Word.

The faith engendered in his heart is speedily followed by its companion, hope; hope takes

him mentally forward to the goal of hope—realisation; and the prospect cannot but induce joy. Therefore the Apostle says—"rejoicing in hope"—for they cannot be parted. As the day of fruition nears the hopes and therefore the joy increases; and so the Christian has in this reasoning, the means (indeed the only means) by which he can rejoice always. He must enlarge his hope and his joy by acquiring the teachings of the Word; and contrariwise, by neglect or undervaluing of the Word his hope will recede and dim, and he will suffer loss in true joy.

He must have more than a nodding acquaintance with the Word. He must make a meal of it. He must talk about it and delight in it as one that findeth great spoil. He must seek the fellowship of those who enjoy the same hope. He must have it in heart and head in such degree that when he is alone his thoughts flee this world and find lodgment in promises. And he

must make a habit of it.

This praiseworthy habit can be induced just like all habits—good or bad. Habits grow. Christendom grew into the bad habit of not searching the scriptures daily but relying upon those who failed to read in the Book distinctly and give the sense. They quickly lost hope; and needing some consolation asked their teachers for prophesy smooth things. At long last there arose those who urged more Bible study, more proving of all things; with the result that Christian hopes long obscured were brought again to light and joy in the Lord revived. This being so, those who to-day seem to be losing joy may well consider whether it results from their hopes being dimmed, ensuing on a lack of consideration of the Word.

Let us prevent our own joys fading by making a habit of referring to the Word more. Whenever a text or promise is quoted in study or address let us refer to it there and then. Yes, even if we know it ever so well. Let us not listen to the voice of pride or laziness which says "you know that text, there is no need to look it up." For in looking again and again at the precious words they become indelibly impressed upon the head and heart. We discover that the texts we knew so well appear brighter. We find they are no longer texts but living words. We find ourselves looking at the context and companion scriptures. And imperceptibly the habit grows, hope grows and joy speedily follows. The resulting hope and joy will not be effervescent, but will abide, a reservoir that will supply comfort and consolation in anxious days.

The Christian must not wait till to-morrow to acquire these graces. Let him gain while he may and when crises undreamed of a few years ago arise in the world, his heart and mind fly because of created habit to the sure Word. For there may be no opportunity in those times to seek for comforting texts or the companionship of those who already have fixed hopes. To think that it may be possible in those trying days to gain comfort by referring to the Word without having first formed the hope and joy already in the heart is entirely false and is no more true than the catch-phrase we used to hear—"get the books into the people's hands and when the time of trouble breaks they will take them up for guidance and consolation."

Only if rejoicing hope be present can the next phrase "patient in tribulation" be appreciated. For can any endure unless there be some measure of hope to allay the tribulation?

The man void of hope must perforce clutch all he can out of the present life and anything that prevents or hinders his ambition is tribulation to him. Without hope he is joyless and patient endurance is waste of time.

How different is the outlook of the Christian! He reads that in the world he shall have tribulation, and he does not think that, as such is his lot, he must accept it with as good grace as possible. He does not regard tribulation with fatalistic acquiescence because hope is present in his heart. Nor is he deceiving himself into thinking that all will be well to-morrow therefore he will tolerate to-day. His view of to-day and to-morrow is governed by his belief in the guiding hand of God in all his affairs. And so he knows that tribulation, though irksome to the flesh, is limited in duration and intensity by God himself, and this gives him tranquillity of mind beyond the comprehension of his fellow-man. Buoyed up by rejoicing hope and having knowledge of the promises he remembers that through much tribulation he must enter the kingdom, and he finds himself able to say "our light affliction, which is but for a moment." We may read the portion so far considered as "Rejoicing in hope, therefore patient in tribulation."

We may find it difficult how to be patient in tribulation. (The preposition is a dominant word in each of the admonitions). It is easy to be patient in circumstances which do not call upon patience to prove its worth; and the worth of this and every grace can be found only by causing conditions to arise that compel them to exercise themselves. Let it not be supposed that our Father puts each of us under trial and test to see how we shall react. As He alone knoweth the hearts of man he already knows how trial will affect us; and the trial is rather that we shall know ourselves.

It will help us to be patient in tribulation if we recall previous trials. When each ended and we looked back we saw them in better view than we thought we saw during the trial. Let us remember to wait till we can see it in truer vision and then we can be patient in tribulation. Let us remember also that tribulation is promised to the Christian, and therefore the meeting of trial not arising from one's indiscretions is at least a proof that we are on the right pathway and we may properly regard it as evidence that we are acceptable children of God. Did not Paul encourage the Thessalonian brethren by this reasoning when he said that their patience and faith in all their persecu-

tions and tribulations which they endured was a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God? (2 Thess. 1: 4/5). We may then say that tribulations are certificates of approval.

Many can say nowadays that they have been called upon to endure trials which a few years ago had not been thought possible; and that some trials are so sharp and intense that for the time being one can hardly think of hope, rejoicing and endurance. Let it be admitted that in these dark days the unexpected has certainly been our portion. It is here that we see the need of forming good habits in peaceful days so that when the extreme occurs hope, joy and endurance still function.

But should any think that a trial may arise in which it may be well-nigh impossible to dwell in joy and patience: then they should remember that Paul foresaw this reasoning and forestalled it by coupling with the injunctions in this verse a third admonition—"continuing instant in prayer." Yes, there is refuge even in such emergency. Again it will be noted that Paul has put them in the right order—hope, tribulation, prayer. Regard these three points as a kind of sandwich with that which is unpleasant to the flesh as the centre layer. Partake of all three together and it will be found more palatable. It is essential to keep them together; for can we suppose one praying unless he had hope; can we think of any being patient under trial unless he has the compensations and assistance of hope and prayer?

The persevering prayer is not that the tribulation may be removed, the Christian believing that it all is under control of the Lord and Father. It is in rich trial that the ingrained promises accepted in faith and grasped in hope come to our aid, for they assist in praying aright and in harmony with God's will. Then we remember the words that God will not suffer us to be tried above that we are able, and immediately we are encouraged; and we find the load lighter: then we recall other words of comfort and the load becomes still lighter. In other words we are patiently enduring. Then our prayers take better form by this acceptance of the Divine will, and instead of being only supplication have mixed with them thanks and

praise.

Having made a habit of consulting the Word we remember the remainder of the verse (1 Cor. 10: 13), that God being faithful will with the trial make a way of escape that we may be able to bear it. **With** the trial! So that at the very time there is refuge! Surely the way of escape is prayer. And the hope that springs from well-based understanding of the leadings and purposes of God will ensure that we pray perseveringly and with thankfulness.

Prominent in the Christian prayer will be "Thy will be done." These familiar words mean to some, reluctant acceptance of God's righteous judgment. They quote the phrase only when death or disaster has occurred. But to the Christian the phrase combines in itself hope and patience—convinced hope that His will shall be done and patient endurance until His set time and purpose are realised. And although we believe in coming glories when His will shall be done, we desire that His will be done now within ourselves, assured that He will not try us above that we are able to bear.

We have in the Acts a practical demonstration of Rom. 12: 12. Paul and Silas were fastened in the stocks within the inner prison. Their tribulations were due to their loyalty to Christ. We know they had large hope and rejoicing, for we read they were praying and singing praises. They were rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. Were they praying that an earthquake would release them (as actually occurred)? They were praying "Thy will be done" with that hope, patience and fervour that only the Christian knows; and rather than pray for release they were praying that God would open a door of utterance that they might speak again the words that had caused their affliction. And God's will was done, and His twofold answer opened not only the prison door but also the door of utterance, and there, right to hand, were the ones who were to hear the message they longed to give.

Surely we may read the verse as "Rejoicing in hope, **therefore** patient in tribulation, **therefore** continuing instant in prayer."

"And a highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called 'The Way of Holiness.'"

Picture the returning multitudes thronging their way up that symbolic road. Wonderment and incredulity will give place to enthusiastic joy as the evidence becomes overwhelming that the Lord Jesus

Christ has without doubt taken the power of His Kingdom and now calls to all men everywhere to learn of Him. Many will be the helping hands stretched out to assist the pilgrims; and that immortal phrase "A Ransom for All" will carry its significance deep into every mind. The time of earth's jubilee will have come indeed.

CHARACTER STUDIES

FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.



3. MOSES.

A type of Christ.

Moses was born at a time of great distress among the people of Israel. A Pharaoh had arisen who "knew not Joseph" and Egypt saw in Israel a danger and sought to repress them by severe laws and slavery. When Moses was born he was concealed for three months in the house and we can imagine the anxiety of his mother during that time, her fear that the case might be reported and bring her whole family, including Aaron and Miriam, into danger. It was too dangerous to keep Moses any longer and a plan was devised which proved very successful, and he was brought up by Pharaoh's daughter.

We have here an example of how God overrules and makes the wrath of men to praise Him. In the ordinary way Moses, while still a lad, would have been put under a taskmaster and grown up uneducated, but God had something in store for Moses and so He overruled, and Moses received the best education. So God arranges things for us for our development and fitness.

The life of Moses holds many lessons of faith; it teaches that self reliance is not good unless we also consult God. That was the secret of Moses' success.

Moses was a type of Jesus, as shown in Acts 3: 22. God is our Teacher. A teacher uses chalk and blackboard and illustrates a lesson by diagrams and pictures but the child must not be so engrossed in the pictures that he does not heed the lesson. **So Bible types are not the lesson but they illustrate the lesson.**

There are four phases in the life of Moses which correspond to four phases in the career of Jesus. They are (a) Pre-existence, (b) Earthly life, (c) Position during the Gospel Age, (d) Reign as a King on Earth.

(a) **Moses** grew up in the presence of Pharaoh. He was beautiful in face and form and beautiful in disposition. He was highly educated, for Egypt was the foremost nation of the day, with a great civilisation, and he was "learned in all the wisdom of Egypt." Josephus says that he was also a soldier and heir to the throne. He had also a special knowledge of God given to him by his mother; he had learned from her of the Abrahamic promise and of the Messiah who would come to bless.

How Moses would listen and his heart be stirred. He was anxious to do something for God and in his active mind he devised a scheme for Israel's deliverance. He would wait his opportunity, then leave the palace and throw in his lot with his brethren, proclaim himself their leader and amid scenes of patriotic fervour put himself at their head and lead them forth to liberty.

(b) **Moses** was disappointed, misunderstood and rejected. His brethren did not receive him as their leader and Pharaoh sought to kill him.

(a) **Jesus** was daily in the presence of God; He too was brought up in a palace (Prov. 8: 30). He had a high position with honour, glory and favour and was learned and rich. He had a special knowledge of His Father's plan to deliver the race. How Jesus would listen and His own heart would be stirred and He would long for the time when God would send Him forth to deliver.

(b) **Jesus** left His home above and for our sakes became poor. He took our nature and was despised, misunderstood and rejected.

(c) **Moses**, in Midian. Here he fed sheep and the greatest event was his marriage to Zipporah, who was black and a Gentile.

(c) **Jesus** went into a far country and before He comes to effect the deliverance of mankind already redeemed by His death, He will unite to Himself a bride, who will be "black but comely" (Cant. 1: 5). We see the condescension of God in having such a daughter-in-law, for Psalm 113: 6, shows that God humbles Himself to behold us at all; but He purposes to raise us up with Jesus. Paul felt this when he wrote of the height and depth to God's love. Black is what sin has made us, but comely is how He makes us. Comely as the curtains of Solomon—suitable for a palace must be the adornments of the character of the Bride. God's providences are all directed towards this end and Jesus has been our helper too all the time He has been away. Throughout the Gospel Age He has been the Advocate of the church.

(d) **Moses**, like all of us had to learn. When he went forth to deliver the first time he seems to have been strong and eloquent, reliant upon

self and his great prowess and reputation but it was not God's time—he was forty years too soon. For all that time he had to wait and he learnt much. He learnt to rely not on self but on God. He lost all confidence in himself. In the early days he was "mighty in words" (Acts 7: 22), but forty years later he said, "I am not eloquent" (Ex. 4: 10). Humbled, he was now fit for God's use, and was sent to be Israel's deliverer. Acts 7: 35 says it was the same Moses who was rejected who became the deliverer and Acts 1: 11 and 2: 36, tells us that it is the same Jesus Who was rejected and crucified Who comes a second time to effect deliverance. Deliverance from Egypt was effected after judgment and the ten plagues; nothing had ever been seen like them before; and God is working His strange work now in a great time of trouble prior to the deliverance of mankind. Is God or is man responsible? There are certain laws in the natural and moral realms which if obeyed will result in blessing. A plant

needs sun, air, moisture and soil. These are God's gifts and if the plant is deprived of them it will die. God gives enlightenment and blessings to man, but man lives in defiance of His laws; the golden rule is not practised and the principles of justice are outraged. Hence His blessings prove to be curses and enlightenment brings trouble.

After deliverance came discipline. Israel in the wilderness were learning that the way to life and rest is in dependence and faith in God and in Moses their leader and mediator. The discipline of the world will take one thousand years of trial and testing under the Mediator, Christ.

After forty years Israel came to Jordan. Moses stepped aside and they went in to their inheritance. So the world will come to their inheritance after their Jordan, the final test, is passed. Then will be the rest of eternity, with every evil thing done away and all things made new.

The Beauty of the Lord.

"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Thus prayed Moses, the meekest man in all the earth. The desire here expressed is not just a passing whim or fancy; it represents the eager yearnings of a soul trying to draw near to its God, and as we read the life of Moses we are compelled to conclude that he experienced more of the personal nearness of God than any other member of this human race, before or since.

God communed with Moses in the mount. He spoke to him out of the burning bush and in Egypt. We do not know whether or not God used His angelic representatives for this purpose. On mount Sinai God seems to have drawn specially near to Moses at the giving of the Law. When the people gathered at the barrier at the bottom of the mount there was a great noise as of thunderings and lightning, and God descended in a cloud. Whilst all this was striking terror in the hearts of all that heard and saw, and the record says that "Moses feared," Moses ascended the mountain to where God was.

After descending to ratify the covenant and to make arrangements for the government of the people during his absence, Moses again ascended the mountain and for forty days and

nights he communed with God for instructions with regard to the Tabernacle. This, however, was interrupted, for the children of Israel were worshipping the golden calf. God advised Moses of this and Moses went down and broke the tables of the commandments. When he re-ascended the mount the attitude of his heart seems to have brought him very near to God. Not many would have replied as Moses did; he reminded God of His past favours and promises and asked, if it were impossible for Jehovah to forgive their sins, would He accept him as the nation's substitute. If the heart of God went out to Abraham who was prepared to give his son, it must also have gone out to Moses who was prepared to be blotted out in place of Israel.

Subsequent events prove that God was pleased with Moses; He gave him the assurance he required. "My presence shall go with thee." (Ex. 33: 13-14).

After obtaining a blessing for the people, Moses asked for a blessing for himself, "Lord, show me Thy Glory." (Ex. 33: 18-23). So, on the morrow, Moses again ascended the mountain for a double purpose, to receive anew the tables of the law and to behold the glory of the Lord.

The record says that God descended in the cloud. The thought is probably that the cloud which was over the encampment of Israel by day, descended on Sinai as a sign that God was there, and God came and stood with Moses, who could not see Jehovah because of the cloudy screen, but he nevertheless realised that he was in the presence of God. Was God actually on the mountain? The record seems to show that He was, and it seems probable that God would leave His throne to honour the faith of Moses. Moses was permeated by an intense longing to know God better, to have a closer union with the God of Heaven. Whether God actually stood on the mountain or whether He sent one of His angelic representatives, we do not know, but we do know that God gave Moses a three-fold revelation of Himself.

(1) He caused His glory to pass before Moses. As Moses stood in the presence of God there was revealed to his mind the goodness of God and he recalled the incidents of his life, also those of the history of mankind which showed God's glory and goodness. These have been preserved for us in his writings in the book of Genesis.

(2) A proclamation of God's name. Not just "I am," the name announced from the burning bush, revealing Himself as the self-existent one; nor the terrible manifestation as seen from Mount Sinai. No, here was something different, more intimate, something more wonderful. Notice how God lingers upon the merciful aspect of His character. (Ex. 34: 6-7). To impress this wonderful feature upon Moses' mind, God accumulated title upon title to show His compassionate nature, "The Lord, The Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long Suffering and Abundant in Goodness and Truth." These titles all emphasise God's compassionate nature, the Tender One, The For-giver of iniquity, but just to prevent any mis-apprehension, there is a hint of the Divine Justice in verse 7. This is God's name, not just one title, but a description of the attributes which go to make His glorious character. When years later the Shepherd Psalmist wrote, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake," he must have had this thought in mind.

(3) When God had passed by, the cloudy screen was removed and Moses was allowed to look where God had been and saw the after-glow of His glory, just like the fading beauties of the sunset when the sun has sunk below the

horizon. Moses went down to the people and his face shone; he had been in the presence of God and the beauty of the Lord our God was upon him.

"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." This prayer can have a three-fold significance to us; it means:—

- (1) May the goodness of God be turned toward us.
- (2) May we behold all that is gracious and encouraging in His revelation of Himself.
- (3) May these same beauties be reflected in our hearts and minds.

For our prayer to be answered it must be a continuous petition, for this prayer involves much; the beauties of God's character are inexhaustible. From the moment our lips frame the petition, our prayers must every day be, "Let the beauty of the Lord be upon us."

"Behold the beauty of the Lord." This desire of ours has Divine approval; "Draw nigh to Me and I will draw nigh to you." Our prayer to know the beauty of the Lord reveals our desire to approach Him. In Psa. 27: 8 the Psalmist represents the sentiments of all the Lord's anointed and in Psa. 27: 4 he mentions his intense desire to behold the beauty of the Lord. This scripture is important because it not only shows the true desires of God's people, but it reveals where we can behold the beauty of the Lord, namely in His Temple or in His Sanctuary. But how can sinful men ever approach to this Holy place? In the types it is exclusive, as is emphasised time and time again. Not many were granted the wonderful privilege.

We cannot take the first step towards the Sanctuary of God unless the mercy, beauty and goodness of our God is turned towards us. "By grace are ye saved," "while we were yet sinners," but with the invitation, "seek ye My face" the Lord reveals the first step which it is necessary to take; **JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH**—acknowledging the provision made for us in Christ. Our earthly imperfections are counted as if they were covered; we enter the gate of the Tabernacle. A wonderful transformation has taken place. Previously we were afar off, now we are made nigh to God, having received forgiveness through Christ, because of the mercy and beauty of the Lord our God. Any withdrawal from this grace would be a reversal of that position from which we have been rescued, so we must continue to pray that God's beauty be upon us and go on to know the Lord. **JUSTIFICATION** is but the first

step towards knowing the Lord.

The next step is **CONSECRATION**; the door into the Holy. Illuminated by the golden candlestick, the Holy Spirit, we are granted an understanding of God and His plans and purposes. It is in the Sanctuary that all the problems of life are solved and we enquire into God's purposes. Here we see the beauty of our God for the plans and purposes of God reveal His character in a way that nothing else could do. We have approached God and can commune with Him in a way we could not outside the Sanctuary. *Once inside the Holy*, by the Spirit's illumination, we are granted an insight into our God's wonderful character; His Glory. We who abide in the Holy are granted this wonderful vision of Divine Glory and, like Moses, we discover that this glory is infinite goodness alone. Someone may say this all sounds mystical! What do we mean in plain language? We reply, abiding in complete consecration. All who do this are in the secret Place and God grants them the illumination by His Spirit of His Holy Word. The object of God's Word is to reveal His Divine beauty. We meet together to understand more of the Divine purpose and will of God shown in His Word. The object of all our studies is expressed in the words of Jesus, "that they may know Thee, the only true God." Such knowledge is life eternal.

The third aspect of our prayer is **SANCTIFICATION**. "Let the beauty of the Lord be upon us," that is, may those same beauties of character be reflected in our hearts and lives. How can such a miracle ever take place? It is perfectly simple although none the less wonderful for that. By nothing less than beholding and reflecting. Beholding, this is our part and is done consciously but the reflecting is done unconsciously. It is a marvellous thing to behold the glory of the Lord but it is more wonderful to reflect it. If we continually behold God's glory, gradually and unconsciously we shall begin to reflect it. How many have striven to be like their Master yet never have attained their ideal! We speak of cultivating a character, but this is condemned to failure if the means by which we seek to obtain it are efforts of the flesh. We are to be **TRANSFORMED** or changed; we do not change ourselves. The transformation is by some other power than our own. The Spirit of the Lord illuminates God's Word and reveals His beauty and it is through His Word that we are gradually transformed into the same likeness. The

process is slow, we are changed from glory to glory, we gradually change from a poor likeness of God to a better and a still better likeness. In Romans 12: 2, we have almost the same language. We cannot transform ourselves but we can be transformed by the renewing of our minds; the Word of God illuminated by the Spirit of God fills our minds. Our minds must be constantly on the things of God and thus we have fellowship with Him and gradually, without any fleshly effort, we are changed or transformed into His likeness. While Moses communed with God, his face shone but Moses wist it not. Does this do away with all our efforts? It certainly does away with efforts of the flesh but it does not relieve us of our responsibility; we have a part to do in the transformation. We can hinder this work or cause it to cease after it has commenced, we can even prevent it starting. Works of themselves are no good, but works that spring from our faith in God are necessary, so, although we cannot perform the transforming work ourselves, yet we have a part to do if it is to go on. We must fulfil the conditions laid down by entering the Holy; consecrating ourselves, and we must keep our mirrors adjusted so as to reflect the glory of the Lord. We shall reveal the things we constantly think upon, everything we see and hear and think upon has an influence upon our character and if our eyes behold only the beauty of the Lord and our ears catch the whisper of His will then our mirrors will reflect only the beauty of the Lord our God. So we begin to see the importance of knowledge. Sometimes knowledge is depreciated as something of not very much importance, but Jesus said, "Sanctify them by Thy Truth, Thy Word is Truth." Knowledge in itself is not sufficient to sanctify. The Word of God is understood only by the Spirit of God operating on our minds. We cannot understand the Scriptures without the illumination of God's Spirit, but the more knowledge of God's Word we obtain, the more we are assisting in the transforming work.

Moses had to put a veil on his face so that the people should not see the Divine glory (2 Cor. 3: 13). This Scripture suggests that the veil prevented Moses from reflecting this glory and the people of Israel from beholding it. In view of this it is important that our faces should be unveiled. Sin is an earthborn cloud which soon veils God's face, but there is no veil which God's power cannot remove.

When the transformation has been completed

by constantly considering the beauty of the Lord and when the imperfections of our earthly mirror, which prevent us reflecting perfectly, have been done away with, then the full floodlight of God's beauty will be revealed and we, joined with our Lord as the Christ, will be privileged to reflect to the whole world the glory of the Lord our God, "And all flesh shall see it together, for the word of the Lord hath spoken it."

The Christ, those who during this age have beheld God's glory, will have the wonderful privilege of pronouncing the blessing given by Aaron in Numbers 6: 23-26, on all the people of the earth when the High Priest comes forth to reveal the Divine beauty of God.

At Creation God said, "Let us make man after our own image," but man, through years of sin, has almost obliterated that character likeness. During this age we have been developing that likeness and eventually all those who pass over into the ages of glory will also be in the character likeness of He who created them. Just as the dewdrops reflect the vast expanse of the heavens, so the world of mankind, restored and perfect, will reflect on earth the glory of the Lord. Then will the prayer of Moses be answered; every creature in Heaven and on Earth will declare this beauty and THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD WILL BE UPON IT.

THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE FAMILY.

The conclusion of an exhortation to Unity.

In the preceding section we noticed three essential headings; first, the One Body, foundation of all our fellowship; second, the One Spirit, the influence which animates the Body, and third, the One Hope of our calling. We come now to the remaining three headings of this study.

4th Point. One Lord.

Our Lord in glory is the caretaker of the Church. Nevertheless He always uses human instruments and to the true Church these are definitely promised. In this same chapter of Ephesians Paul speaks of Jesus raising up apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, for the instruction and building up of the saints, for the work of the ministry. Jesus expects us to recognize these and appreciate His loving care in raising them up. That does not mean that we accept everyone who claims to be a leader of God's children.

The Church in the early days were very much troubled along this line, in fact one would say that each age of the Church has had the same tests, and in the last age of the Church, in which we are now living, it is not only a possibility, but one of the signs of the times that we have come to the final stage of the Church's development here on earth. Many scriptures could be quoted to support this statement; but the question for us is, how can we know when one is a true leader? Two answers may be given to this. First. A true leader seeks to protect the Lord's children. Let us take Jesus as our example. How often we find Him coming to the aid of the disciples when they were

in difficulties both with the authorities and with one another. When Peter made that slip about the tithes question, Jesus supplied the solution. When the disciples plucked the ears of corn on the Sabbath day Jesus again defended His followers by reminding the Pharisees of the incident of David and the shewbread; yet again in the Garden of Gethsamane Jesus said "Whom seek ye?" thus taking the centre of the stage and allowing the others to go. Our Lord in the parable of the sheepfold speaks of himself as protecting and caring for the sheep, even defending them with His life when thieves would come in and endeavour to steal. The spirit evidently is characteristic of any whom Jesus would raise up to lead His sheep during this age. **Secondly**, the effect of example. A real leader in the Church, one whom we could look up to as an example would be one whose life, if followed, would lead us, the sheep, to follow more closely in the footsteps of the Master, to sacrifice more readily for the Lord, to be more earnest in our Christian life, to handle the things of earth more lightly, to a greater separation from the affairs of the world and a greater and more sanctified life. Real divisions in the Church are due, as Paul suggests, to one class being less spiritual than the others. (1 Cor. 3: 1-5. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.")

5th Point. One Faith.

The faith that must be common to all the Christ. Not the faith by which we are justified,

since we believe the exercise of this quality of the mind leads us to the acceptance of Christ as our Saviour, and opens our hearts to receive the further invitation of the call of the Gospel Age. Not the faith that believes that God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, for we understand that the Ancient worthies and the world in the age to come will have that faith. Furthermore, Jesus is the Author and Finisher of the faith delivered to the saints. It is worthy of note that this faith is to those who are already saints, to those who are already justified (Rom. 5. 1), and have taken the step of consecration. (Rom. 5. 2). Jude speaks of it as a most holy faith, or a faith the exercise of which will lead us or result in our reaching the "Most Holy," heaven itself. Thus we understand why Jesus is the Author, the One Who opened the way for us; the One Who has gone before and invites us to follow Him. The apostle also exhorts us to follow him as he followed Christ, and in Gal. 2. 20, claims that the life he was now living in the flesh was the direct result of the faithfulness of the Son of God; having the same quality of faith as His Saviour.

It is faith that makes the word of God living to us. "For unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." To us who believe, the Bible is a personal word, more personal when we recollect that at one time we were without God and now have had opened up to our gaze the transcending prospects of joint heirship with Christ. Faith that is calling Gentiles, faith in a personal, living union with God and with Christ, even while still in the flesh! Surely then this is the faith that triumphs.

6th Point. One Baptism.

Again is drawn to our attention the oneness of the Christ, Head and Body. Baptized into His death, crucified with Christ; is this literal or symbolic? Surely not literal, because not many of Christ's followers have died in the same way. Yet Paul viewed his life and his relationship to the world, using this figure, crucifixion, as an illustration.

"By the Cross of Christ I am crucified to the world and the world is crucified to me." Baptism to Jesus was the turning point in His life. "Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do Thy will" and from that day we see the will of Jesus submerged into the will of God. Though in following this course it ultimately lead to the Cross ("Let this Cup, this form of death, pass from me;

yet not as I will but as Thou wilt.") To Jesus then, baptism was an act, yet a process, and for three and a half years he kept that covenant made so willingly and joyfully at Jordan until finally He could say "it is finished." To the Church there is no other way if we would follow in His steps. We also covenant to give up our own wills and seek to do the will of God. In fact Jesus reminds us that this is the only way open to life at the present time. "He that would save his life shall lose it, and he that would lose his life for my sake will gain it." "For thy sake we are killed all the day long." The picture would not be complete without the Heavenly Father coming into it. Not only has God given us of His Spirit and set the members of this class in the Body as it pleased Him, but here He promises to supply the power to enable us to attain to this oneness. This power, exercised most in the minds and hearts of the followers of Christ, is the same power as God manifested when He raised Christ from the dead. (Eph. 1. 17-20). God is the life-giver to the Church (John 1. 13. "Which were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." 11 Cor. 6. 18. "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.") He it is who is working in us individuals and as a company; working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight. It is not only the will of Christ that we shall behold His present glory (John 17. 24), but the desire of our Heavenly Father also. "Fear not, little flock it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints."

May we then endeavour to attain to this oneness here, knowing its importance as a witness to the world and as the possible attainment of the footstep followers of Christ while still in the flesh. The power is there to accomplish the work if we come under its influence. Grace will be given to overcome all difficulties. The prayer of Paul was along this line. "I pray that your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 5. 23).

Therefore let us walk worthy of our calling, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Effort is needed, constant watching on our part is necessary; unceasingly asking for God's help should be our daily prayer and if we attain in any degree to this oneness, thanks be to God for it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

An interesting letter from the other side of the world.

The following letter is from an old brother who has been a reader of the B.S.M. for many years. He must be one of the world's loneliest brothers, and it makes our talk of "isolated" brethren seem a very small thing when we think of him hundreds of miles from those of like mind.

Jerry's Plains,
New South Wales,
Australia.

"Dear Brethren,
Loving greetings.

I received your welcome letter about last May. My thoughts are ever with you as they are with the rest of the brethren in other parts of the world. I always remember you in my prayers and ask the Father of Mercies, the God of all comfort, to bless you according to His wisdom and love in Christ Jesus. We know that He always hears us if we ask anything according to His will. I love the little paper you send, it always brings a feeling of oneness with you on the other side of the world. I keep in touch with Brother M—, of Melbourne, Victoria. We are separated by about 700 miles. Since I found the Lord through the study of His Word my heart goes out to Him in all thankfulness. I heard our Master say "take heed that no man deceive you." It is written in the Scriptures that we shall be all taught of God. I was longing to know Him, and although I am only a self-taught man, and old, it was by God's wonderful guidance through the Saviour and Apostles and Prophets I found the Narrow Way that leads to life. How wonderful the Lamp shines in this dark world to us who love its brightness, and as we travel the Narrow Way it shines more brightly. It is lovely to hear what our Father has to say to us through the sweet singer of Israel, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with Mine eye." It is lovely to be guided with His counsel and to have His eye upon us as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we need fear not the Evil One. I love to ponder over the things that are written for us. I love the nice hymns to read, those I don't know the tunes of. I love that hymn, "O happy they that know the Lord, with whom He deigns to dwell. He feeds and cheers them with His word. His arm supports them well."

He reveals His wonderful secret to us who love Him, even the deep things. He knows we love His words and wish to "write them upon the table of our hearts." He knows that we love our Redeemer, whom He sent, the Captain of our Salvation, who is not ashamed to call us His brethren.

How lovely to be favoured of God and accepted in the Beloved. Words fail me to express the joy I feel from the reading of these Heavenly pages, which are my ever dear delight. My eyes are weak, but it cheers me to hear our Master say, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see."

I close with Christian love.

Your brother in Christ,
J. B—.

ANONYMOUS

We would acknowledge the receipt of three anonymous donations of 10/- and one of £1 and express our sincere appreciation of these gifts.

GONE FROM US.

On 28th May last a well-known brother passed from our midst when Bro. R. H. Court, of Birmingham, answered the home call. Our brother had ministered to the friends in many places over a term of many years and was held in high esteem in many quarters for his works' sake. For a considerable period he was a member of the Bible Students Committee. The end came very suddenly, in the privacy of his own home, and Sister Court needs the prayers and sympathy of the brethren in the shock of the parting.

Brother Court was laid to rest on 3rd June. Those who knew him best look forward to the day of glad re-union "when the day break, and the shadows flee away."

Sister McCullagh, of Newcastle, better known perhaps as Sister Dyson, late of Leeds, has gone to be "with the Lord," her death having come about as the result of enemy action. Our Sister will be remembered by those who in the past have been privileged to attend the conventions held at Dewsbury.

DEWSBURY CONVENTION

A goodly number of brethren gathered together in Dewsbury for a two days' convention which was held on Sunday and Monday, June 1st and 2nd. On the preceding Saturday evening a number of friends gathered together to hear an encouraging talk by one of the brethren, the convention opening on Sunday morning with words of welcome which emphasised the need of assembling ourselves together.

Each of the speakers also encouraged a deepening of the spiritual life, living nearer to the Lord, and increasing in love for the brethren. The Lord richly blessed the efforts to make possible a rich feast at His hands.

An additional feature which was much appreciated by all was the showing of the two films from the "Photo Drama of Creation" viz "A Royal Prince" and "The raising of the Shunammite's son." We believe this feature was blessed of the Lord and will yet prove a great help to many. In all it was a very profitable time.

In order that a taste of our Convention joys might be shared by those not present, messages are here communicated to such in the texts: Deut 31; 8. Psal 121. I Cor. 15; 58. Hymn 109.

We pray that these convention blessings will bear rich fruit to the glory of God.

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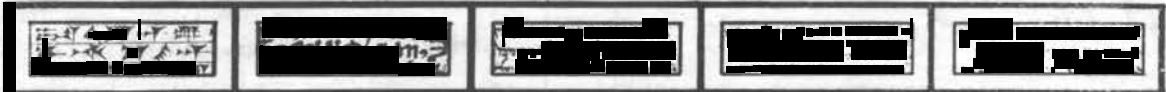
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 All valleys shall be exalted
 mountayne and hylt layde
 fo is croked that be made str
 ye seed of Abram his servan
 Jacob his chosen
 #the Lo R our God: his ju
 # And God shall wipe away all
 tears from their eyes: and there
 shall be no more death: neither
 sorrow, nor crying, neither shall
 there be any more pain: for the
 former things are passed away.

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Threepence

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THE LAW OF DEVELOPMENT

Considerations arising from Paul's words
in I. Cor. 13; 11

C.T.R.

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."
I. Cor. 13; 11.

Spiritual law is as fixed in its principles and operations as is physical law. If it were not so the physical could not be so frequently used as it is for illustrations of spiritual things. Thus, for instance in spiritual life/ as revealed in the Scriptures, we have duplicated that principle so well known in physical law, of growth and development—first the blade, then the ear, and afterward the full corn in the ear; first the infant, then the boy, and afterward the full grown man; first the babe in Christ, then the growing child, the young man, and finally the full stature of a man in Christ. (Heb. 5: 13, 14; 1 John 2: 12-14; Eph. 4: 13-15). In both cases there is also a marked similarity in the process of development. As in nature both plant and animal life are sustained by appropriate nourishment, food, light, heat, air, etc.,—thus strengthening them to perform the various functions of their being, so the spiritual new creatures in Christ must have and appropriate nourishment that they may continue to live and grow. There is this difference, however, to be observed between the physical and the spiritual life in the process of development; viz., that the former matures quickly, while the latter is of slow growth—a plant to bloom in eternity.

As new creatures in Christ—babes in the family of God—we realise our adoption as sons only when we have renounced the vain pomp and glory of this world and turned fully to God, claiming no righteousness of our own, but humbly accepting the imputed righteousness of Christ. No one is even a babe in Christ who still cherishes iniquity in his heart, or who fails to recognise his need of the covering of Christ's righteousness. But having been converted, turned about, from sin to God and righteousness, having learned of Christ, having put off the old man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4: 24), and having been renewed in the spirit (disposition) of our minds, we are reckoned sons of God, babes in Christ. And from that infantile standpoint, which has in it, undeveloped, all the elements of the man, the duty and privilege of such is to grow, to develop as new creatures in Christ. We are not to content our-

selves with the lisps and prattlings of infancy, nor with the milk diet suitable to that age, but, making due use of these as stepping-stones, we should go on unto perfection.

It was in view of such considerations that the Apostle penned the words of our text. He himself had rapidly passed on from the early stages of Christian character to higher degrees of development, and yet he was not counting that he had attained the perfection which was the mark at which he was aiming. (Phil. 3: 13, 14). He had, however, passed beyond both infancy and boyhood to the stature of a young man in Christ. Looking back over the pathway of his Christian experience, he recognised these different stages, and for our profit recorded his thoughts, saying, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

This was true both of his natural life and his spiritual life—the reference being specially to the latter, of which the former was merely an illustration. By the illustration he would draw our attention to the fact that if we have been children of God for some time we should be able, on looking backward over our Christian experience, to trace a good degree of advancement toward the mark of perfection. While as mere babes in Christ our hearts must always be loyal to God and true to righteousness, our very inexperience causes us often to stumble: our knowledge of the right ways of the Lord is very imperfect, and our powers of discernment are very unskilled: we have much to learn both of revelation and experience. The child in Christ has its own childish understanding, thoughts and ways, and his brethren in Christ should not expect from him the wisdom of the sage. Nor should he himself presume to have such wisdom; for only through knowledge and the discipline of experience does wisdom come; and then, only when we have allowed them to work in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

For our growth and development in the Christian character God supplies all that is needful in the way of nourishment, and it is our part to make use of all the help He sends. By

study and meditation upon His Word of truth, by prayer and communion with God, we partake more and more of His Spirit, and are led into a closer acquaintance both with the Lord Himself, and also with His works and ways. And by exercise of the strength thus gained in active service of the Lord, we are prepared to receive more and more of the fullness of His grace, and so to go on from grace to grace, and from one degree of advancement to another.

But notwithstanding these recognised principles of Christian growth and development, it is a lamentable fact that many who can point with exactness to the day and hour when first they gave their hearts to the Lord and received the Holy Spirit, the seal of their adoption, are compelled to realise, when they consider the matter at all, that, instead of advancing toward the stature of men in Christ, they have actually retrograded. Often such painfully look back to the blessedness of that first experience of the grace of God in their hearts, and say:—

**"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I sought the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word?"**

It is a thing of the past with them, and its joys have fled. Why is this? It is because they have failed to appropriate the means of grace which God has supplied, and because, instead of striving against the downward tendencies of the carnal nature, they have allowed those old dispositions to rise up and re-assert themselves. In some cases a morbid desire for something new and strange has led away from the truth into the forbidden paths of human speculation—philosophy and science, so called—until the mind became bewildered and confused in the labyrinths of error—the snares of the Wicked One. In other cases the measure of truth possessed has been held in unrighteousness. The tongue has been permitted to wag in the service of sin and uncleanness, manifesting unkindness, lack of Christian courtesy and forbearance, evil surmising, self-exaltation, pride, boastfulness, vaunting, etc., etc., and these unholy indulgences have been excused and even cultivated; they have not been striven against nor repented of; hence the spiritual decline.

It is for these causes that the blessed sense of fellowship and communion with God, experienced when first the Holy Spirit set the seal of adoption upon the heart, has been lost by many. God cannot dwell in a heart so unfit for His presence; and no Christian can look

back to the time of his first experience as a child of God and recall any such evil dispositions at that time. Had his heart been in such a condition then, God would not have accepted him; and it is only as we strive against sin that we can continue to abide in His love and favour.

Who cannot look back to his first experience in the Christian life and remember how the love of God filled his heart and overflowed to all His creatures, especially to them of the household of faith—a love that could bear well the beautiful description of 1 Cor. 13: 4-7. **"Charity (love) suffereth long and is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."**

Realising such to be the will of God, this was the attitude of heart which the seeker after God sought to attain; and such an attitude he was enabled to realise when the Spirit of adoption sealed him as an accepted son of God. Yet God, who remembers that we are dust, that we are morally weak from the Fall, knew with what difficulty we must endeavour to maintain this condition of heart and mind when assailed by temptations, and worn with the disappointments and trials of life. Nevertheless, He does look for the cultivation of these graces of character in us. He does, and has a right to, expect us to strive to live godly, and to war a warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. And, therefore, notwithstanding the facts of trials and temptations, the maturer growth of Christian character should find our first love deepened into a more steady, constant and enduring thing, not characterised, perhaps, with so much of the gush and fluster of youth, but rather with the mellow benedictions of a more nearly ripened character.

That the church in this sifting and proving time will be individually tested as to character, as well as to faith, is certain. The prospective heirs of the kingdom must, like their Lord, be tried and tested in every point; and it behoves everyone, therefore, to watch and pray, lest he enter into temptation, and diligently to cultivate such a character as will stand every test applied to it. But in the hour of testing let none mistake love of peace for love of righteousness. Let us see to it that the same mind dwells in us that is in Christ, our pattern. So shall we be children of God, beloved and owned of Him.

✦ Elisha AND THE CHILDREN ✦

An explanation of a much misunderstood incident.

R. C. H.

With regard to the Bible generally, and concerning any item of sacred history in particular, it is always with regret that the writer of this article hears or reads the statement, "It would have been better if those verses had been left out."

Under what conditions is it likely that such a statement might be made? It might be made in ignorance, or in wrong knowledge, or perhaps even in right, full and accurate information. If made in ignorance or with wrong knowledge then it is quite certain that the one making the statement should be given every opportunity of obtaining the knowledge; while if made with full knowledge then the matter should be investigated and the passage expunged.

An instance which came to the writer's knowledge was in connection with the story of Elisha and the children, found in 2 Kings 2: 23-24. The story as presented in the Authorized Version (The English Standard) would read in modern English somewhat as follows:—

As Elisha was passing a city, little children came after him and called him names. He turned round and saw them; and in God's name cursed them, and God sent two wild bears which severely hurt or killed forty-two of the little children.

Reading the story in that light, the mind of the average person would naturally instantly jump to such conclusions as "Poor little innocent children," "Stern, just, unloving and unlovable Elisha," "What a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God" and the train of thought would follow "Well it may be true, but even so, if God be love, then surely it would have been better to have omitted from the record such a terrible instance of God's justice?"

Now considering that the Author of the Bible is God Himself (Heb. 1-1) and that all scripture is of use (2 Tim. 3; 16), let us look more closely at the little incident which took place between Elisha and the children.

Elisha was specially a man of God as can be seen from the fact that Elijah was a man of God (verses 10 and 12 of the first chapter of the same book) and Elisha had a double portion of the spirit of Elijah (verses 9-12 of chapter 2). Bethel was a well-known holy city in central Palestine in the tribe of Benjamin and

under such circumstances we are justified in assuming that the inhabitants of such a city would be well up in the lore of their Deity.

The "children" described as such in the text were really youths or young men as can be easily ascertained by reference to an analytical concordance. All Jewish children were carefully instructed in the law as commanded by God in Deut. 4-9, and the young men could hardly have been ignorant of the law, while even if they were ignorant then ignorance was not accepted by God as an excuse. (Lev. 5; 17), and further the Jews had fully accepted God's Law.

The point is, was there any law relating to such an incident? Yes. In Lev. 19; 32, it says, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honour the face of the old man." Surely a bald head could be included in such a description! Then in Ex. 22; 28, we read "Thou shalt not revile the Judges nor curse the Ruler of thy people." The word translated "Ruler" means "One lifted up." Surely Elisha was "One lifted up."

Now, turning to the action of the children, we find that the word translated "Mocked" means "To show self a derider or scoffer." Obviously then we must assume from the reading of the passage that the young people openly and deliberately showed their contempt for the object of their mockery.

The record goes on to say that Elisha turned and cursed them. What does "cursed" mean? The concordance gives that this word can carry one of three meanings. "To lightly esteem," "To vilify" and "To revile." Now under the circumstance that Elisha was a Man of God it is not at all probable that he would vilify or revile the young men. In the first place he would be well acquainted with his God's law on the subject and in the second place he could have dealt with them in such a way that they might have shared the same fate as that of the soldiers mentioned in a previous chapter. No, he simply "lightly esteemed" them, "probably warned them of the course they were following" and passed on.

It was apparently at this point that God interposed and the reason is not far to seek. Turning to Samuel, book 1 chapter 8 and the 7th verse we read, "For they have not rejected thee but they have rejected me," and it is quite clear that anything done to God's appointed

agent is virtually done to God Himself.

What was the penalty for those who "mocked" or "scoffed" at God? In Leviticus 24 it will be seen that it was stoning to death for one of Jewish nationality and in 2 Kings 19, the incident of the king of Assyria gives a case where it cost 145,000 lives.

Surely then the case under consideration is not so very extraordinary.

So now let us recast the story in the light of the above facts, given us by such able Bible Students as, for instance, Robert Young, the author of Young's Concordance.

"Elisha, a special man of God, was passing a certain city which was holy to his God, when some young men from that holy city, knowing the law and the penalties attached to the breaking of that law, called after him in such a manner as to deliberately and openly show themselves scoffers of that law, thereby directly scoffing at the God who gave them that law and appointed Elisha his prophet. Elisha turned round, saw them, rebuked them and passed on. God however took the matter up and meted out punishment as He thought fit."

Now lest anyone might be tempted to think

that the laws applied to the Old Testament only, let us note that even the great Apostle Paul, when before the Chief Priests and Council, considered that his justifiable and innocent offence of speaking against the High Priest whom he did not know as the High Priest, was a sufficiently serious matter to warrant an apology when the identity of the person was known. (Acts 23; 5.) Also in 2 Peter 2; 10-11 the writer of the epistle condemns such evil speaking and states that mighty angels do not so speak.

The above is an endeavour to show the beautiful harmony of the scriptures when interpreted in their own light and language. No knowledge of the original language is necessary as all the information can be obtained from the concordances now in existence. Would it not be well therefore for any of us who have the responsibility of teaching or expounding the Scriptures to make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with the matter beforehand, assuming that our God who wrote the Scriptures knew what He was doing, for it is written of Him:—

"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15; 18.)

§ § IN HIS STEPS §

An Exhortation
to Discipleship

T G H.



"Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps. 1. Pet. 2; 21.

"Ye should follow His steps, who did no sin." So writes Peter, the Apostle of the circumcision. In the exercise of this Apostleship, though writing for Hebrew converts who lived among the strangers of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, we find his line of teaching fully in harmony with the writings of the Apostle to the Gentiles. In the five chapters of this first letter there are no less than seventy instances of parallel words, phrases, and allusions with the letters of "our beloved brother Paul." Additionally, like John, as one who heard and saw and handled the Word of Life (1 John 1, 1-3) Peter had vivid recollections of the words of his Master. More than forty words, phrases, and allusions from the Master's own lips are found woven into the fabric of Peter's letters.

We may not find the same depth and variety of expression in Peter as in Paul, but his memory, as a first-hand hearer, of Jesus' own

teachings give his plainer utterances a force and directness all their own. As a further feature we find Peter's mind saturated with thoughts regarding Jesus, from the Prophet Isaiah's graphic picture of 'Jehovah's suffering Servant.' How easily Peter glides into the thought of Isa. 53: 9, "he had done no violence, neither was deceit found in his mouth," "who did no sin neither was guile found in His mouth" says Peter of his beloved Lord. Isaiah's already-spoken words describe so fittingly what he wants to say of his Master. Again, though not a direct quotation of Isa. 53: 7 (He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth, He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened He not His mouth) we can see more than a passing allusion thereto when Peter says, "when He was reviled, reviled not again." Further, in the words of verse 24, "who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the

tree" we find unmistakable reference to Isa. 53: 12, "He bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Additionally, note the close parallelism of verse 25, "ye were as sheep going astray" with the words of Isa. 53: 6, "All we like sheep have gone astray." Then finally note Peter's application of Isaiah 5: "and with His stripes we are healed," to those who forfeited their peace with God, by going far astray.

Like the Evangelist Philip (Acts 8: 26-37) Peter had learned to apply this prophecy to Jesus, as the one in whom all redemption work centred. With such a background to his thoughts, then, Peter takes up one of the telling phrases of Jesus. "Follow me—follow thou me" (Matt. 16: 24. Luke 9: 23. John 21: 22) and through it, teaches the same profound truth which we find in Paul, and John, and Jesus' own teachings. 'Following an example' may not seem a profound teaching, but when it is coupled with an "Example," who finished His course on a 'Tree' (or Cross) it adds great emphasis to the homely illustration "Ye should follow His steps who did no sin . . . who, when He was reviled, reviled not again . . . who, His own self bare our sin . . . on the tree." There is something here deeper than a moral following. It certainly affects and regulates all the doings and sayings of one's life, but the 'following' is not completed until it conducts the follower likewise to a 'tree'—to a 'cross.' In the course of the journey, both the Exemplar, and the copier, are to be found, on a Tree. Thus this seemingly simple exhortation of Peter teaches the same deep truth that Paul teaches, in "baptism into His death"; which John teaches in "fellowship with . . . His Son Jesus Christ," in "an unction (or anointing) from the Holy One" (1 John 1: 1-3. 2: 20-27) and which Jesus teaches in the "drinking of His Cup"; in 'baptism with His baptism' (Matt. 20: 22). To follow the Lord means a 'via Crucis'—a way of the Cross, which will require in the follower all that it required in the Leader. Peter sets out two beautiful complementary lines of thought; the first of which describes us as astray in the wilderness of sin, but redeemed by Jesus; the other, when its climax comes, will see us linked inseparably with our Lord and Leader both here and hereafter.

"He bare our sins in His own body on the tree" tells of Saviourship; "ye should follow His steps" that is Leadership. Saviourship combined with Leadership! that is the unique, all-important relation of Jesus to His follower.

This is exactly the same thought set out by another pen, likewise written to Hebrew brethren. "It became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain (Prince-Leader) of their salvation perfect through suffering" (Heb. 2: 10). A Captain—and His Company! A Leader and His followers! "Forasmuch, . . . as Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind" says Peter (chap. 4: 1) as he links together in experience and purpose the Leader and the led. He exhorts them to "no longer . . . live . . . in the flesh, but to the Will of God" (v. 2). Thus, as with the Master, so with the follower, doing the Will of God should be the whole objective of life. The Will of God directed Jesus to 'the Tree'—making Him a 'curse' for the nation which had failed to keep its Covenant relationship with God unsullied (Gal. 3: 13). As Moses lifted up the serpent on a pole, so the Son of Man was to be lifted up on a 'tree' that the curse of the people might rest upon Him; He bearing it 'for' them.

Of course, this 'tree' was not merely that wooden cross which Jesus bore along to Calvary, and on which He was 'lifted up' to die. That 'tree' was no more than an emblem of another tree which Jesus had carried from His baptism at Jordan, and on which He had been dying for three and one-half years before reaching Calvary. The cross of full submission to His Father's Will was the 'tree' on which He bore the curse of our sins, and freed us from their guilt.

Having noted this *our sin offering* harmony of Peter's thought with Paul and John and Jesus' teachings, and the influence of Isaiah upon his words, let us now note a wider background to his utterances. The very mention of 'our sins' carries us back in our quest to the Atonement day in Israel. As if to give us the particular line of thought which was prompting this letter, Peter has already informed his readers (of that day and ours also) that they are "a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices to God by Jesus Christ" (Chap. 2: 5). And while his immediate readers were already of an elect nation—inasmuch as Israel had been separated out of the nations to be God's people—yet he speaks of these followers of Jesus as participating in a further and more exclusive 'election'—"elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." (1 Pet. 1: 2).

The impartation of the Holy Spirit, and the anti-typical sprinkling of the blood of Jesus had 'set them apart' (or sanctified them) in the same manner, but in a higher sense, that Aaron and his sons were 'set apart' for their holy ministry by the application of both anointing oil and blood, as recorded in Leviticus 8: 30. This further 'election' and 'sprinkling' constituted them priests of God, and it is as such that they were to "follow His steps, who did no sin." Until they had been freed from their sins, they could not even begin to follow the Sinless One. Jesus could not have had companionship with them in their sins without Himself becoming a sinner. This He never became. He remained always 'holy, harmless, and separate from sinners.'

When He started therefore to lead the way to Glory, by the way of the Cross, it was as an unblemished, sinless Leader that He began the journey, and to its end he remained unblemished and sinless. Not until His brethren have obtained a righteous standing, in Justification, can they begin to follow Him along this journey. For them, therefore, Jesus' Saviourship stands at the entrance to the way, but, thereafter, in every 'step' they take, it is His Leadership which they follow. If then, this 'way' led Jesus to the 'tree'—the cross—and through this cross procured cancellation of sins,—(our sins) (1 Pet. 2: 24) is it not patent to us all that at the back of his mind, Peter had the whole picture of the Atonement Day services.

The priesthood he had already mentioned,—now, in the suffering victim he refers to that which was laid down in sacrifice,—the fat which went on the Altar, and the blood which was taken into the place of propitiation. And here, we see right well the sphere of Leadership and subsequent 'following,' inasmuch, as by the institution of God, the fat of the goat followed the fat of the bullock on the Altar, and the blood of the goat followed the blood of the bullock into the Most Holy Place,—in like manner its carcase followed the bullock's carcase to the place of burning 'without the camp.' But before the Lord's goat could begin to follow the Bullock, it had to be received and accepted from among the people of Israel. The bullock was of the High Priest's own providing (Lev. 16: 3) but he had to 'take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of

the goats'—one of which was destined to follow the bullock provided by the Priest. Hence, before the goat could begin to follow the bullock it must be conducted on to the Holy ground of the Court, from among the people of the congregation. The sources from which the two animals were taken should be duly noted, because it shows a stage in the experience of the goat which had no recorded parallel in the experience of the bullock. It is only from the time that the goat was 'presented before the Lord' that it began to 'follow' in the steps of the bullock. Its experience of being conducted on to the holy ground from the midst of the congregation, would seem fittingly to correspond with the experience of some, who, in the higher sphere, are led from amongst the 'congregation of Israel'. . . as were these immediate readers of Peter's letter—to the holy ground of consecration and sacrifice.

While Peter does not particularise these matters to this degree, yet, the back-ground of all his remarks concerning the Priesthood, and their Anti-typical sprinkling, their selection and sanctification, and the ultimate reference to the Leader, in whose steps we are exhorted to tread, bearing 'our sins' on the 'Tree,' seems to warrant the deductions which have been drawn from his letter. We cannot walk in His steps, till we are justified from sin—we cannot follow Him, till we are accounted clean from our defilements. "Follow me" said the Leader; "Ye should follow His Steps" says the Apostle, and the content and meaning of the Apostle's words must be deduced in the light of the Master's Call. It is not merely a call to follow Jesus in an attempt at moral rectitude, but to follow Him to 'the Tree.' It is not merely a matter of good words, or good deeds, but of a deeper purpose—a contract to live "to the Will of God." (1 Pet. 4: 2).

Beloved in the Lord, let no teaching beguile you from the purpose of your calling. Ye were called not merely to know Jesus as your Saviour, but as your Prince-Leader to Heavenly Glory. Accord Him therefore, the privilege not only of reaching down to your level in order to save you from sin, but of leading you up to His level of Glory, Honour and Immortality.

Let us see to it that we appreciate His Leadership, as well as His Saviourship, till we see Him face to face, beyond 'the Tree' in the Glory.

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

"MY PRESENCE SHALL GO WITH THEE AND I WILL GIVE THEE REST."

Almighty God, the Lord of Heaven and Earth,
O Thou, the Source and Centre of each sphere,
The Lord of Being, throned afar, Whose hand
Upholds the weight of worlds, yet wondrous thought!
Nor day nor night too occupied to note
E'en when a sparrow falls to earth, Whose eyes
A watch-care keep o'er every child of Thine;

Whose guardian angels daily shape the course
Of those who love Thee more than life itself;
Whose chastening rod doth guide them in the way
That leads to endless life!—how sweet to feel
THY PRESENCE EVER NEAR, to know that
Thou
Dost never sleep nor slumber while Thy child
In time of need doth feebly cry to Thee.

O Thou, in Whom no shade of turning lies,
Thou changeless and unvariable One!
Though ALL unfaithful prove, yea, though the earth
And heavens depart, by faith we clasp Thy hand,
We calmly rest our weary hearts on Thee,
Assured that Thou wilt ne'er forsake, that we
Shall be for ever precious in Thy sight!

"HE PRAYED TO GOD ALWAYS."

Here is another man of prayer. Cornelius, a Roman soldier of some distinction who had in some way been attracted to the God of Israel, the only true God. His country was Pagan Rome, steeped in idolatry, calling upon the Gods that were no Gods. How much we admire this man who is described in Acts 10: 2 as "A devout man and one that feared God with all his house which 'gave much alms to the people and prayed to God always.' He not only yielded solemn and reverential attention to God but his influence spread to all his house and the God-like trait of giving was manifested in him in as much as he 'gave alms to the people.' He had renounced the idols of his land and 'prayed to God always' and this was the man whom God honoured with the distinction of being the first Christian Gentile to receive His special attention and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH JESUS PRAYED.

On commitment to His life's work (Luke 3, 21)
Before choosing disciples (Luke 6, 12, 13)
In preparation for the day's work (Mark 1, 35)
At the end of the day's work (Matt. 14, 23)
Receiving strength for work (Mark 9, 29)
Before food (Matt. 14, 19)
Before a crisis (Luke 9, 18-22, 28)
For His friends (Luke 22, 32, John 14, 16)
For His enemies (Luke 23, 34)
For Children (Mark 10, 16)
In thankfulness (Luke 10, 21, 22, 19, Mark 14, 23)

JUST TO LET THY FATHER DO WHAT HE WILL.

Just to let Thy Father do what He will;
Just to know that He is true, and be still.
Just to follow, hour by hour, as He leadeth;
Just to draw the moment's power, as it needeth.
Just to trust Him, that is all. Then the day will surely be
Peaceful, whatso'er befall, bright and blessed, calm and
free.

Just to let Him speak to thee, through His word,
Watching, that His voice may be clearly heard.
Just to tell Him everything, as it rises,
And at once to bring to Him all surprises.
Just to listen, and to stay where you cannot miss His voice
This is all! and thus today, you, communing, shall rejoice.

Just to trust, and yet to ask guidance still;
Take the training or the task, as He will.
Just to take the loss or gain, as He sends it;
Just to take the joy or pain, as He lends it.
He who formed thee for His praise will not miss the
gracious aim;
So today, and all thy days, shall be moulded for the same.

Just to leave in His dear hand little things;
All we cannot understand, all that stings.
Just to let Him take the care sorely pressing;
Finding all we let Him bear changed to blessing.
This is all! and yet the way marked by Him who loves
thee best:
Secret of a happy day, secret of His promised rest.

CHARACTER STUDIES

FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Lot was not called of God as was his uncle Abraham, but he was a good man and there was a bond of union between the two which was stronger than that of natural affection; and he accompanied Abraham the three hundred miles into Canaan. Weaker characters often lean on stronger ones.

Lot was wealthy. Genesis 13: 5 says he had flocks and herds and the difficulty of finding sufficient pasturage was so great that verse 6 says "The land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together, for their substance was great." Strife began between the herdsmen of Abraham's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle but it is obvious that Lot began to take part with his herdsmen and regard himself as an injured man, for Abraham said, "Let there be no strife I pray thee between thee and me," and suggested that they separate. Abraham was generous and gave Lot the choice. Lot accepted it and instead of feeling that it was due to his uncle's age and rank to yield to him the preference he greedily selected the region that seemed to offer the greatest worldly advantages. He chose the Plain of Jordan which was well watered. In Abraham's day the Jordan poured down a larger volume of water than at present. By the loss of its forests the climate of Palestine has become much more dry and fertile regions have become barren.

"Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent towards Sodom." He had evidently a longing towards Sodom but was not as yet within its walls. His departure was evidently a great grief to Abraham; he had lost a companion, but God consoled him. In his journeying Abraham was to have the tranquil pleasure of feeling that his seed would inherit each beautiful spot that he visited. As Lot was deteriorating Abraham was drawing nearer to God and walking more closely with Him.

When we come to Genesis 19 we find Lot had become a citizen of Sodom and was probably treated with honour as a relative of Abraham. This personal respect had made him close his eyes to the sinfulness of the people. He consented to live there and permitted its citizens to marry his daughters. Meanwhile all intercourse with Abraham had apparently ceased and he had lost all share in the covenant of circumcision.



4. The Tragedy of Lot.

C.T.W.

We find a sharp contrast when we read the attitude of the angels towards the two men Abraham and Lot. When Abraham offered them hospitality they replied "So do as thou hast said," but to Lot they said, "Nay, but we will abide in the street all night." Lot's character had deteriorated. 2 Peter 2: 7-8 gives Lot a good character but he was righteous only relatively and though his soul was daily vexed by what he saw it was not vexed enough to make him quit such evil and return to the healthy and virtuous mountain life. The warning of his fall is that men who part with religious privileges for the sake of worldly advantage are in danger of sinking into moral degradation and losing with their faith and hope not only their self respect and happiness but even that earthly profit for the sake of which they sacrificed their religion.

The men of Sodom said of Lot, "This fellow came in to sojourn and he will needs be a judge." It seems that an extraordinary concession had been made in Lot's favour in allowing him to reside in Sodom. In ancient times rights of citizenship were jealously guarded and the position of a sojourner made very bitter. "He will needs be a judge" is in the Hebrew "He is ever acting as a judge" and suggests that Lot had previously reproved the Sodomites.

The angels told Lot of the impending destruction of the city, but verse 16 says, "While he lingered." He still clung to his wealth and could not make up his mind to leave it so that the angels had to take him by the hand and lead him without the city. The instruction was given, "look not behind." God required a total abandonment of the doomed cities in heart and will but his wife looked back and became a monument of an unbelieving soul.

Zoar was pointed out to him as an asylum but (verse 30) he left Zoar, giving another instance of his loss of faith. It is recorded that "he feared to dwell in Zoar" although he had been told he would be safe there. Terrified at the sight of the smoking valley, and remembering that he had been originally commanded to go to the mountains, he summoned up courage and went there, and we find him there housed in a miserable cavern—he whose wealth had been so great and who had sacrificed so much for worldly advantage dwelt with his two daughters in a cave.

Gathered Grain.

It is most important to note the difference between "deadness" to feeling and the "repression" of feeling. To "feel" angry or anxious, etc., and to repress the expression of the feeling is to court physical trouble. Indeed, much physical trouble can be accounted for by repression of some part of our nature. Many truly Christian people do violence to themselves by self-limitation of thought and feeling; they think it wrong to let their love go out fully and freely; they fear to indulge their longing for beauty or give their creative instincts free play. If the "whole" man is to be "healthy" we must open wide all the channels of our nature, at all its varying levels, and let the Divine creative life pour free through them and uplift and transfigure them. There must be some right outlet for every God-given instinct, and if we desire the perfection of our whole being as a witness to our Maker, opportunities for the use of all our powers will surely present themselves as we are fitted to make use of them. Those who make the service of the Master their first joy in life find it offers possibilities in them which they had never suspected they possessed. But that service must be undertaken in the free joyous child-spirit of dependence on the Heavenly Father, not with the burdened sense of personal responsibility. We are always "workers together with God" and God only gives us to do what it is possible for us to accomplish. All else we can leave trustfully in His hands.

Selected.

* * * *

Let us beloved, with all our getting—get love, not merely in word, but in deed and in truth—the love whose roots are in the new heart, begotten in us by our Heavenly Father's love—and exemplified in the words and deeds of our dear Redeemer. All else sought and gained will be but loss and dross, unless with all, we secure love.

The Watch Tower.

* * * *

Psalm 119; 15-16.

Here is the secret of a pure and noble life, acceptable to God. It is to be attained, not merely by prayers and righteous resolution, but in addition to these, by careful painstaking heed, by systematic and diligent effort in self cultivation, by care and perseverance in weed-

ing out evil thoughts, and by diligent and constant cultivation of pure, benevolent and noble thoughts, and by nipping in the bud the weeds of perversity before they bring forth their hasty harvest of sinful words and deeds. If we make the Word of God the theme of our constant meditation its principles will soon be assimilated and become part of our mental make-up, making our characters more beautiful and commendable both to God and to our fellow-men, and in harmony with this habit of the mind the acts of life will speak.

Selected.

* * * *

THE WORLD AND THE GOSPEL.

Under the above heading and bearing a picture of the world, with the words, "The whole world for Jesus Now," also the quotation from Matt. 28: 19, the following appears in a church paper sent in by one of our brethren recently:

"Less than 150 years ago it was estimated that 481 millions did not have an intelligent knowledge of Jesus Christ. Four years ago, it was estimated that the population of the world was 1958 millions, and that of these no less than 1370 millions were unreached by the Gospel. Thus in under 150 years the heathen world had increased almost three-fold.

"Church of Christ, arise! Our Master's command still holds; the need of the world is immense; we have the means of meeting the need."

When it is realised that the increasing number of heathen quoted above has come about during practically the same time as that recorded in Daniel—"the time of the end; (when) many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Dan. 12: 4)—a time of enlightenment which from the natural standpoint should have been the most favourable for extending the Gospel message to every human being, does not the truth of this matter indicate that the time for winning "the whole world for Jesus" is not yet? Surely it does, and there is abundant Scriptural testimony to this effect for all who in spirit and truth seek to "rightly divide the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2: 15).

(The People's Paper).

* Ambassadors of Christ * Holding forth the Word of Life * Lights in the world *

THY KINGDOM COME

THE FULFILMENT OF AN AGE-OLD PRAYER.

A.O.II.

Few people realise with what intensity the words "Thy Kingdom Come" have been breathed by Christians who know that in that Kingdom alone lies the only hope for humanity. Jesus Christ made the Kingdom of God upon earth a very prominent part of His teaching, but His words have been so spiritualised by theologians who believe only in Heaven as a place beyond the stars that the idea of a condition of affairs on earth which could be described as the "Kingdom of the Heavens" has disappeared from currently accepted belief and thus one of the most inspiring and uplifting themes of the Bible is sealed to all but the careful student.

It may be true, as is so often stated, that faith in God and interest in Christianity is waning fast among the people who make up this present day world. Yet it is also true that in every age, when the message and the teaching of Christ is presented in a form which is suited to the minds of men and women of that age, that message proves superior to every other philosophy and affords a ready answer to the questions which arise in daily life.

Now it is to those who do believe that the teaching and practice of Christianity will ultimately prevail that these words are addressed. There are many who do not so believe; many who cannot reconcile their knowledge of the world and of human nature with any such expectation. This may be a very natural and logical conclusion at which to arrive, but one needs to remember that there is always the "unknown factor" which is liable to affect one's conclusions. Some aspect of the problem not completely understood or visualised, and which is not taken into full account, may change the whole complexion of affairs.

That unknown factor, in this instance, is the "Kingdom of Heaven."

The coming of Christ to the earth was from above, as He Himself said. The message He preached was the one by which the world will be saved. His forecast of the things that are to come had the authority of Divine revelation; and in consequence His words about the "Kingdom" must be appreciated and accepted, if one

is to enter into the meaning of His prayer "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven."

At the time of the First Advent those Jews who listened to the words of Jesus interpreted the whole of His teachings regarding the "Kingdom" along purely material lines and with a strongly nationalist flavouring. They thought that the "Kingdom of Heaven" would be a Divine government on earth under which Israel would be the most favoured nation whilst the other nations were to be ruled by them. They thought that the Messiah would appear as a great military leader who would overthrow the power of Rome and exalt His countrymen to the leadership of the nations. Righteousness was to become a virtue by reason of its enthronement as the law of the land; and in the same way sinners would be destroyed just because the new government would be in a position to exact vengeance upon all who opposed it. Small wonder that with ideas such as these the people of Israel proved to be incapable of appreciating the essence of the Saviour's teaching.

As if in reaction to this view of the Creator's purposes, the Christian churches to a great extent have ignored the earthly phase of the Divine Plan and concentrated their whole attention on that aspect of Christ's teaching which deals with His Kingdom in the hearts of men. Such a spiritual Kingdom truly has been in process of establishment throughout the centuries from the First Advent until now, and its beneficent results are seen in the transformed lives of those who have made Christ their Master and Leader, and to Whose service they are devoted. This is the Kingdom which is spoken of so freely in the Epistles of the New Testament, and into which those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are ushered. The outcome of being thus "seated with Christ in heavenly places" is to be an eternal association with Christ in the glory of the spiritual world and in the presence of God Himself. This spiritual salvation is the hope of the Church; of all who have willingly devoted their

lives to the cause of Christ. They will be associated with Him in the spiritual realms in all those works which God the Creator is planning for the future.

Nevertheless there still remains that very definite teaching which was so pronounced an element of the work of Jesus Christ and which is now the most heart-satisfying message that can come to humanity, sorely tried and distressed by reason of world conditions. The Kingdom of Heaven upon earth; Divine standards of truth and right-doing transplanted to earth and in active operation amongst men. Fear, malice, disease, pain—yes, death itself,—a thing of the past, and the human race facing a future of unparalleled happiness. That is the Kingdom, so far as men are concerned. The earth made to bring forth its increase for the good of all; each one of its inhabitants willingly sharing in the duties of citizenship, with no man seeking any advantage over his fellow. Selfishness replaced by self-lessness, greed by generosity, ignorance and superstition by such clear understanding of the underlying principles of the Divine Plan for human existence that men will willingly as well as intelligently conform themselves to its provisions.

When Jesus was upon earth He constantly told of this Kingdom which He would establish one day amongst men. The conditions of life under that Kingdom are portrayed vividly in the Old Testament. From that portrayal it is possible to form a mental picture which in these days of distress affords a definite hope for the future—and there are few who will not admit that such a hope is needed. Although the details of that picture are to the average person so startling that they are likely to be dismissed with a shrug of incredulity, an examination of them reveals the operation of Divine benevolence in a truly marvellous manner.

The establishment of the Kingdom will coincide with the culminating events of a period of trouble, unrest and strife, in all walks of life, and affecting all the institutions of man, such as the world has never before experienced. This time of trouble is now coming upon the nations and it is true to-day that there is "upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things which are coming upon the earth," (Luke 21; 25). It is in the face of these disasters that Messiah's reign will be inaugurated, and men will "say in that day, Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him and

He will save us." (Isa. 25; 9). This will be the cry even although men in general do not realise now that they are waiting for the only One who can deliver them.

The first work of the new Kingdom will be the announcement to the living nations that another power has taken control of earth's affairs, that henceforth "judgment is laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet," "A King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment" (Isa. 28; 17 and 23; 1). The power in control will adopt the most exalted of standards in its rule. From such a government, supervised by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, nothing but good will flow. Although human nature will at first still be what it is to-day, that Kingdom will have as its object the changing of human nature and the recovery of every human being who will accept Jesus as his Saviour, to the mental and moral "image and likeness" of God.

This is not fantasy. The Apostle Peter declared that the "heavens must retain" Jesus Christ "until the times of restitution of all things," and that then people will hearken (Acts 3; 19-23). At a later stage in his life and ministry he spoke of a "new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (1 Pet. 3; 13). Paul, writing to the Corinthian Christians, spoke of a time when Christ, reigning should "put all enemies under His feet," the last enemy to be destroyed being death. Many are the Scriptural references to this earthly Kingdom of universal righteousness with its happiness, peace and prosperity.

With the declaration that death is to be destroyed, a further phase of this subject is brought into view. Our Lord declared that "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." (John 5; 28). A leading feature of the Christian faith is its insistence that a future life is attained, not by dying, but by means of a **resurrection from the dead**. There is abundant testimony in the Bible to the effect that all who have ever lived upon the earth will experience a raising again and a restoration to earthly conditions of life that they might share in the blessings of the Kingdom. An incredible thing to the materialist thinkers of to-day, even as it was when Paul addressed the citizens of Athens (Acts 17) yet as true and certain as the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the very evidence brought forward by Paul to demonstrate his point.

If it is true that the whole of the earth's past

population is to return to earth—obviously with new bodies, since the old ones will have long since disintegrated—two major problems present themselves.

First; will there be room for those resurrected hosts.

Second; how will they solve the problems of daily life without repeating the dark history of the present and past ages.

An exhaustive answer to the first question is not possible within the scope of this treatise and is not important, since it must of necessity rest upon mathematical calculations based upon very scanty and uncertain data, whilst the Word of God is quite definite as to the fact that these millions will return to the earth. Taking the latest findings of competent authorities on the age of the human race and the life-supporting possibilities of the earth as a basis, however, it can be demonstrated that the *Bible promise that all who have ever lived shall be raised to earthly life again*, is by no means so unreasonable as it seems at first sight.

The second query is more in line with the primary object of this article. The aim and object of the Kingdom is to **acquaint all men with those principles which underlie the whole of Divine creation and without which that creation cannot continue.** When men have realised the truth of the saying that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" and compared in their minds the baneful effects of rampant sin, lawlessness and injustice with the beneficial results of right thinking, right living and right doing, the obligation will come to each individual man to choose freely, without constraint, but with full

knowledge, between the opposites—life and death, good and evil. Since evil contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, it should be clear that God the Creator, in harmony with the laws which He has ordained, cannot maintain the life of an intelligently deliberate evil doer indefinitely, and so quite naturally and logically the life of such an one comes to its eternal close. Those who willingly and gladly come to the feet of Jesus their Saviour and King in devotion and service, taking their rightful place as citizens of the new earth, will enter upon a condition of existence eternal in duration and infinite in its opportunity for growth and development in the reverence and knowledge of God, and in every activity and enquiry pertaining to perfect human nature.

Picture then the boundless possibilities before the human race. With sin eliminated, there will be no disease, no pain, no vice, no death. Nature will be the servant of man, who is to be the glory as well as the king of all material creation. With the world's work gladly performed by willing hands and its production controlled and distributed for the common good, there will be no "poverty in the midst of plenty," no scarcity and no unemployment problem. With leisure rightly employed, men will turn to avenues of study and pleasurable pursuit the development of which will but serve to demonstrate their Creator's munificence in stronger relief. From all the earth there will arise an expression of reverential praise to God Whose benevolent designs thus carried into effect will then be manifest to all men.

(This article is available in leaflet form.)

"JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING."

A number of people were sheltering from an air-raid in a strutted stone passage. The blast wall on the pavement and the supported ceiling of the entry gave them protection from blast and shrapnel, but they were cold, tired and afraid. The noise of exploding bombs and the thunder of the anti-aircraft guns was more than one woman could stand, and she gave vent to her feelings in a flood of tears. "Oh, I wish the dawn would come!" she sobbed. The coming of daylight would bring temporary relief from the "terror by night," and the people could re-

turn to the peace and warmth of their homes. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psa. 30; 5). Joy in the morning. What a blessed promise! We hope and pray that soon the Lord will make wars to cease unto the end of the earth, and the peoples of all nations will behold the Millennial Morning with the rising Sun of Righteousness scattering the dark clouds of ignorance and superstition, and bringing Divine truth, happiness, and everlasting peace to a sin-stained world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

A very well-known and greatly beloved figure passed from our midst when Sister Williams, of London, a former colporteur, achieved her heart's desire to hear the voice of her Lord calling her home. She passed from the scene of her earthly activities on Tuesday, 8th July, having of late shown signs of failing health, and dying at last "just of old age." Those who knew Sister Williams best will feel that in essential respects she never entered into old age, and that although the earthly vessel has at length failed there is indeed that committed to her Heavenly Lord which cannot fail but blossom forth into glorious maturity in the "First Resurrection" to which she looked forward with such ardent longing.

ANONYMOUS

This opportunity is taken to acknowledge receipt of an anonymous donation of £1, with an expression of sincere appreciation to the donor, the donation being applied, as requested, to the Benevolent Fund.

IMMERSION SERVICE.

A Baptismal Service is planned by the Forest Gate friends for 11 a.m. on Sunday, 17th August, at the Seventh Day Adventist Hall, Boundary Road, Walthamstow. They will be pleased to welcome friends who would like to be present, and if there are brethren who desire to take advantage of this opportunity to symbolise their consecration. Bro. F. Guard, 74 Princes Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex, will gladly give all information upon request. Perhaps some who will not be present themselves will keep these things in their hearts and when the brethren have come together in this happy meeting will join their prayers with those who in that place are testifying to their faith.

LUTON

The Luton friends had an encouraging season of fellowship on Sunday, June 18th, when a gathering was arranged for friends from surrounding districts. In the afternoon Bro. Guy spoke on "Judging," pointing out the need of avoiding that characteristic now, but to seek continually to prepare ourselves for that work in the future. Bro. Guard gave a very helpful exposition of Psa. 46 in the evening, dwelling particularly on each verse, encouraging us to greater trust in God as our Shelter or Harbour or Refuge, to acquiesce in His over-ruling providence and to be devoid of every element of fear. There was a very deep sense of the Lord's presence and blessing amongst us, and the day finished with very grateful hearts to Him for His gracious providence.

RUGBY

The Rugby friends were the hosts at an uplifting gathering held in a tent at Rugby on Sunday, June 29th. Brethren from Birmingham, Blaby, Coventry, Beeston, Leicester, Kettering and Market Bosworth came together for a day of spontaneous fellowship and devotion; the fine weather and unique surroundings combining to make the day one to be long remembered. A Praise meeting led by Bro. Smith, of Blaby, commenced the day, after which Bro. Hudson, of Leicester, spoke on the subject, "The Road Before Us," outlining some considerations concerning the mission of the Church in

the closing days of the Age. A delightful garden lunch was followed by the afternoon session, addressed by Bro. Golder, of Birmingham, in a very deeply appreciated theme taken from the Psalms. After tea the friends gathered once more to hear Bro. French, of London, expound his subject, "The Bride of Christ" with the Book of Revelation as his background, enlarging on the nature of those vicissitudes through which the true Church has passed whilst the Age has run its course. A real spirit of unity was much in evidence and the friends dispersed with renewed encouragement to continue steadfast unto the end.

LEICESTER

The Rechabites Hall, Leicester, was the scene of a very happy gathering on July 19-20. The week-end commenced on Saturday evening, when Bro. Sidney Smith (Manchester) addressed an assembly of local friends on "Trumpets of Scripture," showing how the various Biblical historical events in which trumpets figured were all marked instances of Divine intervention. On Sunday a well-attended gathering of friends from Leicester, Blaby, Rugby, Kettering, Birmingham, Coventry, Nottingham and Beeston taxed the capacity of the Hall to the uttermost. Bro. Guillemard (Birmingham) conducted a praise and prayer meeting, followed by a session at which Bro. Absalom (Beeston) took the chair for Bro. Stanley (Warrington). Bro. Stanley's subject was "The Ploughman and Reaper," and his exposition of the well-known Scripture touched particularly upon present-day events in their relation to the Church, and included an exhortation to "put on the whole armour of God." In the afternoon a praise and testimony meeting was conducted by Bro. W. Smith (Blaby), following which Bro. Thurman (Leicester) occupied the chair, whilst Bro. Sidney Smith presented a comprehensive exhortation based upon the messages to the Seven Churches,—culminating in a word picture of the Throne Scene of Revelation and its significance to us to-day. The evening programme provided for two sessions, at the first of which Bro. Couling (Rugby) presided over an address by Bro. Ward (Kettering) on the power of prayer, taking as a central theme the story of the importunate widow. The chair at the final session was taken by Bro. Hudson (Leicester) and Bro. Sidney Smith gave as his closing address "The Three Vines," dwelling upon the True Vine in which we are all branches; Israel, the Vine of God; the Vine of the Earth, whose end is to be destroyed. Praise and prayer concluded an inspiring time of fellowship and worship which contributed materially to the forging of still closer bonds of fraternity between many of like faith in the Midlands.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

The Reference Library is now open again and brethren may apply for books under the same arrangements as previously obtained, viz., upon payment of postage both ways. It is only necessary to send post card request for the book in the first place, and send stamps for postage when returning the book.

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Mr. J. Humphrey
24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent

and not to 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford.

A list of books at present available appears on back cover. The Committee are pleased to accept books for inclusion in the Library if of value to Bible Students and not easily obtainable in public libraries.

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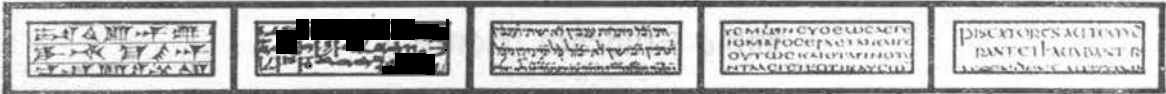
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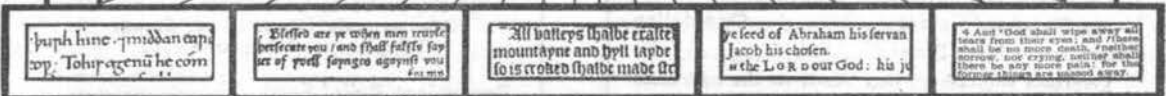
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BIBLE STUDENT'S MONTHLY



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Threepence

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

Bible Students Monthly

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The object of this journal is the encouragement of independent study of the Scriptures in the light of present-day knowledge, with special reference to the "High Calling of God in Christ Jesus;" the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the establishment of His Kingdom upon earth.

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THE PATH OF THE JUST

A discussion on the broad principles of
Christian Progress. A.O.H.

"The path of the just is as the
shining light, that shineth more
and more unto the perfect day."

Prov. 4; 18

Admission to the privileges of Christian fellowship is limited by almost every religious community to those who will conform to certain standards of belief. Sometimes the set standard has a wide basis—nothing more than acceptance of Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour and belief that by that acceptance the believer has "received salvation"; has been "born again." Sometimes the standard set is almost inconceivably narrow, demanding rigid adherence to a comprehensive theology which purports to set out a detailed exposition of all God's dealings, past, present and future; a code of conduct which takes no account of the changing world around; insistence upon the absolute necessity of outward symbols, such as baptism, before the prospective believer can be counted as one of "the flock." Between these extremes there is represented in Christendom a varied range of standards, and to those who view their relationship to each other as dependent upon their relationship to the Lord Jesus and who desire to attain a correct perception of His Will, it becomes very necessary to have a clear view of the varied aspects and requirements of Christian discipleship. Only thus shall we be able to discern our own place in the Master's vineyard, and, discerning, labour acceptably in His Service.

Among Christian disciples there are various outlooks and a differing understanding of the "call" to follow Christ. In the first place there are those who believe and cultivate the ethics of His teachings, the virtues described by James as the "fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. 6; 22), love, joy, peace, and so on, but who go through life without feeling the burning urge to become **workers** for Christ. The call to ambassadorship finds no responsive chord. The joy of converting the unbeliever, of assisting the first faltering steps of "babes in Christ" is one which is never theirs. The Christian life is to them a placid existence in which the calm enjoyment of saintly virtue is a shield and barrier against the ugly things of this world, and whilst they look up to the Lord Christ with reverence and adoration they do not see at His feet the bending figures of broken-hearted sinners who come to Him for healing.

In the second place, there are those who, having fully appreciated the essentially missionary spirit of Christ's teaching, have found on the basis of a complete and whole-hearted surrender to Him an outlet for their love and zeal in one of two general directions. They either engage in some form of social service, applying practical Christianity to the immediate material needs of men's bodies, or they become evangelists and missionaries, seeking to satisfy the craving of men's minds for a sense of re-union with God. There is not much of an intellectual nature in this, for the majority who will listen to such a missionary need food for the heart and not for the head; hence "bright Gospel services," the preaching of "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," fully satisfies the desire manifested by such for a sense of freedom from the power of sin and the certainty of ultimate salvation. The work of great revivalists like Dwight L. Moody was of this kind. No deep theology, no striking revelation of the purpose of God for man; yet a spiritual revival of such dimensions that without doubt it had much to do with the general ripening of Christian character which made the closing years of the nineteenth century the "Harvest of the Age."

Thirdly, there are those disciples, generally of a studious, reverent or mystic turn of mind, who seek to know God's plans for the future. Such a desire is a commendable one. "Surely the Lord will do nothing but He revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets." (Amos. 3; 7). Here is clear indication that the Father does reveal His purposes to those who are in the proper frame of mind to listen. The constant reiteration of the command to "Watch—for ye know neither the day nor the hour." (Matt. 25; 13), to be as watchers on the walls of the city (Hab. 2; 1) and to seek as did Daniel to "know by books the number of the years." (Dan. 9; 2) is sufficient to assure every earnest student that the study of Divine laws and purposes is fraught with blessing to the one who seeks.

This third class of disciples is that which will take the most intelligent interest in the whole Plan of God and is prepared to give time and thought and energy to the consideration of the

underlying principles of Divine revelation. Such will have the clearest idea of the ultimate purpose of God's creation and can, more than any other, give a reasonable answer to the enquirer. Accused as they are of being "not practical" or of ignoring the opportunities of Christian social service or the winning of unconverted ones to the standard of Christ, it is nevertheless true that the work they are doing is of vital importance in the further development of God's plan. "God at the first did visit the Gentiles (nations) to take out of them a people for His name" says Peter (Acts 15; 14), and much of the New Testament is occupied with exhortations to this class of believers to give heed to their continued growth in grace and knowledge, that in due time they may become the Divine ambassadors when God "returns" (Acts 15; 16) to convert the nations.

The administrative and uplift work of the Millennial Age will require a Ministry of Reconciliation (II Cor. 5; 18), the members of which are fitted in every respect for their work. They will have been "perfected through suffering" and in all the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit will have been made copy-likenesses of God's dear Son. That inward grace and heart harmony with God must be allied with a positive knowledge of God's laws and purposes so that they may be real instructors of the people. "They that be wise" said Daniel (12. 2), "shall shine as the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." It was so with our Lord, for "by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, when he shall bear away (Heb.) their iniquities" (Isa. 53; 11) in the Millennial Age. Made "like unto his brethren" (Heb. 2; 17) it is by His positive knowledge of the evils of sin and of the beneficence of righteousness that our Lord becomes a "merciful and faithful High Priest" and so shall it be with His followers. It should be readily agreed then that of all the varied kinds of Christian disciples those who consecrate to do the Will of God and endeavour in the course of their consecrated life to attain a fair and true understanding of the Divine Plan are likely to be the best fitted for ultimate control—to reign with Christ. This is the purpose of the High Calling of this Gospel Age—to select a consecrated body of disciples who "know what their lord doeth" (Luke 12; 47), and so are ready to be used in His purposes when the time comes.

This is the reason that study of the Scriptures cannot be separated from our High Calling and

our consecration. Some bemoan the fact that so much of our time is taken up with the study of the Word to the exclusion of more "practical" manifestations of Christianity. It is unfortunately only too true that the "students" are often the least practical of all Christians and sometimes tend to become "mystics" without any practical outlook in the world around them at all. A clear understanding of the Truth should point to a proper balance between mere studiousness, the accumulation of knowledge, and the practical outworking of that knowledge. We need always to remember that the sincerity of our belief in the standards of the Millennial Age will be measured in large degree by our endeavour to put them into practice in this world to-day; and the learning we gather from the fountain of all Truth has failed in its purpose if we do not manifest forth the Word of life to others around us in some degree almost at once.

In order to preserve this proper balance between head and heart it is vital that the Divine way of imparting truth is clearly understood. There are two possible methods which God could have chosen. He could impart the knowledge of this Plan by direct revelation to each individual, in which case there would be no necessity for study and discussion, for thought and meditation, for pastors, teachers, evangelists, helpers. (Eph. 4; 11). On the other hand He could allow His truth to penetrate men's minds gradually as their powers of understanding developed, feeding upon that which had already been made known and had been assimilated. Which method has God adopted?

The laws of Nature point to the latter process as that which characterises all God's creation. Our Lord sketched a word picture when he likened His message to seed which was scattered and lay dormant, and then germinated, a man not knowing how, until at length it made its way through the earth "first the blade, then the ear" (Mark 4; 28). Another eloquent lesson lay concealed in His action when, taking a little child and setting him in the midst, He said to His disciples "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." The earth itself was not brought into existence in a moment of time. The splendour and variety of trees and plants, of animals and birds, did not appear in all their present glory at one word from the lips of the Almighty. The story of the rocks reveals how creation progressed in a logical and orderly manner. The bare, lifeless earth existed for

countless ages before even the humblest forms of life appeared on its surface. Mosses and ferns appeared before the trees. Humble denizens of the oceans swarmed and multiplied long before any great air-breathing animal roamed the forests and prairies. Ungainly flying reptiles hovered uncertainly in the air before any of the brilliant chorus of birds made their songs heard above the tree-tops. Man himself, the glory and crown of earthly creation, was the last arrival of all upon our planet. All this is described with unparalleled simplicity and eloquence in the first chapter of Genesis.

So with the development of the promised "seed." At first but a hazy glimmer of hope, the seed of the woman was to bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3; 15). Then a definite and detailed promise, given to Abraham the friend of God (Gen. 12; 3), a chosen nation, to be the custodian of God's oracles (Rom. 3; 2), and a kingly line of whom should come that Seed (Jer. 23; 5), until finally in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus the promise became a reality. Even then a further development in this wondrous purpose came into view, for now we perceive that Christ has many members, and we, Christian disciples of this age, are those members (1 Cor. 12; 27), and if we be Christ's then we also are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3; 29).

We are often reluctant to admit this progressive and unfolding nature of Divine Truth. Human pride is much more flattered by the desire to believe that God has chosen us as specially favoured individuals to be granted a special and exclusive revelation which no one else can possibly receive, than it is to recognise the fact that our standing in Divine Truth at all is due to the labours of earlier disciples who laid the foundation of our present standing. In our natural reaction from those errors of doctrine which we have cast aside in the light of this day we oft times fail to give sufficient credit for the good work done by our predecessors in Christian service and ministry. Our Lord recognised that principle when he said "I send you forth to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour. Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours." (Jno. 4; 38). Many believe that in this day they have seen a harvest work accomplished and perchance have taken a share in the reaping. Do we always realise as much as we should that that harvest was made possible by the labours

of earnest Christian men in past centuries—yea, even those whom we sometimes criticise for too great a zeal in their service and not sufficient attention to a deeper doctrinal understanding of the Word of God.

This appreciation of the essentially progressive development of our understanding of Truth is the key to New Testament teaching. Paul's exposition of doctrine contained all the essentials, but he left it to each reader to interpret for himself in the light of his own generation and environment those expressions and figures which Paul adopted to convey his meaning to Christians of the first century. To a Church which had been brought up under the strict discipline of Judaism the message of Christ came expressed in types borrowed from the Tabernacle ceremonies, and much more easily understood therefore by Jews than by Gentiles. We in this day must study the Levitical ritual of Exodus and Leviticus before we can appreciate the deeper spiritual teaching of the Book of Hebrews. Paul expounded the truth regarding the "Ransom for All" in terms taken from Mithraism, a philosophy well known to his Gentile readers but almost unknown to us to-day. To the illiterate and uneducated masses of Western Europe the "Passion plays" of the Middle Ages were the only effective means of teaching Scripture truth, and so it happened that men and women who, unable to read or hear the Bible in their own language, gazed upon the winged and white-robed angels, and horned and tailed devils, of those plays and built their conception of Heaven and Hell around the things which they saw. How deeply those things were impressed is shown by the fact that to-day, several centuries after reading has become almost universal in England, there are still many Christians who think of the spiritual world in those same terms. John Bunyan believed whole-heartedly in the things about which he wrote, yet who could doubt his fervent spirit was truly in tune with that Lord to whom he was given in complete surrender, even although we in this day could by no means endorse his theology!

Present Truth is built upon this foundation, and to remain and continue in Present Truth it is essential to hold that, first, the essential principles of Divine Truth were revealed to the Apostles and laid down by them for all time, and expressed in language fitted to the generation which first heard them; second, that in every age those principles need to be re-expressed in words and terms fitted to that age, that the

spiritual truth behind the words may be truly appreciated. Luther believed in transubstantiation; that the bread and wine of the sacrament became in very truth the body and blood of our Lord. Wesley saw a deeper significance in the call to "eat of that bread and drink of that cup" and proclaimed the necessity for personal surrender to Christ. Later Christian leaders elaborated that understanding until in the nineteenth century, personal association with Christ, now and for ever, a complete and utter abandonment of ourselves to the service and instruction of the Good Shepherd, was seen to be the real participation in bread and cup which our Lord had in mind when first he said to the disciples, "This cup is my blood of the new covenant. Drink ye all of it," and who shall say that there is not an even deeper understanding of this mystic association with Christ, awaiting us when we are ready to receive it, reconciling past perplexities and leading us still farther along the shining pathway of Truth?

Unless we realise and follow this principle there can be no progress in Truth. How true it is that attempts are often made to stop at some point to which Christian believers have attained and to discourage further research and progress. The tendency is always to rest satisfied with progress made and to withdraw from the constant struggle of pioneering. But the very nature of Christian thought is to burst the bonds and grow, and if an outlet is not provided then the result will be that declared by the Master Himself in His story of the new wine in the old wine skins (Luke 5; 37). It is not often noticed that He did not condemn the old wine as bad, nor the old wineskins as useless. What he did say was that old wine is the right thing to keep in old wineskins, and that both are then preserved. New wine should go into new wineskins, and then both will adjust themselves to each other peaceably.

Our Lord knew that His teaching would take out from amongst the Jewish system a "remnant" who had already learned all that Judaism could teach them and were reaching out

to further advances in the knowledge of God's Plan. He knew also that the vast majority were not yet ready for this further revelation of Divine Truth and in His wisdom left the old wine to the old wineskins. Now be it noted that there were certain essential doctrines which were common both to the old Jewish faith and to that new faith which was to supersede it. That there was only one God, and that men were sinners, unreconciled to God except a propitiary offering be made; that the Seed of Abraham was to bless all families of the earth and that God had appointed a chosen people through whom He would execute that purpose—all these things were held as truth alike by Jew and Christian. Nevertheless the Christian from his advanced standpoint held beliefs and expectations which the Jew never enjoyed. So with us in our own day. Whilst there is much that we hold in common with all Christian believers, there are also the things which are the heritage only of those who are "called to be saints" and who have been blessed with a deeper and more "up-to-date" knowledge of the Divine Plan.

We must learn therefore to respect the beliefs and convictions of our fellow believers whilst standing quite firmly by our own. More than ever does this become necessary in the case of our nearest brethren who differ on matters which may at first sight appear to be fundamental. It often occurs that, when misunderstandings are cleared up and care taken to fully appreciate each other's point of view, the seemingly irreconcilable opposites are perceived to be different ways of expressing the same fundamental truth. We must learn to draw a clear distinction between the truths of the faith which have never varied and can never vary, and the many methods of expressing those truths which do vary from age to age and between believer and believer. Thus, and thus only, will it be true that "we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (II Cor. 3; 18).

The outworn rite, the old abuse,
The pious fraud transparent grown,
The good held captive in the use
Of wrong alone—
These wait their doom, from that great law
Which makes the past time serve to-day;
And fresher life the world shall draw
From their decay.

But life shall on and upward go;
Th' eternal step of Progress beats
To that great anthem, calm and slow,
Which God repeats.
God works in all things; all obey
His first propulsion from the night:
Wait thou and watch! the world is grey
With morning light!

(Whittier)

The Testimony of Two Witnesses

Archaeology and History unite their voices "Thy Word is Truth"

Rachel and the Stolen Images.

The story of Jacob's flight from his uncle Laban, when with wives, children and cattle, he determined to return to his own country, comes readily to mind, and one remembers how Laban pursued the runaways greatly distressed at the loss of his images or "teraphim" which Rachel had stolen. Gen. 31: 19 tells us "And Laban went to shear his sheep; and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's." Rachel had the images, and Laban had to return home without having found them.

What were those images? Why did Rachel steal them, and why did Laban, going to shear his sheep, discover his loss and manifest such distress of mind?

It has been known for many years that these "teraphim" were miniature images of gods and were kept in the house to be a kind of guardian deity. They were thought to ward off evil and to keep the household in health. When any undertaking was planned special ceremonies were conducted before them, and thus Laban, prior to commencing his sheep shearing, which was always an important event, found to his dismay that the usual ceremonial could not be observed, for the deities of his household were gone.

The discoveries of recent years have given the clue to Rachel's object. Eight years ago, research in Northern Mesopotamia revealed written records of a great nation which in Jacob's time occupied the region in which Laban and Jacob lived and kept their flocks. These people have been given the name "Hurrians," and they are the same as the Horites and the Hivites of the Old Testament. Laban, living among them, was subject to their laws and must have adopted many of their customs. Among those laws there is one which states that possession of the family gods or "teraphim" entitled the holder to a son's share in the father's estate. Here then is the reason for Rachel's theft. By securing and retaining possession of Laban's teraphim she could justly demand a share in her father's property at his death. Doubtless she was anxious to provide for the future of her son Joseph, fearing that Jacob's other ten sons might deprive him of a share in Jacob's possessions. It may have been that the jealousy which was openly manifested in later years was present even then, and Rachel sought this means to ensure that her own son would not be "left penniless."

Her theft was of no avail. Soon afterwards Jacob commanded all the "strange gods"—"the teraphim"—in the hands of his people to be given up and had them buried; a sign that the old beliefs of Laban's

house were banished for ever. (Gen. 35; 2-4). A little while longer and Rachel herself was dead. Neither was her scheming necessary, for Joseph eventually became the most powerful man in the most powerful empire of his day—Prime Minister in the land of Egypt—and so far from losing his inheritance amongst his brethren, he became their preserver and the means of establishing Israel in the place where they grew into a great nation.

Nebuchadnezzar and the Son of God.

"Did not we cast **three** men bound into the furnace?" They answered "True, O king." Then answered King Nebuchadnezzar "Lo, I see **four** men, walking in the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." (Dan. 3; 25).

The translators of the Authorised Version are guilty of a little bias here. The definite article "the" does not appear in the original Hebrew, and what Nebuchadnezzar really said was "a son of God" i.e. a supernatural being, one of the "Watchers" from above in whom the Babylonians believed. The king could obviously have known nothing about Christ, and there is no evidence that he ever intelligently accepted Daniel's God and became a proselyte. Like many other men of his time, Nebuchadnezzar probably looked upon the God of Daniel as being a mighty and powerful God but just one of many gods all the same. "There is no other god that can deliver after this sort" he said (verse 30). "He hath sent his angel" (verse 28) and this manifestation of the power of the God of these three men so impressed the king that he forbade any man to speak amiss against this mighty God. But he still paid court to his own gods, and many years after this event we find him pleading the forgiveness of his god Bel-Marduk for his neglect of his temples, and hastening to repair the omission. It needs more than great outward signs to turn a man from vain worship to serve the living God. It needs a humble spirit and a contrite heart, and this king, for all his acknowledgment of the power of God, never showed that.

Three dead cities.

Joshua destroyed and burnt three cities—Jericho, Hazor and Ai. So says the Old Testament. Learned men have written massive volumes to prove that those stories were all based on folk lore and Nature myth; that they had no foundation in fact. To-day those three ruined cities have been revealed. They lie in the hot Syrian sun just as Joshua left them over three thousand years ago, mute witnesses to the truth of that which was written.

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

PRAYER WHICH PREVAILED.

"Instant and earnest prayer was made of the church unto God for him." (Acts 12:5 margin). James had been killed by Herod, and Peter had been taken and was expecting the same fate; indeed the Jews were anticipating this (verse 11 Weymouth).

"The church was apprised of his imprisonment and danger; and had no resource but to apply to God by prayer. In scenes of danger there is no other refuge; and the result shows that, even in most discouraging circumstances, God can hear prayer. Nothing scarcely could appear more hopeless than the idea of rescuing Peter out of the hands of Herod, and out of the prison, and out of the custody of sixteen men, by prayer. But the prayer of faith was prevalent with God."

It could almost literally be called "prayer without ceasing" (verse 5 A.V.) for when Peter was set free by the angel it was apparently in the middle of the night, for Peter "was sleeping between two soldiers" (verse 6), yet when he arrived at the home of Mary the little company gathered there were still praying.

"Thus by the providence of God this persecution, that had been commenced by royal authority and power, and that was aimed at the very pillars of the church, ceased. The prayers of the church prevailed; and the monarch was overcome, disappointed, humbled, and by Divine judgment soon put to death."

A PRICELESS THING.

Surely all will agree that in the dark pathway of sorrow and the shadow of death, in which we daily walk, there are abundant opportunities to be generous, even for those who have no money to give. A kind word of sympathy or advice, yea, even a kind look, has sometimes been worth more to a discouraged brother than a handful of gold:

*It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.*

*The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told.*

FAITH AND FEELING.

Feeling should never be mistaken for faith, yet there is as much connection between faith and hallowed feeling as there is between the root and the flower. Faith is permanent, just as the root is ever in the ground. Feeling is casual and has its season. Just as the root or bulb does not always shoot up the green stem and beautiful flowers, so faith does not always produce ecstasy of feeling. Our faith may be just as strong when we are despondent as when we are filled with joy. As we feel the calamities of war, the pangs of disease and the hardness of poverty, our feeling sinks down to zero, while our faith may be as firm as the granite that underlies the cloud-kissed hills. Measure not God's love and power by your own feeling. The sun shines as clearly in the darkest day as it does in the brightest: the difference is not in the sun, but in some clouds that are between you and the sun. So God loves as well when we see not the brightness of His countenance as when we do.

One of the things we learn by a Christian experience is that low measures of feeling are better than ecstasies for ordinary life. God sends us His rain in gentle drops, else tender plants and delicate flowers would be beaten to pieces. If our faith is founded on the immutability of God, our Christian life and love will flow steadily on like a deep river, not easily affected by a cold blast nor obstructed by despondencies. Moses was not governed by feeling when he stood on the margin of the Red Sea, neither was Abraham when he offered up Isaac, nor Israel when they compassed Jericho seven days. Have faith in God, move forward all along the line, and we shall have the victory.

TAKE HEART.

Let me take heart! the present scene shall soon be
o'er;
The clustering clouds shall hide the sun at noon no
more.
The tears now dropping from mine eyes shall be
forgot;
And joys, undimmed by sin and misery, my lot.

The storm now sweeping through the troubled sky be
past;
The longed-for morning without clouds arise at last.
The hindmost shadow soon shall utterly depart;
Then let me watch and wait and hopefully take heart.

DIFFICULT TEXTS CONSIDERED.

"I make peace and create evil."

The 45th chapter of Isaiah describes the great power of God and His determination to work all things after the counsel of His own Will (Eph. 1; 11). The seventh verse in full reads as follows.

**"I form the light and create darkness;
I make peace and create evil;
I the Lord do all these things."**

"Evil" in the Old Testament refers not only to the principle of evil as such, but also to the various manifestations of evil. Sin, suffering, disease, calamities, death itself, are all evils. The Lord refers here to His own creative power by which He brought all things into existence. He shows also that to the good things He has created there are the opposites which automatically come into existence at the same time. "God said 'Let there be light' and there was light." Darkness is the absence of light but darkness can only be known by its contrast with light. So soon as light had appeared, men could discern what darkness meant. But in "dividing the light from the darkness" God was preparing for a greater work—the introduction of man upon earth and his gradual development through an experience of sin to become worthy of being called a son of God. The word "make" in "I make peace" has the thought of doing work or fashioning a thing. The Lord has set out to "make" peace—that peace on earth which is to be the culmination of His Plan has to be "worked out" through many long centuries. It does not come into being immediately. And in thus setting out to make peace God has introduced its opposite—evil. Not that God has sponsored or endorsed evil, but that in setting up righteousness as His standard he has "set up" evil as the opposite principle before men. As Paul says, "By the Law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3; 20). In this sense has God "created" evil—He has made the principle of evil what it is by setting up His own principle of righteousness in opposition to it. He has done this as a matter of permission and not by direct act.

The eighth verse carries on the thought from creation into the work of the Millennial Age. **"Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness. Let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring forth together. I the Lord have created it."** The picture is that of the heavens opening and pouring down rain

upon the thirsty earth, which opens to receive the rain and then brings forth its tender shoots and buds, growing up into the vegetation and fruits of the earth. God first forms light and darkness. **That is creation.** He then sets to work to "develop" peace and righteousness, and in so doing sets up evil as the principle which has His disapproval and which will not endure when "peace" has been made. **That is the story of His dealing with man during this present evil world.** Finally He causes the heavens to pour down their blessings upon the earth, and so it is that "as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isa. 61; 11). **That is the consummation of the Divine Plan.**

There is a vital truth hidden in this 8th verse. The word for righteousness in the first phrase is **tsedeq**, meaning the principle of righteousness. That in the second phrase is **tsedeqah**, which refers to the embodiment of righteousness in the character and conduct. Thus the skies, "pouring down" the principle of righteousness, will result in the earth (humanity) bringing forth the fruit of righteousness in their hearts and lives—all as the result of the Lord, in His wisdom, setting out to **develop** righteousness in man although by following that course He must needs for a time permit the existence of evil.

A significant side issue to the 7th verse is the fact that the Zoroastrian religion, which was built upon the idea of an eternal conflict between two great influences, light and darkness, good and evil, personified as Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman, had its rise very soon after the days of Cyrus. In this verse it is as if the Lord foreknew this and declared that Good and Evil are by no means powers in themselves which could hold the world and its fate at their mercy, but that He, the One True God, was Lord of both good and evil and that He was in full control of the situation. Since Isaiah's prophecy was recorded nearly two hundred years before the days of Cyrus and the rise of Zoroastrianism we have here one more evidence of the Divine foreknowledge in the compiling of the Scriptures; as Isaiah himself declares in another place, "New things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." (Isa. 42; 9).

PHILEMON

C. T. W.

An exquisite gem
set in the New Testament

True nobility is more often shown in the little things of daily life than in the great things. When a man lives in the full view of public opinion he is keyed up to create a favourable impression but it is the nature and temperament shown when the lime-light is withdrawn, when there is no inducement to wear a mask, which reveals the true man and what he really is.

This is shown in an incident in the life of the great Apostle Paul. This does not mean that Paul was not at all times genuine or that he at any time dissembled or pretended that he was one thing at one time when the public eye was upon him and another thing at another time in private. The incident brought before us in the letter to Philemon, however, shows us the true nobility of this man of God in a clearer light than is possible when we are considering the great public work Paul accomplished during his eventful life. We can gather from the record of Paul's life a very good idea of his keen spiritual vision, his intellect and reasoning powers, his great skill in argument, his passion for truth, his love for his countrymen and for the churches he founded, his continual care for them, his ardent loyalty to the Master he served and his heroism, courage and fortitude under bitter trials and disappointments. We can gauge pretty accurately the strength of all these qualities but nowhere is the heart of the man so well revealed as in the short private letter he wrote to Philemon.

It is here that Paul throws off as far as possible his Apostolic dignity and his fatherly authority over his converts and descends to a familiarity of equal intercourse. He lingers with obvious delight on the word "brother" which breathes the very spirit of freedom and equality. In this letter we see in Paul not the towering Apostle but the friendly partner; he speaks simply as a Christian gentleman and uses true courtesy, delicacy and tact. After reading it we confess that we know the writer better and it would have been a vast pity if this letter had not been included in the Canon of Scripture.

In the course of his missionary journeys Paul had spent a considerable period at Ephesus. It is probable that the Church he founded there was numerous and distinguished and the fame of the Apostle as it spread affected neighbouring towns and doubtless attracted men like Philemon and Epaphras who were natives of

Colossae. Perhaps these men founded the Church in their own town; it is certain that Philemon's house at Colossae was the recognised centre of Christian activity in that place.

Philemon was evidently a man of mark, probably quite wealthy for it is said he was able to refresh the hearts of the saints which seems to suggest gifts both temporal and spiritual. Moreover he was in a position to entertain brethren. Philemon must have been held in high repute by the Apostle for the latter treats him almost as an equal, a fellow labourer and partner, as a brother and not as a son like Timothy for instance. Philemon's wife appears to have been Apphia and his son Archippus; both Christians, Archippus holding office, probably a Deacon in the Church. The details supplied, though meagre, give us the impression of some wealth and dignity in the family nobly used for the relief of necessity and the binding closer of the bonds of Christian love and unity.⁶

Another member of the household was Onesimus, a slave, but he turned out badly. He stole his master's goods and, fearing detection, fled to Rome, doubtless thinking that among the thousands of that crowded city he would escape notice.

Our God is ever watchful and in this runaway slave He saw a potential child of grace. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world." It is among the poor despised and outcast ones that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has wrought miracles all down the age. It has changed lives like those we read of in the Corinthian Church, some of whom were thieves, covetous and worse but the message of salvation transformed them into noble and pure men and women with hearts aflame with a new and burning desire to do the will of God and tell forth the wonders of His grace.

Paul was at this time undergoing his first imprisonment at Rome. It was irksome enough to be chained continually to a Roman soldier, though some generous concessions were made him and he was able to live in his own hired house and receive there any who came enquiring into the faith he preached. So earnestly did he follow up this advantage that a number of converts to Christianity were made and Paul's name began to be known in Rome. Men and women who came under his influence were

not backward in proclaiming their new faith and in course of time the Truth reached Onesimus the runaway slave. Christianity regenerated the true humanity which had been degraded in him. The actual circumstances which led to his introduction to Paul are not told us but it is certain that Paul, noting his sincerity and earnestness, received him as a brother in Christ and a close fellowship sprang up between them. Onesimus was happy in the privilege of doing many a little service for the Apostle.

It would not be long before Onesimus made a full confession of his past life and how he had robbed and run away from his master and we can picture the Apostle's surprise when he learnt that the master's name was Philemon, one of the principal supporters of the Colossian Church and a most worthy friend of his own. It was with mingled feelings and some perplexity of mind that Paul meditated on the problem now presented to him. What course of conduct should he advise Onesimus to pursue? Onesimus was now a free man; ought he to inform the authorities and let the man suffer for his crime? That, he knew, would be sending his convert to certain death. Would it not be better to say nothing about the matter? Onesimus had become very dear to him and had been of great service to him in his imprisonment. It would be hard indeed to lose him and yet Philemon had his rights which ought to be respected. Slavery was a recognised custom and clearly Onesimus was the property of Philemon and ought to be restored to him. He would write to Philemon and make Onesimus the bearer of the letter. But the letter did not prove an easy one to write; he wanted to conciliate Philemon and yet not humiliate Onesimus—to commend the evil doer and yet not excuse his offence. Such was the delicate problem set his mind.

To give Onesimus courage to face the master he had injured, Paul arranged that there should be a third person present. Tychicus, a companion and fellow labourer of Paul and probably one of his own converts, was on his way home and the idea came to Paul that Tychicus might act as a mediator and ease the situation by his presence (Col. 4: 7-9). Tychicus could present the letter while Onesimus, adopting his old position as a slave, would remain unseen but within call.

The letter is a model of tact and Christian courtesy. Paul first endeavoured to create a favourable atmosphere of good-will by refer-

ring to the fact that they all belonged as members to one family. There was himself and Timothy, Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and other members of the Church meeting in Philemon's house, all called in one holy calling, all privileged to name God as their Father and the Lord Jesus as their elder Brother. What a bond of union—! Surely Philemon's heart would rejoice as he recalled the boundless grace of God accorded to his family! Then the writer touched a chord of tenderness in Philemon's heart by making reference to himself as a prisoner and an old man; Paul would be between fifty and sixty and after a life of unexampled labour and suffering he might well call himself aged in relation to his need of ministry from his son Onesimus. Paul commended Philemon in verses 4-7 and cordially acknowledged his love and loyalty and thus carefully prepared the way for the main object of his letter. He intended to make it very difficult for Philemon to refuse the request he was about to make; Philemon would surely be anxious to live up to the good opinion Paul had of him. In verses 8 and 9 he approached the matter a little closer and told Philemon that there was a duty he should do. He did not yet tell him what it was but he urged his own position as an Apostle and suggested that he could demand this thing but he preferred to leave it to Philemon's love and goodwill and to his feelings towards himself as a dear bosom friend. His appeal was to love rather than authority, "I plead with you for this child of mine to whom in my prison I have become a father." Then he announced the name, Onesimus. In verse 11 he frankly acknowledged that Onesimus had been found a worthless character. The name Onesimus means useful or profitable and Paul played upon the word and seemed to say, "He belied his name in days past, he will more than deserve it now." Though once unprofitable Paul could vouch that he was a changed man. "He is so dear to me that in sending him back to you with this letter it is like tearing out my very heart. If I kept him by me he would be ministering to my needs in your stead just as I know you would be serving me if you were here, but I would not do that without your consent so that your goodness to me might come of your own free will and without any appearance of restraint." Notice how carefully Paul chose his words, he said Onesimus "departed" not "fled" from his master. The word "fled" might have awakened resentful feelings and he wanted to

avoid that. "He parted from you for a while that you might get him back for good," a very graceful way of putting it! He hinted at the *Providential aspect of the matter and suggested* that the parting was unconsciously overruled by a higher hand. God in His wisdom had parted him from Philemon for a season that he might receive him for ever. Verses 16 to 18 are very tender; Paul reiterated that Onesimus was now a brother dear to himself; how much more must he be dear to Philemon. If Philemon considered Paul as a partner in the Gospel let him receive Onesimus as his own representative. In verse 21 Paul speaks of his confidence that Philemon would do as he suggested, then adds that he was hoping to see him soon face to face.

It is not difficult to follow the workings of Philemon's mind as he read the letter. We are not told of the result but we cannot doubt that Paul's appeal, couched in such happy language, had its effect. Philemon would surely feel that he could never face the Apostle again if he refused to do what he desired, and what Christian joy would fill his heart as he learnt that the grace of God had touched Onesimus and effected such a marvellous change in him. How long would it be before Philemon would eagerly enquire where Onesimus was and learning that he was without, insist on having him in so that he might assure him of his complete forgiveness?

Why is this letter included in the New Testa-

ment? No important doctrine is enunciated as in Romans; it admits of no controversial or directly theological use; there is no dissertation on *Christian virtues, no warning against apostasy or false teaching* as in Galatians; it is purely a personal letter, even though a model of the highest character. The question will be answered if we can see in this simple letter an analogy to the story of redemption.

Onesimus the thief and slave had run away from his master. Man was the creation of God and as such was His property but by his conduct he has erred against his Master and provoked Him sorely. He has become not a servant of righteousness but the slave of sin and has run away from God, his legal and proper owner. Not only has he run away but he has robbed Him of His due and gone into a far country, but an all loving Providence has led his steps to Jesus, Who has suffered great privations for his sake. There at the feet of Jesus, whom God counts as His partner, the repentant slave pours out his soul and confesses his sin. Acting on the advice given him he returns to God, his rightful owner, and is received, not as a slave, but even as Christ Himself and all the debt he has incurred is put to the account of Jesus.

"Naught of merit or of price
Remains to justice due
Jesus died and paid it all
Yes—all that I did owe."

THOUGHTS.

First of all we must turn a search-light into all the dark corners of our being and clean out everything that cannot stand God's Light. No thought of darkness, no unworthy feeling or desire must be allowed to keep possession. We cannot prevent dark thoughts from presenting themselves, but we can change them immediately to constructive thoughts and so prevent the negative thoughts from dimming our consciousness. Turn out all thoughts not conducive to conditions of joy—never give expression to them. One really poised, radiant mind in a community will do far more than forty dim ones. We must keep our minds turned rightly toward the light, and keep them bright and clear like reflectors in a lighthouse, *free from all the murky thoughts that dim and darken ourselves and others.* Light builds up, and brings nutrition. The X-ray expands tissue

condensed by disease and so gives the life force free course through it, and makes the healing process possible. So also our mind responds to the idea of light, and a real change is produced in the body as well as in the mind, for the body responds to our thoughts. There is not a function of the body that is not altered by thought. "**As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.**" This is true both of body and character. Our habitual thoughts are responsible for more than we have thought possible and need constant censorship. Moreover thoughts vibrate and travel like the light. Consciously or unconsciously the influence of our thought-life reaches others, uplifting or depressing. Let us seek to live consciously in the light of God's presence and rejoice in Him. Then dark thoughts will be impossible.

Selected.

HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE!

An exhortation to trust.

To the vivid mind of the Apostle Paul the existence of Satan was a very real thing. Nowhere in any of his letters does Paul suggest that the "Prince of the power of the Air" was only an imaginary being. In every reference to Satan Paul conveys the idea as strongly as words can possibly convey, that he is the great personal Evil Spirit, into whose hands, as the Prince of this world, the rulership of this present evil world has been committed. He also calls him "the God of this world" (or age) (2 Cor. 4; 4). For many years this clear-cut conception has been losing its sharp distinction among Christian people, and even theologians have been known to state that all evil is **impersonal**. To the Lord Jesus, and the Apostles, Satan was assuredly no mere impersonation of evil, but an evil personality; as truly personal as the Archangel Michael who called down the Lord's rebuke upon him. (Jude 5; 9).

From the earliest pages of the Divine records Satan is shown as an instigator of evil (John 8; 44), as one having the power of death (Heb. 2; 14), as one employing cunning "wiles" (or stratagems) and as an accuser of righteously-inclined people. God has given him great latitude, even allowing him and his evil co-labourers to slay the saints of God.

Taking full advantage of God's permission, Satan has produced a world-order in which evil is the predominant factor; so much so that Paul describes it as "this present evil world" (Gal. 4; 4). This world-order, passing on from generation to generation, has corrupted, for centuries, the words, thoughts and activities of nearly all the human race. But for the grace of God working in the hearts of the saintly few, this corruption would have been complete. Institutions created under the Satanic influence by one generation, become the swaddling-bands to bind and fetter the next and future generations. The strait-jacket of custom is there when we are born, and it is tightly laced about us from our earliest days.

Both in and out of "Society" strict conventions are rigidly applied from which neither education nor illiteracy afford release. Deeper than any other national trait is the tendency to follow in "father's footsteps" or to do as "Mother" did. Life runs in grooves, worn

"He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

Psa. 91; 11

T. H.

deeper with each succeeding generation. Thus with the first breath, the child comes under the control of a regime behind which is the cunning, seductive mind of the Prince of this world; this world-order—with its many ramifications. It is because men have become accustomed to this general situation, and attribute it to 'heredity' and 'the glorious past' that the recognition of Satan's personality tends to become blurred and indistinct. Too much emphasis is laid upon the 'trend of things,' and not enough upon the design and the designer of this world's affairs. The 'it' of sequence too often displaces the 'him' who designs it. Good indeed would it be for the world if they could realise that the crises of life are produced more by Satanic design than by the drift of circumstances.

It is vitally imperative for the Christian to realise 'what' or 'who' he is 'up against' in his daily warfare. It is no opposition of a mere impersonal principle, but of a cunning highly-placed adversary. There is the mental calibre of a Spirit mind—more comprehensive in its range and more subtle in its operation, than the mind of mere man. And that cunning mind is fortified by many centuries of experience. It has the advantage too, of seeing but of remaining unseen by its earthly opponent. It is a real foe; perilously real; an actual, personal, veritable opponent, bent upon the destruction—if God allow—of every child of God.

No child of God should be afraid to realise this fact. It should not cause fear or terror in even the least of God's saints. No matter how vividly or realistically the mind can visualise the existence or the nearness or the malignancy of Satan, there is not the slightest need for alarm. It is one of the greatest phases of victory in the Christian life, to be consciously aware of the unseen presence of a malignant foe, and yet know no fear or disquiet of soul thereat. It bespeaks a courage—a self-control—born of true faith, to realise the perils, and yet to remain unperturbed and undismayed. The Holy Spirit is thus bearing a rich fruitage in the heart.

It has ever been God's desire to produce in His people this rest of soul, by assuring them that He and His heavenly messengers are much more than a match for all Satan's cunning and

malignant power. From Psalmist days God has encouraged His people by telling them that His angels (even legions of angels) encamp round about them that reverence Him, in order to deliver them. By Apostolic pen, God has assured us that they are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of Salvation. And every angelic minister, authorised and equipped with Divine Power is just as real and personal and as veritably present as the hosts of wickedness. Jesus once said "their angels do always behold the face of my Father" (Matt. 18: 10). Their angel! As though every child of God were attended by an unseen body-guard, whose mission is to superintend the details of life's experiences allowing Satan to come near enough to test, but not to injure God's little ones. It is probably because we are not admonished to pray to the Guardian Angels, nor yet to seek contact with them, that we may not be so keenly aware of their presence with us; or it may be, though reading these promises, we forget to apply them, and fail to see, like Gehazi, till the Lord graciously opens our eyes, the chariots of the Lord, and the horse-men thereof. (2 Kings, 6: 17) filling the heavens around us. As the difficulties of the way surround our future pathway, and we see indications of unrestrained fury manifested by Satan and his evil hosts, it will be an act of grace toward each other to remind one and all that the invincible armies of heaven are not

one whit less personal, nor one bit more distant from our side than the evil forces on the other side. "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." On behalf of each child of God, old or young, weak or strong, these Divinely-sent ministers, who come invisibly near, are equipped with Divine Power, and are commissioned by a loving gracious Father to look after His children, and keep the opposing evil forces, at just such distance that they may test, but not injure.

But while it cannot be other than comforting to know of this angelic body-guard, God has provided additional means whereby we may be protected from the subtle snares of the great 'deceiver.' The Devil's weapons are mainly in the form of untruths. To protect against these God has provided an armour of Truth; a full equipment to cover both heart and mind. "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." This is the part we must give attention to, deliberately and consciously; leaving the safety of our person in the hand of God and His messengers. Thus equipped with the Truth within, and protected by the angelic body-guard without, we should be able to look out on the most dangerous crises of life, with great peace of heart, assuring each other in fullest confidence, that though devils rage and men run riot, all things are still working together for good under God's protecting hand.

AMBASSADORS.

He has chosen us to be His ambassadors in the world, invested with power to speak and act for Him, and to draw upon all His resources. An ambassador is one of the most important officers of the Crown. To be successful he must be able to let his own personality and his own thoughts and opinions sink into the background, so that he may be open minded, able to place himself in another's position and see things through his eyes. His first concern must be to know his King, so that he may get a clear conception of his mind, the direction of his thoughts and desires, so that he can identify himself with his royal master; because in the capacity of his representative at the foreign court, his sovereign will be identified with him. The power of the King, the resources of the King are behind him, as long as he faithfully represents him. And he must have complete faith in the King and also in his resources. Doubt anywhere would hinder perhaps ruin his chances of success, for if he doubted he would not be able to speak with that assurance which creates confidence.

From "Evidence of things not seen."

THE DEAREST NAME.

If Jesus from our faith to-day
Were stricken, and we knew
A Godless creed must meet our need—
That nothing else were true;
If Jesus from our hearts were cast,
From pages to be read,
What word, in all the realms of thought,
Would answer us instead?
If Jesus, 'midst the mists of time,
Were lost, and we could know
He never died, our crucified,
What could the new creed show
To take His place, to vibrate through
The prostrate human mind,
To give the race a standing place,
A hope for human kind?
If Jesus from our faith to-day
Were stricken, who could trace
Another word the world hath heard
To ever take its place?
Could ever frame a sound so sweet?
In all the realm of art,
Who yet hath shown a single tone
So priceless to the heart?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE "DIVINE DRAMA OF THE AGES."

Friends in many parts of the country have now had the opportunity of seeing the first two films in this series. Large groups and small, in halls and homes, have been taken back in memory some twenty five years or more to the days when first they saw God's great Plan of the Ages declared in picture form. The films are, of course, of principal interest to those who were associated with the earlier production and who remember the presentation then given, but in many instances neighbours and acquaintances have seen the "Divine Drama" films and been favourably impressed. Scotland and Kent, towns in the Midlands and in Wales—in short, every part of the land, has been visited in turn, but yet there is opportunity for those who have not had a visit, to make request. The brethren sponsoring this effort will bring their own projector and equipment unless same can be obtained locally for the occasion, and all that is necessary to be provided is a suitable room or small hall, with electricity available.

Here are the first two films of the series. Others are planned, if the Master opens the way.

- Film 1. The Raising of the Shunammite's son**
Film 2. The Nativity of Jesus.

Your applications, which should give several alternative dates for the visit, may be sent either to 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, or to 129 Doncaster Road, Leicester. It ought to be explained here that the Committee is not responsible in any way for this "Drama," the effort being due to the loving zeal of a brother who prefers his name to be kept in the background; and in recognition of the fact that many will be desirous of seeing the films, we are pleased to make the facility known through the columns of the "Monthly."

A NEW WITNESS CARD.

The friends at Forest Gate have produced a card similar in appearance to the well-known "Kingdom Card" and bearing a message which is calculated to make a special appeal at the present time. We consider it worthy of reproduction in full. Here it is.

Divine Answers to Human Problems

Any serious and thoughtful contemplation of present conditions must give rise to many questionings because so many problems require an answer.

What does the future hold in prospect for the human family? Civilisation, as we know it, seems to pass from one dread crisis to another. Will it survive?

Are the forces of evil and destruction forever to stalk the earth, blasting and imperilling the lives and prospects of posterity? If we may hope that good-will and righteousness will eventually emerge triumphant, what real ground have we for such optimism? Is man himself to be the guardian of his destiny, or is he despite the sorrowful story of past and present history, the subject of a higher and benevolent providence?

Has God no interest in the affairs of earth and if He has such an interest, what is His purpose?

Then there arises the question as to past generations: What of those who have died? Where are they? What is their future?

Where may we look for authoritative, definite and satisfactory answers to all of these questions?

We believe there is a revelation from God which conclusively deals with all these perplexities. *That Revelation is the Bible.*

On request, Bible treatises on these matters will be forwarded free of charge.

Use this card.

Supplies of this card are limited and of course were intended primarily for the friends at Forest Gate. They will, however, be pleased to send small quantities for judicious distribution to any brethren who will apply for same to—

Bro. F. H. Guard, 74 Princes Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex.

The cards are addressed for return to 74 Princes Avenue and friends desiring to follow up the interest aroused by their efforts will have the names of such interested persons sent to them for following up.

FREE LITERATURE.

Subject to the necessary funds being available leaflets and pamphlets explanatory of various features of the Divine Plan are supplied free of charge to our readers, in quantities for judicious distribution. This work is supported by voluntary donations. Requests for free literature should be sent to Mr. W. J. Rew, 244 North Road, Darlington, and donations should be sent to the office at 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

Subjects at present available are :—

Hell—the Truth.

Other subjects, now out of print, will be renewed when funds permit.

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

A list of books available from the reference library can be obtained upon application to the librarian. Postage both ways is payable by the borrower, and books may be retained for one month, and for further periods if not required by another reader. A post card request for the desired book is sufficient, and stamps for forward postage may be enclosed with the book when returning same. Please address all requests to Mr. J. Humphrey, 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

BENEVOLENT RELIEF FUND.

Such donations as are entrusted to the Committee for this purpose are administered by three brethren of experience. Correspondence regarding deserving cases should be addressed to Mr. G. A. Ford, 13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds., and donations should be sent to the office at 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

M.S.S. FOR PUBLICATION.

The Committee is prepared to consider articles submitted with a view to publication in the "Monthly" or otherwise and these should be by regular readers who are in harmony with the principles expressed under the heading 'To us the Scriptures clearly teach' on the front cover of this issue. Please send such M.s.s. to Mr. A. O. Hudson, 129 Doncaster Road, Leicester.

PUBLICATIONS.

MISCELLANEOUS

	Price	Post free	Six post free
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do. Cloth	3 6	4 0

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BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



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ap. Toluragenū he com

Blessed are ye when men shall
persecute you / and shall felle for
us of your sake agaynst you

All valleys shall be exalted
mountayne and hylt lapt
to is croked that be made str

ysced of Abraham his servan
Jacob his chosen.
the Lo g our God: his j

And God shall wipe away all
tears from their eyes: and there
shall be no more death, neither
mourning, nor crying, neither
sorrow: for the former things are passed away

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Threepence

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the truelight which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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JEHOVAH—THE SACRED NAME

A three-fold exposition of
the meaning of "The Name."

Part I.—THE REVELATION OF
THE NAME

T H.

*"The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long suffering,
and abundant in goodness and truth"*

If we would appreciate aright the exceeding deep significance of the Name under which Almighty God revealed Himself to Moses, both at the Bush and on the mountain top, we must probe down a little beneath the surfaces, both of the language used and the occasions on which the language was used. No part of Scripture invites more serious reflection than this enunciation by God of His Holy Name, and it well becomes the investigator to proceed with reverent care in the elucidation of the profound truths which lie buried in "the Ineffable Name."

There is no need for the reverent student to adopt the Jewish attitude when meeting this Holy Name in his studies. For centuries the Hebrew reader has substituted some other word, such as 'lord,' or 'god,' for the "tetragrammaton" (the four-lettered word, J.H.V.H.) when reading his sacred Scriptures. Jewry's most respected writers have called this "the uncommunicable Name"; too sacred to be communicated by one to another; too holy to be taken upon the most devout human lips. This reluctance to utter or use the Holy Name was adopted in order to avoid the possibility of taking it in vain. Out of deep respect for the command "thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain" they preferred not to speak it at all, neither in reverence nor in levity. Thus the danger of using it lightly or in anger was definitely avoided. A severe penalty was appointed for any rash or vain usage of the Name. (Lev. 24: 10-16). Commenting upon the commandment (Ex. 20: 7) the Jewish translator, Isaac Leeser, says "This means that we shall not utter, 'bear on our lips' the blessed Name."

It is easy to appreciate this attitude, even while not endorsing this reverential reticence to utter the Name of the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity.

The English reader will note in his Bible that this sacred Name is printed in small capital characters. In the A.V. it reads "The LORD,

THE LORD GOD . . ." This is the vital part of this Scripture. The word "LORD" in these capital letters (as a word) is used as a substitute for the actual word which could be transferred to our tongue from the Hebrew language. It is used in our Bible as a substitute some seven thousand times for the word "Jehovah," but this word Jehovah is a hybrid compound combining the four consonant letters of the 'tetragrammaton' (J.H.V.H.) with the vowel sounds of another Hebrew word meaning 'lord' (Adonai). It is not at all of ancient usage, having been introduced into Christian literature so recently as the Reformation times (around 1520 A.D.) In 1611 A.D. it was introduced into the English Bible, thus giving us a word (or Name) unknown to our Lord and the Early Church, and unknown to the professing Christian Church for about fifteen centuries.

Rotherham (Introduction to Old Testament p. 25) says it is about as hybrid a combination as it would be to spell the name "Germany" with the vowels in the word "Portugal"—viz., "Gormuna."

Jewish writers therefore are by no means responsible for the introduction of this hybrid word. They **did** use substitute words for the Holy Name, but they did not graft other letters on to it, as Protestant ministers have done.

Rotherham says (Introduction to Old Testament p. 25.) "They intentionally wrote down alien vowels—NOT FOR COMBINATION WITH THE SACRED CONSONANTS, but for the purpose of cautioning the Jewish reader to enunciate a totally different word, viz., some other familiar name of the Most High."

The use of this word Jehovah in some versions, and the practice of printing the word LORD in place of it in nearly all occurrences in the A.V., has hidden from the view of the ordinary Bible reader some of the most profound and beautiful thoughts which the word

of God affords. The child of God who comes to know the beauties of this sacred Name will never need nor desire to bury these beauties under other names, nor will he ever use 'the Ineffable Name' irreverently or 'in vain.'

This "Name" represented in its four essential letters 'J.H.V.H.' should (according to the suggestions of the most eminent scholars) have two syllables only, the first two letters being joined by an 'a' or an 'e,' thus forming the syllable 'Yah' or 'YeH'; the two latter being joined by an 'e,' thus forming the second syllable 'WeH'—the whole word thus compounded being 'YahWeH,' or 'YeHWeH.' Scholarly preference is generally for the first of these words 'YahWeH.' This is the word used in Rotherham's translation without exception.

This word is "almost always regarded as the third person, singular, masculine, imperfect tense, from the root 'hawah,' an old form of the root 'hayah.' The one meaning of 'hawah' is 'become.' Thus the force of the word 'yahweh' (used as a verb) would be 'He becometh' or 'He will become.' When the word is used as a name (a noun) its meaning is 'He who becometh' or 'the Becoming One.' (Rotherham).

Thus the word used by God to reveal Himself means "He will become."

A companion form of this word, but in the first person, singular, is found in the word 'ehyeh.' This is the word used by God at the burning bush when commissioning Moses to become the agent of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. In this Scripture our A.V. translation has the remarkable phrase, "I AM THAT I AM." The Hebrew text has the words (see Rotherham's introduction to the Old Testament) "'ehyeh' 'asher' 'ehyeh'" and should be translated (in the imperfect or future tense) "I will be what I will be" or "I will become what I please to become." Thus the word 'Yahweh' is the word another would use when speaking to third parties about the Most High; as for instance in Psa. 91: 2.

"I will say of Yahweh, He is my Refuge and Fortress."

"'Ehyeh'" is the word God would use when speaking for Himself and of Himself, assuring His hearers that He would become this or that, or do this or that as the occasion required.

What do these words mean to the hearer, when used as the Name of God by God, or by His messenger? When God says "I will become what I will become" what does He mean?

When His Prophet says "He will become what He will become" what thought is his declaration intended to convey? Let us not forget that when God adds the words "I AM YAHWEH" (I am the LORD" in our A.V.) to any command or promise, He is really saying "I am He that will become what I will become," for this particular occasion. And when a Prophet of God says "Thus saith YAHWEH" (Thus saith the LORD, in A.V.) concerning any command or promise, he is really saying "Thus saith He that will become what it will please Him to become" concerning that command or promise.

The question that stands out therefore is "What will He become"? This question must then be related to the circumstances under which the Holy Name (in both its forms and tenses) was put forward.

When God introduced Himself to Moses at the bush (Exod. 3:) the descendants of His friend Abraham were in bondage. The four hundred year period which was to terminate with Abraham's seed in bondage was drawing to its close. The iniquity of the Amorites was almost full. (Gen. 15: 13-16) and the due time was near when Israel should be delivered. God was proposing their deliverance to Moses, and the promise and pledge of that deliverance was the wonderful Name which the Most High used to commission and encourage Moses to undertake that task.

When Moses demurred to undertake the task, God said "certainly I will be with thee." To this Moses replied "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say 'What is His Name?' what shall I say unto them?" "And God said unto Moses 'I AM THAT I AM'; and He said 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.' And God said moreover unto Moses (as he further remonstrated) 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, YAHWEH, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you . . .'" (Ex. 3: 13-15).

Thus at the time, the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were in grievous bondage, crying day and night for release, and God was preparing a great deliverance for them. "Go and tell them, that 'I Who will be what I will be' have sent thee unto them," said God to Moses.

Thus God related His ability and intention to their great need, and promised to become to them all that they needed, 'I have seen their affliction; I have heard their cry; and I am come down to deliver.' Such was the assurance God gave to Moses. And thus in their direct need, God promised by His Holy Name to supply that need.

Passing over Moses' repeated remonstrances, and God's promise to be with him, and He unto Moses what he needed Him to be (Ex. 4: and 5:) we proceed to consider the second revelation of the 'Holy Name' on the mountain top. (Ex. 34).

Again, this people had reached another crisis in their lives. For their idolatrous sin the blood-sealed Covenant had been abrogated. They had broken the solemn pact and taken another God in the place of their father's God. In strict justice God could rightly have cast them off and left them to fend for themselves, even had He not destroyed them out of hand. To the greatly distressed plea of Moses, repeated again and yet again, God at last re-affirmed His gracious intention to be to this erring people all that He was pleased to be, and in such a way, and in such conditions that Moses could assure that people (and all people) for all time that "He will become (to you) what He will become."

"And Yahweh passed by before him and proclaimed 'I AM YAHWEH, YAHWEH ELOHIM, merciful and gracious; longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth. . .'" (Ex. 34: 6).

Never before since the dawn of time had such words been heard by mortal man. Men had known of Yahweh before Moses came, but not in this light. Here, at last, God Most High proclaimed His compassion and pity for fallen man, in terms of touching tenderness and indescribable beauty. The great heart of God was intensely aflame with love for a rebel race, and on this mountain top it broke through some of its restraining bonds and began to send its rays to earth. From that time on, prophet and psalmist took up this uplifting song and story, and wove these assuring words into prophecy and psalm. Scores of passages of later date pulsate with the sublime promise enshrined in that Holy Name. That Holy Name was put forth as a promise—a most gracious promise—assuring one and all that Divine power and capacity were adaptable to any circumstance, to any difficulty, to any necessity, that may arise. It becomes a veritable bank of faith to such as love God and keep His commandments, no less to us of Christian faith than to Israel in her earlier days.

THE PRICE OF PERFECTION

"I count all things but loss and
dross, that I may win Christ"

(Paul)



A stirring call to
supreme effort.

G. A. F.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5: 48). Jesus spoke these words to His disciples nearly two thousand years ago and those gracious words of life come to us with the same sweetness and power as when He spoke them. To us now comes the same inspiring exhortation urging us to draw near to God, to keep near, and above all to be like Him. He points to God, the High and Lofty One, enthroned in Heaven, and says to us, "There is your Father, perfect,—be ye therefore perfect even as He is perfect." These words awake in us a strong desire to attain to some likeness to God.

The very name of God conveys to us such a sense of purity that we are cleaner and better for the thought of Him, and He is our Father

if so be we have received His Spirit in our hearts. He is nearer, closer, dearer than the fondest earthly parent could ever be. Jesus says, "Be ye perfect even as YOUR FATHER;" What a glorious thought! The supreme Sovereign of the universe is OUR FATHER!

Let us try to consider the perfection of our Father in Heaven. Our finite minds can but dimly comprehend the might, the majesty and the power of God. Surely it is not to perfection in these things that we are exhorted to attain. Yet all these things are at work on our behalf assisting our weakness that we may attain to that which is attainable.

What is attainable? "Be ye holy for I am holy." That is the word of God to us, or as

Weymouth translates Matt. 5: 48, "You however are to be complete in goodness as your Heavenly Father is complete." "Attain unto holiness," says the writer to the Hebrews, for just as it is impossible to please God without faith so it is impossible to see Him without holiness. Holiness carries the thought of purity; heart purity, beauty in its most radiant form, the loveliest of all loveliness and this loveliness inspires us to devotion, to gratitude and imitation when we consider the love of God that prompted the giving of His Son for the life of the world; the mercy that forgives, the compassion with the weak, the infinite tenderness that heals and assists the feeble in faith and the forbearing comforting love "as one whom his mother comforteth (Isa. 66: 13). It is this perfection that our Lord exhibited throughout His earthly life and we are to consider this perfection in the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. What we need to imitate is the love of God, His compassion, His forbearing mercy and His understanding love as we see them manifested in His dealings with mankind through the ages and as we see them revealed in Jesus. We need to absorb them into our natures by daily contact with Him in meditation and prayer, to think of the love of God as we have known it, admired it and adored it in Jesus and to realise that **this** is perfection; the God-like heart, the lovely life, the very end and crown of being, the standard we are exhorted to attain in Eph. 4: 10.

So a cry arises in the depths of our hearts, "**O for a heart more like my God.**" "How can I attain perfection? Lord, show me the way!" If we truly aspire to the perfection of Heaven we must needs consider the greatest exponent of perfection Who ever lived; we must take Jesus as our pattern and example, our teacher and guide. We must not be content with a few cursory glances or to take a lesson now and again. We must apply ourselves diligently to the task. No day should be allowed to pass without meditation upon the life of our Master. It involves earnest consideration, earnest prayer for grace to copy and attain the perfect heart and the loving life. No man has seen God to note and study His perfection, but Divine wisdom and love sent His Son Who said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" and we can look upon Him and learn. We can have our Master before us, beside us, within us, about us, giving us counsel, instruction, assistance and strength. Without Him we must fail; with Him we can

do everything but fail!

All the great men and women who have devoted their lives to the cause of Christ are a splendid source of help and inspiration to us. When we think of Paul and read of his struggles and conquests, his noble faith and lofty purpose we are inspired to follow him as he followed Christ, to join in his great quest for perfection and by grace win the crown as he. We can help and inspire each other. Our faith and noble determination can assist others who might faint. The light of our own enthusiasm can light a lamp in another heart. Let us be up and doing if we are seeking perfection with sincerity and have a deep rooted longing to be like Christ and be found in Him. So shall we by grace and Almighty Power receive the crown of life—**faultless, glorious, perfection.**

That perfection is attainable is proved by the word of our Master. He never exhorted us to strive after something beyond our reach. The prize is costly and precious and not easy of attainment. We must not only long to possess the treasure, we must sell ALL to buy it, give all of this life in exchange for it. Are we prepared to do this?

If we can say "I know what it is to struggle, to weep, to be crucified with Christ, to rejoice with Him in selfless service, then the crown is near; we are attaining, claiming and possessing, slowly but surely, the perfection of our Father in Heaven. If on the other hand we are knowing little of the pain of striving, if we are not being daily impoverished in self esteem, then the crown of perfection is but a mirage, a phantom, a mental myth. Jesus, who walked this way to show us the path to God and the ultimate glory of holiness was a Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. The road of suffering was the way He took. The quest of perfection is a hazardous, costly quest. It calls for courage, zeal, determination, ardent devotion, generous love and simple faith. It does not need temporal wealth, learning or natural abilities, for the most humble and ignoble may set out to win the prize and gain it providing he will pay perfection's costly price.

The secret of perfection lies in the passionate ardour for God and Christ that leads to a full self surrender; a giving of all in a full unquestioning faith and trust into the hand of God. The worldly critic looking on has counted such ardent souls fools, and indeed they are fools for Christ's sake in giving up ambitions, friends, talents and treasures that they might obtain the pearl of great price. It is a

glorious folly and a splendid unreasonableness that urges a consecrated heart to lay its all upon the altar of sacrifice and to suffer itself to be stripped of all selfwill that God may be glorified and the beauty of His Spirit may shine forth from the heart and life dedicated to do His will. It was the Holy Spirit of God abiding in Jesus that enabled Him to manifest the perfection of God, for God gave not the Spirit by measure unto Him. He gives to us according as we are able to receive, according to the measure of our faith. It is better to give Him all at the beginning with happy generosity, accounting it as nothing, than to have Him take it from us by many painful separations over many years of tardy spiritual growth. When we have reached this point His Spirit can fill our hearts and we can enjoy the sweetness of His presence, but His Spirit can not dwell in any odd corner that we wish to spare, side by side with selfwill. The cry of all who aspire to the Father's perfection should be—

"Come and possess me whole, nor hence again remove.

Settle and fix my wavering soul with all Thy weight of love.

*My one desire be this, Thy love to fully know
Nor seek I longer other bliss, nor other good below.*

My life, my portion Thou, Thou all sufficient art,

My hope, my heavenly treasure Thou, enter and keep my heart."

Our lives, our all, every moment is sanctified to Him and "the daily round, the common task, can furnish all we need to ask. Room to deny ourselves, a road to bring us daily nearer God." Is it not worth all, to be noth-

ing in this life that we might know the transcendent joy of being transformed by the power of God into radiant perfection, fitted for eternal life in heaven and companionship with God and Christ?

In the Apostle Paul we have the greatest example of an imperfect man giving his all for the perfection of heaven. It brought him at last to a prison cell, almost blind, feeble and in chains; his only possessions a few books and parchments and an old cloak. Almost friendless and alone he faced a martyr's death, but he could say, "**I have fought a good fight . . . henceforth there is laid up for me a crown.**" The crown was the thing for which he had paid his all, esteeming it only a light affliction. He had nothing, yet everything, for he had the conviction that the crown was his. Do we desire to have the same conviction? To some it is worth while, to others much. Let us say, "To me it is worth everything. I want my Father's perfection, the perfection of Christ, the life of heaven, the fellowship of saints and angels for ever, and by the power and grace of God which avails for me through Christ I know I shall have it."

**"A thousand swords might cut you down
Fierce hunger may devour you
But nought shall rob you of your crown
And none shall overpower you.
Arise, No longer let the things of groping
sense confuse you
Race on ahead on time torn wings and let
God fully use you.
What matter love of home or friend
The agony, the dying,
If in the end you've won your crown,
And at God's feet you're lying."**

My Son Timothy

The love of a great
man for a lovable
son in the faith

C.T.W.

One of the most beautiful experiences recorded in the life of the Apostle Paul began at the commencement of his second missionary tour. It was at Lystra that he met one who was to be his close and dearly beloved companion for the remainder of his life. "Tim-

theus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed, but his father was a Greek; which was well reported of by the brethren which were at Lystra . . . Him would Paul have go forth with him;" (Acts 16: 1-3). Paul had recently parted from his former com-

panion, Barnabas, who had sailed to Cyprus with Mark, and Paul had chosen Silas to accompany him. It is perhaps significant that of Paul and Silas it is recorded "they departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God." (Acts 15:40).

Of this visit to Lystra made by Paul and his companion only one incident is told us but it happily affected all the future of the great Apostle. In his former visit he had converted the young Timothy and it was in the house of the boy's mother, Eunice, and his grandmother Lois that he and Silas were probably received. These two women were Jewesses who had accepted the Christian faith. We are led to suppose that Eunice was a widow and if so, she showed a beautiful spirit of self-sacrifice in parting with her only son.

The youthful Timothy is one of the best known and most lovable of that little circle who were henceforth associated with the wanderings of Paul. Of the many who Paul loved, none was dearer to him than this young disciple of Lystra. He adopted Timothy and regarded him as a son in all affectionate tenderness. Hear the terms with which he addressed him, "Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith." (1 Tim. 1: 2.) "To Timothy, my dearly beloved son . . . I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day." (2 Tim. 1: 2-3) and he reminds the Philippians how well they knew "that, as a son with a father, he had served with him for the Gospel." (Phil. 2: 22). In spite of his shyness and timidity, which were increased by his youthfulness, he was so entirely united in heart and soul with the Apostle that among his numerous friends and companions he found no one so genuine, so entirely unselfish, so sincerely devoted to the furtherance of the cause of Christ. "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state." (Phil. 2: 20). He was in fact, more than any other, the 'alter ego' (other self) of the Apostle. That their knowledge of each other was mutual is shown in Paul's letter to Timothy, "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long suffering, charity, patience," etc. (2 Tim. 3: 10). One whose yearning and often lacerated heart had such deep need of a kindred spirit on which to lean for sympathy, and whose distressing infirmities rendered necessary to him the personal services of some affectionate companion, must have regarded the devoted tend-

erness of Timothy as a special gift of God to save him from being crushed by overmuch sorrow.

Much as Paul loved Timothy, he loved the churches more and if any church needed warning or guidance or Paul himself desired to know how it prospered Timothy was required to overcome his shrinking modesty, to console the persecuted churches of Macedonia (Acts 19: 22. 1 Thess. 3: 2) or face the conceited turbulence of Corinth (1 Cor. 4: 17. 1 Cor. 16: 10) or to be the overseer of the Church of Ephesus (1 Tim. 1: 3). In fact no name is so closely associated with Paul's as that of Timothy; not only were two epistles addressed to him but he is associated with Paul in the superscription of five. "Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God and Timothy our brother." (2 Cor. 1: 1. 1 Thess. 1: 1. 2 Thess. 1: 1. Phil. 1 and Col. 1: 1).

Timothy was with the Apostle Paul during the greater part of his second missionary journey; he was with him at Ephesus (1 Cor. 16: 8-10), he accompanied him on his last voyage to Jerusalem (Acts 20: 4), he helped to comfort his first imprisonment at Rome (Phil. 2: 18-20), he was urged in the second epistle Paul addressed to him to hurry from Ephesus, to take with him the cloak, books and parchments which Paul had left with Carpus at Troas and to join him in his second imprisonment before it was too late to see him alive. (2 Tim. 4: 9 and 13). Some sixteen years had elapsed between the days when Paul took Timothy as his companion at Lystra and the days when, in the weary desolation of his imprisoned age, he wrote once more to his beloved disciple, yet even at that latter date Paul addressed him as though he were the same youth who had first accompanied him to the hallowed work. (2 Tim. 2: 22. 1 Cor. 16: 11). Surely it is obvious that if Timothy, when first Paul won him over to the faith of Christ, was not more than sixteen or seventeen years old, he would be still far short of the prime of life when the second epistle was addressed to him; and that, even if he were older, there is no more familiar experience than an old man momentarily forgetting that those whom he had known as boys have grown to full manhood.

This was the youth whose companionship Paul now secured. Young as he was, the quick eye of Paul saw in him the spirit of loving and faithful service. He read the indications of one of those simple faithful natures which combine the glow of courage with the bloom of modesty.



Difficult Texts Considered

"As a child shall one die an hundred years old"

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isa. 65; 20).

The Millennial application of this verse is generally recognised and it is usually understood to teach that every individual will have at least one hundred years of opportunity in that Age for his progress toward perfection and that if no progress has been made in that time he will be cut off in death, even although in so short a time after the establishment of the Kingdom such would be, comparatively speaking, children.

There is no other Scripture that gives any kind of time feature in connection with the Millennial Age except the one in Revelation which defines its length as one thousand years; and for this reason at least the text under discussion merits examination.

The first point worthy of note is that the entire chapter pictures the laws of the Millennial Age in active operation, bringing life to the righteous and death to the unrighteous, in harmony with Paul's words "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life" (Rom. 9; 23). The first seven verses look back to the shortcomings of Israel; 8-10 declare that because in Israel there is some good upon which God can work, He will assuredly do so; 11-15 tell of the doom of the wilfully wicked; and 16 to the end describe the new heavens and new earth which God will make. The Authorised Version is not altogether clear in some passages, and in the text under consideration the Septuagint seems to express the thought more clearly and with an important difference. The Septuagint rendering of Isaiah is agreed by scholars to be the poorest part of that work but in this chapter it gives a rendering of rare beauty. Vs. 19-20 are translated "I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; and there shall no more be heard in her the voice of weeping or the voice of crying. **Neither shall there be any more a child that dies untimely, or an old man that shall not complete his time; for the youth shall be a hundred years old, and the sinner who dies at a hundred years shall also be accursed.**"

In this rendering it is said to be the sinner who dies at a hundred years, and that the age of youth is reckoned at a hundred years. There are to be no **untimely** deaths, either of children or old men. That seems to be the plain teaching of the verse. Then if no death is to be "untimely," what will be the cause of death? The answer is obvious—SIN! It is the wilful sinner who dies, and is thereby accursed.

What means the "hundred years"? It may be literal, as is usually thought. There may be a deeper meaning intended. In the Scriptures the natural fulness of man's life under the dominion of evil seems to be associated in symbolism with the number one hundred, in contrast with the fulness of man's life under the dominion of righteousness which is likewise associated with the number one thousand. Thus we have Eccl. 8; 12, "Though a sinner do evil an **hundred** times, and his days be prolonged . . ." and Eccl. 6; 13, "If a man beget an **hundred** children, and live many years . . . and his soul be not filled with good," etc. The span of a man's useful life was considered to be fourscore years (Psa. 90; 10) or a hundred years (Rom. 4; 19). Jacob told Pharaoh that the days of his pilgrimage were one hundred and thirty years, "few and evil" (Gen. 47; 9). Upon the other hand, Isa. 60; 22, speaking of God's work in the Millennial Age, declares that "a little one (Israel) shall become a **thousand**," and the Lord asserts His intention to keep covenant and mercy with them that love Him to a **thousand** generations (Deut. 7; 9. Psa. 105; 8) whilst the likening of a day with the Lord to a **thousand** years (Psa. 90; 4. I Pet. 3; 8) and the testimony of John to the thousand year reign of Christ (Rev. 20; 4) is well known.

Is it not possible therefore that we have here a contrast between the glorious fulness of perfect human nature to which man can attain, pictured by the thousand years, and the brief spell of conscious existence which is all that sin allows the sinner? In the Millennial Age at a hundred years a man is but as a youth—not yet attained to the glory of manhood. The wilful sinner never attains that glory. As a sinner he dies, as though he had never progressed beyond the hundred years which is the

full measure of man's attainment (symbolically speaking) *under the dominion of sin.*

Men lived longer in the first centuries of human history than they do now. As the effect of sin became more deeply engrained so the span of human life shortened. But none ever lived a thousand years. All have "come short of the glory of God." It seems almost as if the effect of ingrained sin is such as to make it absolutely impossible for a human being to live out a full thousand years. It may be a reasonable conclusion, therefore, that men who will not make any effort to conform to the principles of righteousness and go on in their way, in "that day," fully determined to continue in deliberate opposition to the light which is then

given to them, will sooner or later reap the inevitable penalty of sin as the natural and logical consequence of their course of action. It may be a literal hundred years in the case of some; it may be more or less than a hundred years in the case of others, depending on the extent to which they progress along the way of sin, but their life will be limited by the "hundred years" of sin's fulness instead of reaching out to the glorious eternity pictured by the "thousand years" of the day of God. Their ultimate death will follow the law of cause and effect. "When desire hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (Jas. 1: 5).

* Ambassadors of Christ * Holding forth the Word of Life * Lights in the World *

HE MAKETH WARS TO CEASE.

—an outline for the newly interested.

A.O.H.

"They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more."

"All very well," says the cynic, but the same Book also says "Prepare war . . . beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears? There always have been wars, and there always will be wars" and he dismisses the subject with a wave of the hand.

Casual treatment of that nature does not settle the matter. There was a time when men lived their lives without war, and there will come a time when war is no more. **That time is close at hand.** "An optimistic statement, and a rash one!" says the cynic. Optimistic, certainly, but by no means rash. Divine revelation in the Bible, interpreted in the light of history, has been saying for three generations past what every man now realises, viz., that after the present conflict the world must face up to the construction of a new order which will end war.

The Bible is not quite so optimistic as the man in the street, though. The new order is not going to be born automatically upon the cessation of present hostilities. There is a long and hard furrow for mankind to plough before God's New Order is established, but that New Order is so infinitely superior to anything that is being promised at the present time that it will be well worth waiting and working for.

As far back as ordinary history goes war

is one of the many evils afflicting humanity. Behind the campaigns of Napoleon with all the bloodshed and misery into which he plunged the nations there lies a long story of strife and struggle between the peoples of Europe. Prior to that comes the grim record of ruthless Asiatic conquerors such as Timurlane in the 14th century and Genghis Khan in the 13th; men who extended their empires over all Asia and well into Europe. An appalling toll of human life was taken by those two men, Genghis Khan being reputed to have caused the shedding of more blood than any other man whose name is preserved on the pages of history. Before these men were the great empires of Rome and Greece, their whole story one of war; and behind these, names which figure in the Old Testament, Nebuchadnezzar, founder of the Babylonian empire, said to be the most brilliant military strategist the world has known, and Sennacherib, King of Assyria, whose army was so mysteriously annihilated outside the walls of Jerusalem. Finally, going back to the first great ruler of the earliest empire of which we know, five thousand years ago, Sargon of Agade, a man skilled in the arts, of literary tastes, imbued with a passion for the erection of fine buildings, and deeply religious; yet like the others, ruthless and cruel in the prosecution of war for the extension of his dominions. Little wonder that men say "There always have been wars. . . ."

With respect to the time before Sargon his-

tory is silent. Egypt, China, India, Central America all have their records of great civilisations and cruel wars, but Sargon is before them all; and behind him hangs the veil which divides history from tradition, and conceals the story of mankind in the world's first ages.

There is one exception. That exception is the Old Testament, a record of history from the beginning of man's existence. What has that book to say about this catchword "There always have been wars?"

It declares that man appeared upon earth, an intelligent being, made in the mental and moral image and likeness of God; that man was commissioned to make full use of the earth, to populate it and exploit its natural advantages for his own happiness. It declares that continued harmony with the laws of his nature would ensure for man continued life upon earth and freedom from disease, pain and death. War and fighting between nations had no place in the original state of human society.

The story took a darker turn. Man's primeval happiness was shattered by the entrance of sin. Sin brought in its train violence, disease, pain and death. The Bible tells the story of jealousy which led to murder (Gen. 4). The earth became filled with the misdeeds of violent men (Gen. 6). At last men dared to aspire to make war with God (Gen. 11). Those few chapters in the early part of Genesis merely summarise the broad principles of man's descent into sin during thousands of years of early history; and when at last the record becomes sufficiently detailed to recognise its allusions to contemporary history it speaks of a time about four thousand years before our own—a time when Abraham was living and the Elamite King Chedorlaomer (Khudur-Lagamar in the inscriptions) was invading Palestine with his troops (Gen. 14). The record of that campaign marks the first connection of the Bible with the story of war.

Nations went on fighting each other, apparently without let or hindrance from God, for another five hundred years. There then transpired a remarkable happening—one which is so little appreciated even to-day that it is worthy of notice.

The people of Israel, three millions strong, held in slavery by the Egyptians, threw off their shackles and under the leadership of Moses began to make their way to a new land where they could assert their national independence. Such mass movements of entire nations to new abodes were by no means uncommon, and as a rule the invaders assumed

control of their new home by right of conquest,—by war. The Israelites were prepared to do the same thing, although they were certainly in two minds as to their ability to overthrow the stalwart inhabitants of Canaan, the land toward which they began to make their way.

Now it was here that God Himself interposed and told the Israelites not to resort to war to obtain possession of their inheritance. He guaranteed that an intelligent and whole-hearted faith in His power to give them the land would result in the migration to Canaan becoming an accomplished fact without a single act of violence on their part. It is a point to be noted that the Almighty did not sanction the wars of the Israelites when on their way to the Promised Land. He told them to obey Him implicitly and they would go straight up into the land and inherit it. (See Exod. 3, 8; 6; 6-8. 13; 5, 11. 14; 14. 23; 20-34. 33; 2-3. 34; 11-14, 24. Lev. 18; 24-25. 20; 23-24).

The experiment failed. To trust in the power of an unseen God in the face of militant enemies armed with the latest of then modern weapons was too much for the untried faith of the newly fledged nation. They took the high praises of God upon their lips but insisted upon attacking their enemies in the time honoured fashion, with no better result than had ever been achieved by men. At the first assault they were soundly beaten.

Later conflicts brought measurable success. They won the land of Canaan at last, but only in part. The native peoples were never completely subjugated. The nation that had the opportunity to show mankind the path away from war failed to grasp the lesson itself and so demonstrated that mankind in general was, as yet, unready for the light.

Once, and once only, did Israel in after days rise to that height of faith. When in the seventh century B.C. Sennacherib of Assyria invested Jerusalem with his armies and demanded unconditional surrender, the besieged King, with his people's assent, took the aggressor's ultimatum into the Temple of God and laid it before the Lord. They rested the case entirely upon the power of God. That exhibition of intelligent faith resulted in one of the most singular and inexplicable military disasters of ancient times—the annihilation of Sennacherib's army, an event the historical truth of which is attested both by Hebrew history in the Old Testament and by Assyrian records on the monuments. See 2 Kings, 18 and 19.

One other notable occasion when men deliberately adopted the Divine remedy for war was when William Penn in the seventeenth century initiated and administered a system of government in the colony of Pennsylvania—a country as large as England—in which war was renounced and outlawed. For seventy years the settlers lived unarméd and upon terms of the utmost friendliness with the native Indians whilst neighbouring colonies were engaged in continual warfare with the Indians. Not until settlers devoid of such ideals and faith began to arm themselves "for safety" and the Pennsylvania Legislature, under pressure from the Home Government, began to insist that the colony must be in a position to defend itself against both internal and external potential enemies (the Indians and the French) did the period of "Penn's experiment" give place to a time of mutual distrust in which re-arming on both sides went on apace until white and red man met again in murderous conflict and grim war came into its own once more.

Apart from such rare exceptions the world has continued to wage war; for offence, when men and nations have embarked upon a career of frank aggression for the extension of territory, for access to raw materials; for defence, when faced with the problem of aggressor nations and perceiving no other way of maintaining a semblance of peace and justice in the world. With the highest of ideals and perfect sincerity of motive men have adopted war in all its ugliness as the only alternative to the triumph of evil. Not even two thousand years of Christian teaching has sufficed to convince men that there is a Divine alternative which would be productive of lasting results. Or is it that the price to be paid is too great? For the Divine alternative to war can only be enjoyed at a price. Whatever the reason, it remains an indisputable fact that men have waged war for the settlement of disputes, for unashamed aggression, or in defence of their own, for thousands of years; that their weapons and the consequent bloodshed and misery and destruction become increasingly more terrible to contemplate, and still the carnage continues. Despite all his efforts, man cannot abolish war.

So that the only practical alternative is Divine intervention!

Divine intervention has always been an unpopular doctrine. It is the reverse of flattering to human pride to have to admit that after all our efforts, we have not succeeded in emancipating ourselves from evil, and that God must help. But it is true history. Time and time

again when the nation of Israel involved itself in seemingly inextricable difficulty the people "Cried unto the Lord in their trouble and He delivered them out of their distresses." Likewise in the end of time, when "man's inhumanity to man" shall have involved the whole earth in one vast fratricidal war, God will intervene and command attention as He points to the better way.

Jesus Christ foresaw this when He was on earth. Asked by His disciples how they would know when His promised return and the establishment of His Kingdom would take place, He looked down the vista of the ages and saw successive generations of men still convinced of their own ability to rule the world by force and without God. He saw wars between nations, strife and conflict, misery and death, afflicting every people under heaven in increasing degree as the centuries succeeded one another, until at length the greed and hate and selfishness of man would culminate in a great climax to the age, a time of universal warfare in which every man's hand would be against his neighbour and the nations in madness destroy the world system which they had erected. "A time of trouble" said our Lord "such as was not since there was a nation, nor ever shall be again" (Matt. 24; 21). That last phrase is significant. It betokens a gleam of hope. The final cataclysm of war which is to mark the ending of this present age and the coming of Christ to take up the sovereignty of earth is to be the last great time of trouble that will afflict humanity. After it is over the world will enter upon an era of peace, a warless world, where security and prosperity shall be the portion of humanity.

How will it come and when is it to be?

To know how it will come requires first some understanding of what has been happening in the world since Christ uttered his memorable foreview of world history He saw His teachings alone surviving in a Europe that had lost well-nigh every trace of its former culture under the engulfing waves of ignorance and superstition. The fine cities and great roads of the Roman empire crumbled into ruins and disappeared. The learning of Greece and Rome survived only in a few libraries and monasteries. Christianity was driven into the dens and caves of the earth; and Europe became a vast feudal terrain in which barons and brigands alike held in bondage the wretched serfs who were the lineal descendants of those thoughtful men and women to whom Paul, and Peter, and others of the twelve apostles

of Christ, had preached. War between nations, crusades against "infidels," civil strife and turmoil, religious persecution, flood and fire, famine and pestilence, took relentless toll of humanity in Europe, only repeating in almost every detail the fate that had already befallen the older civilisations of the East.

But the feudal system in Europe eventually produced a semblance of order. Handicrafts developed and towns began to come into being. Men once again sailed the seas and found their way to India, to Africa, to the far East, and trade began to develop once more. Civilisation was on the way to being re-built.

Civilisation? It was still a system without God. Mechanical invention following on the general increase of knowledge brought in its train what has been called the "Industrial Revolution." Factories came into being; big cities herding thousands and tens of thousands of workers, producing new and countless varieties of goods. A new incentive for war appeared; war for coveted territory, for raw materials, for markets; and to-day war more terrible than ever before is ravaging the world.

This catastrophe stands directly related to our Lord's foreview of the events marking the end of the age. The situation is graphically portrayed by several of the prophets of the Old Testament and their testimony is endorsed by Him. Thus Joel, seven hundred years before Christ, looking down the avenue of the centuries, described this final cataclysm in these graphic words "Prepare war; wake up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near; . . . Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say 'I am strong' . . . (Joel 3; 9-10). But the story concludes with a picture of universal peace; a land flowing with milk and wine (vs. 18) and this is characteristic of many passages describing this same period. Thus Zephaniah declares that the Divine intention is to "gather the nations" and "assemble the kingdoms" and pour upon them "His indignation," devouring the earth with the fire of His zeal (for righteousness) "for then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent" (Zeph. 3; 8-9). Isaiah, the great Hebrew statesman of the 8th century B.C., wrote "It shall come to pass in the last days, that . . . the Lord's house shall be established . . . and all nations shall flow unto it; and many people shall go and say 'come ye, and let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of His ways, and we shall

walk in his paths' . . . and he shall judge among the nations . . . and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2: 1-4). Isaiah was an astute politician as well as a sincere servant of God and his experience of ultimatums, non-aggression pacts, peace treaties and the like, recorded in the historical books of the Bible, gives his testimony added weight. He it was who declared, speaking of the blessings of God's Kingdom on earth, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord (as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11; 9), and again "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever; and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." (Isa. 32; 17-18).

Thus King David the poet, knowing of the same things, was able to say "Come behold the works of the Lord, . . . He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. 'Be still, and know that I am God! I will be exalted among the nations! I will be exalted in the earth.'" (Ps. 46; 8-9).

The Scriptures indicate that the climax of this Age will be reached when all nations of earth come together in universal war. It is then that God will intervene. How that intervention will come about we may not certainly know, but certain indications are given. The 38th chapter of Ezekiel speaks of two great coalitions of nations meeting in conflict over the land of Palestine—territory which is of considerable political importance just now. The contest is staged and the armies are apparently invincible. The hapless civilian population is helpless. The tide of war surges toward the Holy Land. The prophet drops the veil for a moment. When he lifts it again—"Behold, it is come, and it is done," saith the Lord. "This is the day of which I have spoken" (Ezek. 39; 8). In some inexplicable manner, even as in the days of Sennacherib's defeat, the invading hosts have been routed and the people of God are saved. Zechariah, in his 14th chapter, pictures the event as though some mysterious panic grips those warriors and causes them to turn their arms against each other. From that day and forward God will again be to the forefront in the counsels of the nations.

That will be the end of war. Earth's new

King, Christ Jesus, will assume control, and a new administration, formed of righteous and incorruptible men, known only to Him and selected by Him for the purpose, will direct human affairs. Not only war, but every form of evil will be restrained with firm hand, and men and women be free at last to walk in the ways of peace.

THE QUIET TIME



THE FOURTH QUARTER-MARK OF LOVE.

This is the standard of perfect love; and we must not stop short of it. Whoever would be accepted of the Lord as a member of the New Creation in glory must attain to this love of enemies. Not that he is to love his enemies as he loves the brethren, for this is not the pattern set us—God does not love His enemies as He loves His sons, His friends; and Jesus did not love His enemies as He loved His disciples. But God loved His enemies so as to be ready and willing to do for them whatever could be justly done; and Jesus loved His enemies so that He was heartily willing to do good to them—He bears no enmity or grudge toward them in return for their hatred, but is ready to pour out upon them in due time His Millennial blessings, that they may all come to the knowledge of the truth and that even those who pierced Him may look upon Him and weep when God shall pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication in due time. (Zech. 12: 10). We must have the love for enemies which our Lord describes, saying, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." (Matt. 5: 44.) We must let no bitterness, animosity or rancour of any kind dwell in our hearts. They must be so full of Love that not even an enemy could stir up in our hearts an evil or malicious sentiment.

A NOTE OF WARNING.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended." (Phil. 3: 13.) If any man consider that he has attained a satisfactory spiritual state, from that moment he may date the beginning of his spiritual decline. No present attainments can be satisfactory to a sincere follower of Christ who studiously endeavours to copy the perfect pattern. It is only when we turn our eyes away from Christ that self-complacency can be exercised; for, in full view of the pattern our shortcomings are ever manifest. And if in pride of heart we do lose sight of them ourselves, they only become the more manifest to others. Only in the realisation of a continual growth into the likeness of Christ should the Christian find satisfaction.

That time is at hand! This present war is not the last war, but it does have a definite place in the events of the END. A little sand remains in the hourglass—the last few grains have yet to run out and then the KING Who even now stands at the door will enter and claim His dominion; and the horrors of war will have become a thing of the past for ever.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

THE GLORIOUS PROSPECT.

What a glorious prospect the new dispensation will present when fully inaugurated! The changes from one dispensation to another in the past have been marked and prominent, but this change will be the most eventful of all. No wonder the thought of such a spectacle—of a whole race returning to God with songs of praise and everlasting joy upon their heads—should seem almost too good to believe; but He who has promised is able also to perform all His good pleasure. Though sorrow and sighing seem almost inseparable from our being, yet sorrow and sighing shall flee away; though weeping in sackcloth and ashes has endured throughout the long night of the *dominion of sin and death*, yet joy awaits the Millennial morning and all tears shall be wiped from off all faces and beauty shall be given for ashes and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness.

THE TWO TRIALS.

One difference between the experiences of the world *under trial* and the experiences of the Church during her trial will be that the obedient of the world will begin at once to receive the blessings of restitution by a gradual removal of their weaknesses—mental and physical; whereas the Gospel Church, consecrated to the Lord's service even unto death, goes down into death and gets her perfection instantaneously in the First Resurrection. Another difference between the two trials is in the more favourable surroundings of the next age as compared with this, in that then society, government, etc., will be favourable to righteousness, rewarding faith and obedience and punishing sin; whereas now, under the prince of this world, the Church's trial is under circumstances unfavourable to righteousness, faith, etc. But this, we have seen, is to be compensated for in the prize of the glory and honour of the Divine Nature offered to the Church in addition to the gift of everlasting life.

GOD IS LOVE.

This is the grand expression of the Bible—the key note of Christianity. It is the foundation of the great plan of creation and redemption, and the underlying principle in the structure of the Word of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANONYMOUS

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation, the receipt of anonymous donations of 10/- £1, and £2 respectively.

GONE FROM US

Friends at Pontypool write: "On August 29 a well-known sister passed from our midst when Sister Jones answered the voice of the Lord calling her home. Sister had been in failing health during the last twelve months. She was laid to rest on Sep. 2. She was known by the brethren at Forest Gate, London, and would also be known by the friends at Cardiff. Those who knew her look forward to the day of glad re-union."

It is also learned that Brother J. Cattan of Argyll (Scotland) passed away on July 11 last. Thus, one by one, the flock comes home.

KETTERING.

A Home Gathering was held at Kettering on Sunday, August 24th, when nearly ninety friends from Leicester, Blaby, Rugby, Coventry, Peterborough, Luton, London, Melton Mowbray and Northampton, joined in a very happy season of fellowship. The day began with a service of praise conducted by Brother Couling, commencing with the singing of hymn 315, "Praise my soul the King of Heaven," after which Brother Ward gave the visitors a warm welcome in the name of the Kettering brethren and read messages sent by brethren unable to be present but who were asking our Heavenly Father to bless the gathering. The morning address was given by Brother Ford with Brother Walton in the chair. Brother Ford's talk, which was entitled "Gather my Saints," was based on Psalm 50: 5, and showed how much of this prophetic psalm is being worked out today. We were reminded that in these days of "devouring fire and tempest" spoken of in verse 3, the powers of the whole universe were exercised on behalf of those who are truly God's saints, those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. Before the afternoon address the chairman, Brother Holmes, announced a similar gathering to be held at Coventry on September 14th, (D.V) and invited those present to assist the Coventry brethren to get into touch with any isolated brethren who might be encouraged and helped by this means. Brother's reminder that these opportunities for fellowship are a special favour from our Father in these days of stress was very timely and found an echo in our hearts. The afternoon speaker, Brother F. Guard, spoke on 2 Peter 1: 10 exhorting us to "give diligence" to accompany our faith with all the lovely train of attendant graces mentioned in verses 5 to 8; to let faith lead on as at the head of a choir with the other graces following in harmony, for if these graces are in us and abound, progress in the spiritual life is absolutely certain. In the evening Brother Nadal presided over an address by Brother T. Watson entitled "So be it, O Lord." Taking his text from Jer. 11: 5, Brother showed us that this must be the attitude of the consecrated child of God throughout his earthly course. We must willingly acquiesce to the will of God and say "Amen—so be it O Lord," to every circumstance and experience of life, to every revelation of truth and to every aspect of Divine judgment. The language of our hearts must be "Bend me, oh bend me to Thy will, while in Thy hand I'm lying still," and as we look up into our Father's face and realise that He will do nothing but what is in accord with our tenderest and deepest conception of what love is, there will be a confident tone in the voice as we trust Him implicitly and say "Amen" to all His dealings. As the friends left for their

homes there were many expressions of gratitude to our Father for granting His blessing—truly "He doeth all things well!"

LEIGH (LANCS.)

A happy gathering of friends was held on Sunday, August 13 last at Leigh, when a number of brethren from Warrington, Wigan, Stockport, Hyde and Southport enjoyed the hospitality of those at Leigh. Bro. Philip of Warrington opened the sessions with a discourse on "The God Whom we serve" and this was followed in the afternoon by a characteristic talk by Bro. J. W. Wright of Stockport on "Paul's Three Testimonies." In the evening Bro. Sidney Smith of Manchester chose as his subject the first chapter of Revelation, so concluding a very profitable time of spiritual instruction.

COVENTRY

About one hundred and fifty brethren received a rich blessing from the Lord at Coventry's Home-Gathering, the first of its kind for many years, held on Sunday, 14 September.

Many experiences, some with a gap of thirty years, were called to mind among the visitors, who came from Birmingham, Blaby, Kettering, Warwick, Leicester, London, Manchester, Rugby and other places. Some friends were unavoidably absent through the lack of travelling facilities, and some through infirmity. The thoughts of those present went out to all these as well as to a few who sent messages of greeting.

The speakers were Bro. L. Shephard (Manchester), Bro. F. H. Guard (Forest Gate) and Bro. A. J. Lodge (London). Their addresses stressed the fundamentals of the Christian Faith, the Christian Walk, and the Christian Calling.

The Coventry brethren wish to express their appreciation of the help rendered by various ones in making the gathering known and to all who contributed by their attendance to making the day a memorable one. It was brought to a close by the words of the 133rd Psalm and the singing of "God be with you till we meet again."

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

A list of books available from the reference library can be obtained upon application to the librarian. Postage both ways is payable by the borrower, and books may be retained for one month, and for further periods if not required by another reader. A post card request for the desired book is sufficient, and stamps for forward postage may be enclosed with the book when returning same. Please address all requests to Mr. J. Humphrey, 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

BENEVOLENT RELIEF FUND.

Such donations as are entrusted to the Committee for this purpose are administered by three brethren of experience. Correspondence regarding deserving cases should be addressed to Mr. G. A. Ford, 13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds., and donations should be sent to the office at 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

M.s.s. FOR PUBLICATION.

The Committee is prepared to consider articles submitted with a view to publication in the "Monthly" or otherwise and these should be by regular readers who are in harmony with the principles expressed under the heading "To us the Scriptures clearly teach" on the front cover of this issue. Please send such M.s.s. to Mr. A. O. Hudson, 129 Doncaster Road, Leicester.

PUBLICATIONS.

MISCELLANEOUS

	Price	Post free	Six post free
Tabernacle Shadows An exact reprint of the original booklet (Dawn)	1 3	1 5	7 6
Evolutionists at the Cross-roads Biblical teaching in relation to Evolution and recent statements of scientists 126 pp (Dawn)	1 0	1 2	6 0
Zionism in Prophecy An interesting survey of developments in Palestine. 64 pp (Dawn)	1 0	1 2	6 0
Some of the Parables Brief expositions of the "Kingdom" Parables. Illustrated. 99pp (B.B.I.)	6	7	3 3
Pilates Report Reputed report of Pilate to Tiberius regarding the Crucifixion. Art booklet. 32 pp (C.T.I.)	6	7	3 3

B.S.C. PUBLICATIONS

The Plan of God—in Brief An abridged edition of the "Plan of the Ages" retaining all the most important portions. 104 pp	4	5	2 3
The Promise of His Presence An exposition of Scriptures relating to the Second Coming of Christ. 92 pp	4	5	2 3
The Beauty of Holiness The story of consecration through the ages	4	5	2 3
The Golden Future A 36 page booklet describing man's hope and Millennial conditions. Specially prepared for witness work	2	3	1 3
12 for 2/- 50 for 7/6 100 for 14/- post free			
Parables of the Kingdom Six stories from the teachings of Jesus. 30 pp	2	3	1 3
12 for 2/- 50 for 7/6 100 for 14/- post free			
Evolution—and the Scriptures A brief introduction to the subject 12 pp	1	2	7

DAWN.

All at 3d. each. Post free 4d. Six for 1s. 9d.

The Day of Jehovah A reprint of Chap. 15 of the "Divine Plan" 64 pp			
What is Man? A reprint of chap. 12 of "The Atonement." 62 pp			
Hope Beyond the Grave An interesting treatise on the Scriptural teaching regarding death, the grave, heaven, etc. 124 pp			
Christ has Returned. A 80 pp exposition			

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE.

All at 2d. each. Post free 3d. Six for 1s. 3d.

Hell, Death and Spiritism A short exposition of Scripture upon these subjects. 26 pp			
Do the Dead Know Anything? The Scriptures on the death state. 32 pp			
A New Dictator the only Hope for Humanity An 18 pp treatise			
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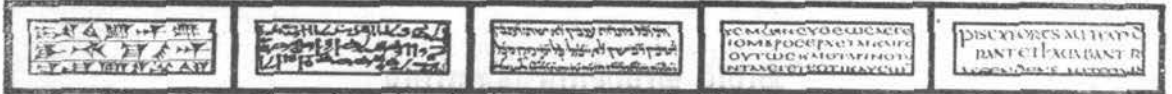
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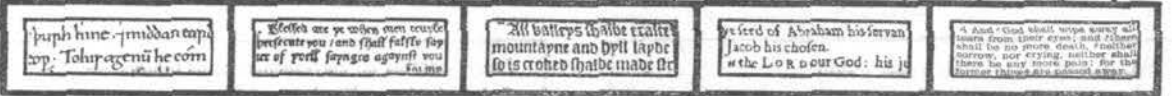
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BIBLE STUDENTS

MONTHLY



Vol. 18 No. 11

NOVEMBER, 1941

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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JEHOVAH--THE SACRED NAME

A three-fold exposition of
the meaning of "The Name."

Part 2.—THE REVELATION IN
THE HOLY NAME

*"The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long suffering,
and abundant in goodness and truth"*

The disclosure that the Divine purposes were embodied in the Holy Name was made to Moses by way of revelation. No one, of his own observation or intuition could have wrested these intentions of God from the rocks or stars, for they were not hidden there. Even those early friends of God, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, needed to be told by God about the great things He proposed to do. Otherwise they could not have known or understood how God's great love would one day measure itself against man's great need, and overcome that need.

In some aspects of His nature the Most High was the 'Great Unknown.' Occasion to reveal the tenderer side of His disposition had not previously occurred. Originally men had known of His power and Deity (Rom. 1: 20), but even these attributes they had chosen to neglect and forget, so that when God gave them over to follow their own vain way, knowledge of God became almost extinct.

Willingly men had chosen to become ignorant of God. As the dense clouds of superstition darkened man's understanding of the Divine being, the light of heaven became overcast and hidden from men's view. Black night at length descended and spread its sable wings over all the earth.

Into this dark scene, God, at times, sent forth some rays of light, to be a source of guidance and comfort for such as loved the better way. Such rays of light must of necessity be God-given. They could never have been deduced or discovered by man. Restoration of such knowledge depended essentially upon revelation—revelation FROM God, revelation TO man.

Various stages in this process of Divine self-revelation may be noted, as when, for instance, the Most High revealed Himself to Abraham as 'God Almighty' (El Shaddai, Gen. 17: 1),

and then again to Israel as 'Yahweh Elohim' (Ex. 34: 6) or **Yahweh Nissi** (Yahweh, my Banner Ex. 17: 15), or **Yahweh Sabaoth** (Yahweh of Hosts, 1 Sam. 15: 2), or **Yahweh Ra'ah** (Yahweh my Shepherd, Psa. 23: 1).

Each such disclosure of the Divine attributes was occasioned by some tremendous need among God's chosen people, whether few in number or many. God revealed Himself as 'the God who is able' (God Almighty) to that aged pair when hope was dead and nature's forces spent. The numbers here were few; their need however was overwhelmingly great, and the promise enshrined in the new-given Name was the Divine answer to that need. Numbers will be exceeding great when **'Yahweh Tsidkenu**, is revealed (Yahweh our Righteousness). But when that revelation is made it will meet a universal need. (Jer. 33: 16).

The 'eyes of God' run to and fro in all the earth, to witness and observe the extent of man's need. When the need of man becomes exceeding great, God comes near again to meet that need, and enshrines His purpose in some new Name. Thus 'Name' and 'Need' appear together,—the promise embosomed in the Name being ever great enough fully to satisfy the need.

'Name' and 'Need' sprung forth together at the Bush (Ex. 3: 7-18) when Moses was informed that Israel's need had mounted high as heaven, and that now, at last, (because the times were ripe) High Heaven would come down to earth to meet that 'Need.' Out of the darkness God flashed another beam of light to illuminate the unknown future of His chosen race, and through them, of a sinful world.

What was that 'Need' which occasioned Israel in Egypt both groans and tears? And what was to be found in that Divinely-given 'Name' to meet that need?

First, Israel was enslaved by Egypt's king

and people. The men of Israel slaved agonisingly in the kilns. Their groans were echo to the lash. Day in, day out the tyrant swung his spite into each stinging blow, with none to stay or assuage. Israel's huts were filled with offspring born only to bear the same hateful load. The parent's day was dark—the children's would be darker still. No help was near, no helper seemed at hand. Days, months and years, on into generations to come and only *toil and groans and death awaited sire and son!*

Into this hopeless night God sent the pledge and promise of His Name. But what would that avail? What good could the Name of an almost unknown God provide Israel? If that God were indeed their father's God, why had He forgotten their father's children—their selves and their households?

Let us try to put tongue into the needs of this crushed and hopeless people, to learn what that Holy Name could promise them. Let us ask the questions we think they might ask when the messenger from God arrived, and found them in their dire distress.

"Art Thou able to fulfil the promise Thou hast made to us and to our children in generations yet unborn Art Thou likely to live on to care for our sons, when we have passed away and have been gathered to our fathers?"

And the answer that would come back would be "I AM—I am the Ever-living One, inhabiting Eternity—I am He who was your father Abraham's God—and I WILL BE your children's God to the end of time. I AM the fountain of all life, and my years shall know no end."

Let NEED now ask again "If Thou art the Ever-Living One, by whose permission dost Thou live? Is Thy life dependent upon another's will, or to circumstances subject to another's will, or art Thou fully independent of every will and circumstance? Art Thou existent solely of Thine own will and volition?"

To this the answer would come "I AM"—I am entirely self-existent! I can exist and will exist above and apart from every circumstance. No enemy or circumstance can interfere with Me or with My purposes by threat of death or incapacity. "I AM" THE ONLY SELF-EXISTENT ONE,—I LIVE BY MY OWN POWER AND VOLITION, AND "I WILL" CONTINUE SO TO LIVE FOR EVER-MORE!"

NEED asks yet again "Wilt Thou be unto our children as Thou art proposing to be unto

us? Wilt Thou change with every passing mood as we poor mortals change? Will our children find Thee as we find Thee to-day? Or art Thou unchanging and steadfast? Will Thy Word stand fast, as long as Thou art alive?"

And the answer would come "I AM" CHANGELESS—I CHANGE NOT! My Word is not mutable, it will stand forever! "I WILL" KEEP MY PROMISES FOR EVER-MORE!"

Again NEED asks "Art Thou liable to sin, in any wise, as we mortals are? Canst Thou become defiled by unholy thought and act? Will Thy Promise to us and to our children become invalidated by Thy lapse from rectitude? Or art Thou impeccable and sinless beyond the possibility of defilement?"

And again the answer would come "'I AM' HOLY, INCORRUPTIBLE, IMPECCABLE! 'I WILL' MAINTAIN MY HOLINESS FOREVER!"

Again NEED asks "Wilt Thou ever leave us, or our children untended and undefended? Or art Thou able to be ever present with us and ours in every change of life? Art Thou ever engaged too far away to hear our cry, or art Thou able to watch over us in our little world, and supervise Thy wide heavens too?"

And the answer comes "'I AM' able to be present with you everywhere, at every time, in every condition. I dwell in My Heavenly Place, but I will walk with all who love My Name through every path in life. 'I WILL' both attend and defend Mine own sheep for evermore."

Again NEED asks "Art Thou able to see and understand our needs in every dark hour, or wilt Thou forget or fail to understand. Thou art God; we are but men; is Thy understanding too lofty to comprehend the sorrows of mere men, or art Thou able to KNOW us as fully as Thou knowest Thine angels of light?"

And the answer comes "'I AM' ALL KNOWING!—OMNISCIENT—I know all things in heaven and earth. No problem is too big; no question is too small for Me to understand! "I WILL" watch, and I WILL comprehend everything that befalls you on your way!"

Again NEED asks "Art Thou ABLE to perform all Thy good pleasure towards us? Does Thy arm never tire? Does Thy strength not give out? Dost Thou never grow weary? Or art Thou able to labour on by day and night, year in, year out, to-day, to-morrow,—while many generations rise and fall?"

And again that answer comes "I AM ABLE TO DO ALL MY PLEASURE! I speak and it is done! I build worlds and clothe them in their verdant beauty—I stretch my line across the skies. I bring the sunshine and the rain! I clothe the fields with living grain, and paint every glorious tint and hue! I AM OMNIPOTENT! ALL POWER IN HEAVEN AND EARTH IS MINE! I CAN AND WILL FULFIL ALL MY GOOD PLEASURE!"

Let NEED now ask its last and most searching question. "Thou hast many and great attributes. O God Most High!—Thou art Ever-Living, Self-Existent, Immutable, Impeccable, Omni-Present, Omniscient, and Omnipotent, but art Thou kind and compassionate, and pitiful? Art Thou, like heathen gods, hard, austere, exacting, giving little, but requiring much? Dost Thou ask the last farthing from frail sinful man? Dost Thou look down with cold unpitying official gaze, and tell the sufferer his suffering is but just? Hast Thou no pity in Thine eye, nor kindness in Thy heart? or art Thou touched by man's distress? Art Thou compassionate, and pitiful, and merciful to all who on Thee call?"

And the answer comes loud and deep and strong. "I AM YAHWEH! YAHWEH ELOHIM, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin—I am Everliving that I may be gracious to all generations; I exist of my own volition, that none may ever hold my kindness in fee; I am unchanging that I may attend the last generation as I did the first; I am impeccable, so that I may rebuke wilful sin in small or great; I am ever-present with all, all the time, that I may hear the faintest cry from the tiniest child; I am omniscient, that I may solve every difficulty of life; and I am omnipotent that I may bring all my power to their relief. But all these things are necessary only to a greater thing. These things are contributory to my love and to my great regard for men. It is my delight to bring all I AM into service for my earthly sons, and I WILL ever find my joy in becoming unto them as they need Me to become. Even the present distress I will yet turn into joy—all the baser passions I WILL transmute into the pure gold of perfect character. And I WILL rid the world of all that would defile and annoy, for I will not clear

the guilty man who delights in his sin, now, or in future days. For "I am what I am" and "I will be what I will be" for the sake of fallen man. That is "My Name for ever and this is My memorial to all generations" (Ex. 3: 15).

The scenic setting of the Revelation of the Ineffable Name was partly in the wilderness of Midian, and partly on the crest of Horeb, in the long-ago days of Moses; but it was revealed there for all time. That Holy Name contained the germ of the whole plan of redemption—for the execution of the complete intention was embodied in that peculiar sacred Name. Later generations and latter prophets amplified the great theme, as its immensities and implications came to be understood. It set the tongues and hearts of Israel's saintliest men singing with hope and expectation, and inspired the most sublime literature the world has ever seen.

That 'Holy Name' was Israel's richest heritage. 'Yahweh' was Israel's God exclusively for a time. For a whole Age 'Yahweh' had neither blessing nor favour for any people save Israel. But that exclusive favour to Israel was a means to an end, for through them, when they were refined and purified God's love, like a mighty flood, was intended to flow to all nations. The people whom Yahweh wound around His Holy Name were to be vessels of His mercy to all. Thus that blessed Name—too holy for Jewish lips—stands both as pledge and promise of a wide-reaching plan to bless all nations through Abraham's earthly seed. God's great purpose is outlined in a promise—the promise is concentrated in a Name. There was a revelation OF the 'Name'; there was a revelation IN the 'Name.' This Name is God's Name, to which Name He will ever be faithful; of it He will never be ashamed. He revealed that Name to Israel, to hold in trust for a time, but its pledge and promise was for all, for the NEED which Yahweh pledged Himself to meet in Israel, was the NEED of all men everywhere.

"Praise ye Yah, for good is Yahweh, Sing praises to His Name, for it is full of delight." Psa. 135: 3.

(Rotherham).

"Praise Yahweh all ye nations,
Laud Him all ye tribes of men
For His Lovingkindness hath prevailed over us,
And the faithfulness of Yahweh is to times
age-abiding,

Praise ye Yah!

Psa. 117. (Rotherham).

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Deep calleth unto Deep.

If you would to another heart a source of comfort be,
 Skilled to administer TRUE balm, and shew real sympathy;
 If you would dry another's tears in deepest grief or woe,
 O, marvel not then if today your own heart's blood must flow.
 If you would in life's stress and strain, courage and strength impart.
 To those who 'neath life's burden oft might droop with sinking heart,
 You, too, must know the pressure keen, the spirit sorely tried,
 Draw for yourself the strength from God that never is denied.
 If you would tell with words of power to lives that well might tire
 With suffering prolonged, that still God shares the "furnace fire,"
 O' you must prove then for yourself His presence surely there,
 But marvel not if trials keen today your soul must bear!
 Would you equipped for service be, where'er your path may lie?
 God has His training school on earth, learn here your calling high,
 When pain or joy shall to you come, perceive His coming too,
 To train you even now for work He has for you to do.

Calm in time of storm.

The true Christian in proper relationship with the Lord has at all times "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," ruling in his heart. It was Paul who sang praises to God in the prison at Philippi, who was composed and ready to speak to the people after being mobbed at Jerusalem, who was also the composed one in the tempest on the Mediterranean Sea. While Paul was indeed a stalwart follower of Jesus, with whom few, if any, could stand comparison, nevertheless the same principle holds with respect to every sincere child of God. If their triumphs of faith are less heroic than those of the Apostle, so also their trials are proportionately less severe. The Christian has much advantage every way. He

has the promise of God, not only as respects the life that now is, but also the life to come.

When God's Will is done.

Will God's will cease to be done in earth as in heaven when Christ's Millennial Kingdom terminates? Oh no! Quite to the contrary, that condition will only then be attained as the result of Christ's reign. By that time all men will not only be perfect, as Adam was when created (wilful sinners having been destroyed), but additionally they will have a knowledge of the goodness of righteousness and of the exceeding sinfulness and injuriousness of sin; and they will have successfully passed their trial and demonstrated that they have fully and definitely formed characters in fullest harmony with and likeness to the Divine Character. (1 Cor. 15: 24-28).

No Cross! No Crown!

In his sufferings the Christian is often tempted to think himself forgotten, but his afflictions are the clearest proof that he is an object of God's fatherly discipline. Satan would give the man the thing his heart is set upon but God has better things in reserve for His children and they must be brought to desire them and to seek them and this will be through the wreck and sacrifice of all that the heart holds dear. The Christian prays for fuller manifestations of Christ's glory and His love to him but he is often unaware that this is in truth praying to be brought into the furnace. Only in this it is that Christ can walk with His friends, to display in their preservation and deliverance His own almighty power. Dark and trying dispensations may be needful for some stubborn minds. To such, the language of God is of this kind:—"I will not wholly hide Myself; I will be seen by thee; but thou shalt never meet Me, except in a dark night and in a storm."

Peace.

The artist painted life as a dark storm-swept sea, covered with rocks. Then out of the midst of the wild waves he made to rise a great rock, in a cleft of which, high up, amid herbage and flowers, he painted a dove sitting quietly on her nest. It is a picture of Christian peace in the midst of this world's strifes and storms. In the cleft of the Rock is the home of content.

The Writings of Solomon.

These three productions come down to us from Jewish archives of sacred religious literature; and notwithstanding the imperfection of the writer, they come with clear indication of Divine supervision and inditement. The wisdom expressed is above that which is natural to our fallen humanity. It is not necessary to the reverent study of the moral philosophy therein set forth that we should either forget or ignore the defective moral character of Solomon; for even the story of his life with its chequered manifestations of virtue and vice is no inconsiderable part of the lesson of these books.

In 1 Kings 3: 11, 12, we have the assurance of the Divine inspiration of the wisdom of Solomon: "And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, **behold, I have done according to thy word.** Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." But while we recognise and duly appreciate the wisdom of Solomon, we also mark his typical character, and perceive that only as a type of Christ could the fulness of the promise belong, of wisdom and riches superior to any preceding or succeeding him. In this light the statement of our Lord (Matt. 12: 42) "A greater than Solomon is here" is in perfect harmony with 1 Kings 3: 12. His peaceful and prosperous reign, his famed wisdom and his marvellous wealth and glory were typical of the Millennial reign of Christ, though it all falls far short of the glory of the antitype—as types always do. As a

type, the peace of his reign in contrast with the warlike reign of his father David is strikingly similar to the predicted peace of Christ's reign in contrast with the turmoil and war and confusion of the Gospel age which precedes and prepares the way for the reign of his Son and for the building and establishment of the glorious temple of God, whose living stones are now being made ready, even as David similarly prepared the materials with which Solomon built the typical temple.

The Song of Solomon, though in the form of an oriental love song, is really an allegorical representation of the mutual love of Christ and the church.

The Book of Ecclesiastes seems to have been written in later life, when the heart had grown sick with excess of sensuous pleasures and the lack of real happiness which comes from a close and perfect walk with God, when he turned from all his riches and honours with the sad refrain, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." From his own experience he proves the truth of his theme, and counsels to others a different course from that which he himself had pursued, saying, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. . . . Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12: 1, 13.

The Book of Proverbs was probably the latest production of Solomon, when not only the promised wisdom from above, but also an experience gained under very peculiar and varied circumstances found expression in numerous concise and pithy sayings for the guidance and instruction of all who would live godly. These are frequently quoted and referred to in the New Testament.

Contrasts in the Life of Jesus.

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| (1) He began His ministry as a hungry man, yet,
He is the Bread of Life! | Matt. 4: 2.
John 6: 48. | (6) He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, yet,
He is the Good Shepherd of the Flock! | Acts 8: 32.
John 10: 14. |
| (2) He ended His ministry and life athirst, yet,
He is the Water of Life! | John 19: 28.
John 4: 10. | (7) In the evil hour He was put to death, yet,
By His dying He will destroy death! | Luke 22: 53.
1 Cor. 15: 54. |
| (3) He was often weary, yet
He is our Rest! | John 4: 6.
Matt. 11: 28. | (8) He was led captive to His death, yet,
He will lead Captivity captive. | Luke 23: 32.
Eph. 4: 8. |
| (4) His enemies called Him a devil, yet,
By the finger of God He cast devils out! | John 7: 20.
Luke 11: 20. | (9) He went down to the lowest depth, that,
He might ascend to the highest height! | Acts 2: 27.
Phil. 2: 9. |
| (5) He was sold for a mere thirty pieces of silver, yet,
He was full Ransom value for the whole world! | Matt. 26: 15.
1 Tim. 2: 6. | | |

SHORT MEMORIES

A Lesson from the Story of Israel.

After the great deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt they had many strange experiences, were subject to divers temptations and had many enemies to overcome. The power of God had been so markedly manifested on their behalf that it should have made such an impression on their minds and hearts as could never be eradicated. That is what we should have expected but we find that no sooner did they come up against a difficulty than they forgot all about past deliverances. As Psa. 106: 21 puts it "they forgot God their saviour who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham and terrible things by the Red Sea." Very short memories!

Are not we guilty of very short memories too? The mighty power of God has often been exercised on our behalf and we soon forget all about it. We see ourselves so clearly represented by these people of old that we feel no surprise when Paul tells us that the things which happened to them are things which may and do happen to us and their experiences are recorded for our guidance and help and that the people of Israel are in short typical of the people of God in this dispensation of Grace. This being the case it will surely be profitable for us to consider some of the experiences which occurred after they had left Egypt.

There are two things in Exodus 13 which reveal the wisdom and loving forethought of God for His people. The first is in verse 17. The nearest way to the Promised Land was by way of the coast through the land of the Philistines who would assuredly have opposed their progress. Israel was in no fit state to face an army. They had just been freed and we can imagine their condition. Like a man who has long been imprisoned in a dark dungeon and who is suddenly led forth into the sunlight, they must have been somewhat dazed by their sudden change of fortune. What did such as they know of war? How could they in their present ill discipline successfully contend with armed opposition? So, lest they should be so disheartened at the prospect of war that they

should return to slavery and their former misery, God very graciously made provision to school and train them gradually and teach them by gentler experiences and by degrees develop them into a confidence and strength which would replace their present broken and dispirited condition.

In dealing with those He loves the Lord does not permit trials of the way to be harder than we can bear. He has control over all circumstances; let us remember that. In His condescending goodness He so arranges that on our first setting out in the Narrow Way we do not encounter heavy trials which might have the effect of discouraging our hearts and making us turn back. On the other hand the way of the wilderness was long and difficult to the Israelites but God had varied lessons to teach His people which could only be learnt in the desert. (Deut. 8: 2-4). Such precious lessons could never have been learnt had they travelled by the short route through the land of the Philistines. There in the desert God was with them and none but He could have unlocked the secrets of their hearts and nothing but these experiences could have revealed to them their natural waywardness or have provided the remedy.

The second thing to notice in this chapter is in verse 21. Not only did God select their route but He came down to walk therein with them. He was their leader and companion, He knew of the trials and besetments of the way and in His concern for them He would not suffer them to travel alone, He went before them—a guide, a glory, a defence. If they had but trusted Him wholly, contentedly, confidently, how quickly they would have realised their goal, for the march would have been a triumphant one from the first day of deliverance. With God in front no one could have stayed their progress. **BUT THEY FORGOT GOD.**

Why do we so often forget that He who has called us out of darkness into light will also be our Leader and our ever present Guide to pro-

fect, to comfort and encourage every step along the way? Yes; we forget too. It is in the day of trial and difficulty we can experience something of the blessedness of being able to count on God. Were all to go smoothly this would not be so; it is not in gliding along the surface of the tranquil lake that the reality of the Master's presence is felt but when the tempest roars and the billows roll over the ship. Peter feared as he trod the water but afterwards, as he remembered the Master's words and felt the warm pressure of His hand, he was grateful that he had had the alarming experience. THE DIVINE PRESENCE IN A TRIAL IS MUCH BETTER THAN EXEMPTION FROM THE TRIAL. The sympathy of His heart WITH us is far sweeter than the power of His Hand FOR us. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were cast into the fiery furnace, the discovery and comfort of the Son of God's presence with them in the fire was far better than a display of His power to keep them out of it.

Chapter 14 tells of a situation of dire peril. The Israelites were at their wits end; human effort could do nothing. The sea was before them with neither boat nor raft and Pharaoh's army and chariots behind but it had all been ordered by God, He is never taken by surprise by any circumstance whatever. Nay more, the situation had been deliberately brought about by Him so that He would have an opportunity of displaying to His people His concern for them and His great power again to be exercised on their behalf.

When God has fixed our position for us we may remain calm and feel the utmost assurance, but how often do we feel disposed to question the why and wherefore of our being placed in such circumstances and perplex ourselves as to the reason of our being exposed to such trials? How much better to trust the love and wisdom of our Father who doeth all things well and call to mind the great deliverances of the past remembering that it is when we are in the greatest straits and difficulties we are favoured with the finest displays of God's character, His providence and His power. But we do not remember! He **could** have led Israel through the Red Sea and far beyond the reach of Pharaoh's hosts before the latter had even started from Egypt but that would not have glorified His own name so fully or confounded the enemy so entirely. Let us look on each difficult crisis in our lives as an occasion of bringing out on our behalf some fresh exhibition of Divine Grace, thus shall we be able

to glorify God even in the deepest waters.

How did the Israelites act in this emergency? Alas, "they forgot God their Saviour who had done great things in Egypt." They had seen the gods of Egypt judged and the power of Egypt shattered by repeated blows from God's stretched out arm and yet the moment a dark cloud appeared, confidence failed, their hearts became timid and they gave way to unbelieving murmurs (Ex. 14: 11-12). Giant depression had got them in his grip or they could never have thought that the Lord had taken such pains to deliver them from Egypt merely to let them die in the wilderness. Moses said, "Fear ye not, stand still." **Stand still!** how difficult when Nature must be doing something, yet what could they do? Turn about and face their enemies? Quite hopeless. Flee? Which way? They were shut in by sea and mountains; they were in a position where they could do nothing but appreciate their own helplessness. Now this is just the time when God acts, His strength and power is made perfect in our weakness. When we cease from our own puny efforts and are willing to stand still then it is that we can witness the salvation of God on our behalf. The assurance is "The Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace" but how frequently we ask for directions and forget to wait for the answer; instead of waiting and watching we busily arrange in our poor wisdom what we think will be best. It is wise indeed to stand still in all times of difficulty and perplexity and await the Lord's directions. He will surely open up some way of deliverance for us and then we can happily and trustfully go forward.

God opened up a way for the Israelites but it was a way which called for continued trust and faith. To walk on the bed of a river between piled up waters on the right hand and the left must have taxed their confidence indeed; it was a walk by faith and not by sight. The Egyptians, trying to do the same, were drowned. When people try to do what faith alone can accomplish they only encounter defeat. God's thoughtful providence for His people arranged that the crossing while in progress should be completely hidden from the observation of the pursuers. God placed Himself between Israel and their enemies. What complete protection! Before Pharaoh could harm the most feeble straggler of Israel he must force his way through the very abiding place of God.

Does not this incident remind us of the way in which our Heavenly Father places Himself

between us and our sins? He casts the latter all behind Him while He sheds upon us the light of His face. We may think our difficulties are great but if we only remembered that a **greater** God was between us and them we should save ourselves a great deal of needless fear and apprehension.

Rescue and relief came with the warning (Ex. 14: 26-28), and the children of Israel expressed their joy in a triumphant song of praise which is recorded in the next chapter. Previously we have not read of a single note of praise, thanksgiving or acknowledgment. It was as if the nation had been awe struck by the stupendous happenings in Egypt and were apprehensive lest their late master should overtake them, but now for the first time they realised that their enemies were powerless to injure them and when their minds grasped the full significance of their great deliverance the flood gates of emotion opened and six hundred thousand men joined in the magnificent outburst of praise to their great God for all His work on their behalf. This song was all about God and what He had done. There was not a word of self, self pity, or self praise anywhere. This is what a true song of thanksgiving should be; the heart should overflow with one theme, God's goodness, His loving-kindness, His character, His Name. It is only when God fills the heart to the exclusion of all else that we can render true worship.

How soon after that burst of song were murmurs heard among the people. They had no water to drink, the water at Marah was bitter and at the appearance of this fresh difficulty they forgot the grace which had brought them thus far on their way and they permitted their natural desires to control them. We are all prone at times to fall into a fretful impatient murmuring spirit and the only remedy is to remember past mercies and deliverance. We cannot remember all but the Scriptures urge us not to forget all. "Forget not all His benefits." Recall to mind as many as you can. Our wilderness journey has its Elims as well as its Marahs (chapters 15: 27). Many green and favoured spots have been provided just when we were most in need of them. The shade of the palm tree and the cool water of the well speak to us significantly of the blessing of spiritual ministry supplied to us by God who has called us by His grace.

About two weeks later the Israelites were complaining again; this time of hunger. They had again forgotten the loving kindness of their

God and asked, "Can God supply a table in the wilderness, Can He give bread also?" Hitherto all wants had been supplied but how often it is that a thousand mercies are forgotten in the presence of a single privation. But the people were still the objects of God's care in spite of their fretful unthankful spirit. In their backsliding ignorance they could visualise nothing better than the flesh pots of Egypt but the Lord said, "I will rain bread from Heaven for you." What a contrast, flesh pots of Egypt and angels' food! The advent of the manna brought a test with it as all God's gifts bring tests. To appreciate the manna the heart must be weaned from Egypt's influences. A few chapters later we read that they despised the manna and pronounced it light food which proves how little their hearts were disposed to God. As New Creatures we have been begotten to a new life and it is our privilege to feed upon the heavenly bread. The Word of God is the food divinely appointed for us in the wilderness condition and we must take heed that we value it lest we too come to consider it "light food." The manna was not to be hoarded, just sufficient for a man's need was to be gathered daily, neither more nor less. How does this apply to us? Is it a mistake to accumulate as much knowledge as we can? No, we may do that but we must not hoard it, we must use what we acquire; what we have learned must be proved out in our daily lives and we must turn it to profit in the way of renewing our spiritual strength. It has been said that "Christianity is not a set of opinions or a system of dogmas but a living reality, a personal, practical, powerful thing shedding a hallowed influence over the entire character." This can only result through the proper assimilation of our spiritual food or in other words a true and living fellowship with Christ.

Passing over many other incidents showing their failure to remember the manifold mercies of God, we come to the summons of Moses into the mountain where he was given the law and instructions respecting the Tabernacle, its construction, ritual, sacrifices and priesthood. While Moses was in the mountain top in communion with God what a contrast was taking place in the plain below. What degraded backsliding was there. They were rejecting their great and glorious God and demanding "make us gods!" They were degrading themselves to worship gods of molten metal; "make us gods to go before us." What? In place of the Shekinah light which indicated the pre-

sence with them of God their leader! Had they forgotten again so soon the manifestation of Divine Power so terribly exhibited in the wonders of the smoking mountain, the black clouds and the great trumpet voice? What was the cause of this strange defection? The carnal heart is at enmity with God, only faith can endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Fallen human nature leans not upon unseen spiritual things but on visible imitations of them. Tired of an invisible God they were busy making one they could see.

Paul tells us these things are written for our admonition. Are we then in danger of making false gods to go before us and displacing God by an idol of our own devising? Whenever we turn away in heart from leaning exclusively upon God we are in principle saying, like those Israelites, "Up, make us gods!" Everything set up in our hearts which claims our devotion is a challenge to the God who calls for all our love. He alone can and will bless and benefit those who trust Him but He is a jealous God and demands the whole praise

and adoration of His people. How clearly in all these incidents do we see ourselves portrayed, and their repeated transgressions, doubtings and murmurings find some counterpart in our own experiences. How many times do we forget past mercies? His compassions are new every morning, says Jeremiah, yet in spite of constant reminders we continually have much to deplore in our waywardness and weakness of faith. May the prayer for more faith be very constant upon our lips and may God answer that prayer by giving us that confidence in Him in all of life's experiences which will bring the perfect peace of a heart which is stayed upon Him.

*"We must trust Him solely
All for us to do.
They who trust Him wholly
Find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah
Hearts are fully blest
Finding as He promised
Perfect peace and rest."*



Two Simons

The Story of
an Opportunity



The last few days of Jesus' earthly life were full of mental and physical strain. Luke says (21: 37-38) "And in the day time He was teaching in the Temple; and at night He went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to Him in the Temple, for to hear Him." Following this came the last Passover and a long talk, then the Garden with its anguish and agony. An armed company came to take one defenceless man. He was betrayed by a kiss, bound and led away to trial. Mocked, humiliated, insulted, scourged and crowned with thorns Jesus began His journey to Calvary. He, bearing His cross for Himself, went forth to die. (John 19: 17, R.V.)

When the journey began Jesus was "led" forth carrying the cross but before the place called Calvary was reached and probably at a point just outside the north gate of the city (for note "as they came out" in Matt. 27: 32) it was necessary to transfer the heavy cross to someone else's shoulders. Moreover whereas at the beginning of the journey He was "led,"

at the close of it, such was His physical exhaustion, that He was "brought" or "borne along." (Mark 15: 20 and 22). Even His sinless body had its limits of endurance and they were reached that day. For three and a half years He had daily poured out His soul unto death, giving forth His vitality and strength, but like the Psalmist (Psa. 73: 26), He could say, "My flesh and my heart faileth but God is the strength of My heart and my portion for ever." His faith never faltered though His steps might.

A passer by was "impressed" by the Centurion in charge, one Simon, a Cyrenian, and he walked behind Jesus bearing the cross. Perhaps he was one of the "scattered abroad" Jews mentioned by Peter, come up to keep the Passover and obliged to lodge outside the city. Suddenly he found himself compelled under the law of Rome to carry a burden laid upon him by the Roman soldiers. The unlooked for happened and he found himself with his day's programme changed, walking in a direction opposite to that he had intended, following a Person with whom he had never

thought to be associated and bearing a burden he had never dreamed of carrying! How came it that the moment at which Simon met the procession was the very one at which the Centurion decided that somebody was wanted who could carry a cross? If Simon had been a little earlier or later, if he had entered by another gate, if the Centurion's eye had looked in another direction; but there are no ifs in the outworking of God's purposes. Behind apparently chance circumstances lies the planning of the wise God, that was why Simon's name that day found a place on the page of Scripture. Nothing happens by chance where God's providences are concerned. It is not likely that Simon welcomed the interruption of his day's programme but it was God's way of bringing him into touch with Jesus.

It must have happened like that in thousands of cases since; some trivial circumstance, some slight incident, some strange turn of event has made all the difference in the life. Sickness, sorrow, loss, the breaking up of a cherished plan, these and a host of other unwelcome happenings have resulted in bringing many into touch with the Lord Jesus.

THE OTHER SIMON.

Peter, the leading Apostle; how was it he was not carrying his Master's cross at that great moment? If he had been as good as his word and had lived up to his boast he would have been so close to Jesus that morning that it would have been impossible for any other to be chosen to carry the cross. A few hours previously Peter had said, "I am ready to go with Thee, to prison and death" and when somebody was really needed to go with Him to the place of death Peter was not there. He was afar off hiding his tears and his shame, far off with that last look his Master gave him burning into his tortured mind. The echo of his own denials and curses was still in his ears, so Simon Peter lost the opportunity that could never come back. Never again was the Son of God to walk that sorrowful way of the cross and because Peter was not there he lost the right to carry the cross for his Lord and go step by step with Him to Calvary. Think of it! Their Lord and Master who had shown such willingness to serve them in the most menial of tasks—washing their feet—was needing such a service at such a moment and not one of His own disciples was at hand to render it, so that to a stranger the undying honour must needs fall.

Simon the Cyrenian in a very real sense took

Simon Peter's place that day. How glad we are that the grace of God restored Peter to his place, for he was in peril of losing, not only his opportunity of service in carrying the cross after Jesus but also his crown, "Let no man take thy crown."

The sight of a man carrying his cross was quite familiar in Jerusalem. Our Lord had chosen the figure of a cross bearer as an illustration of a true disciple and added the paradox concerning losing life by saving it and saving life by losing it. Everyone seeing a man carrying his cross saw one whose life here was ended. So it is with one who sets out to carry his cross, he is severing his connection with old pursuits belonging to the old life, and following Christ into the new life. Simon the Cyrenian had this signal honour; alone of all the characters of Scripture he was the embodiment of our Lord's own illustration of a true disciple—a man carrying a cross after Christ! See him associated with Jesus in His shame, all his strength devoted to the carrying of a cross, walking pace for pace behind the Lord Himself, but with this difference—Simon carried Christ's cross; the disciple carries his own. The disciple's cross is Christ's only in the sense that he bears it voluntarily, gladly, "for My sake." (Mark 8: 35). Paul is our example here. He was always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 4: 10) and filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. (Col. 1: 24). He counted all things but loss and dross that he might win Christ and be found in Him.

We may suppose that Simon the Cyrenian never forgot that morning's burden carrying nor the after incidents. If the Centurion who laid the cross on him was constrained before the day was out to say "truly this was the Son of God," we may believe that Simon's heart was reached.

Simon is mentioned in Mark 15: 21 as being the father of two sons, Alexander and Rufus. These two men were evidently well known Christians at the time Mark's Gospel came to be written, for the evangelist doubtless mentioned them by name because they were known to those Christians to whom he was writing. This in itself is strongly in favour of the assumption that Simon was so moved by his experiences on that eventful day that he became a follower in the deeper and spiritual sense of Him whose cross he bore and trained his boys to do the same.

"Think on these things!"

A signpost in the way to transformation of character.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life," is one of the wise sayings of the inspired Word (Prov. 4: 23); and it was with the same thought in mind that the Apostle penned the above words to the church at Philippi, whom he addressed with great affection and appreciation as his "joy and crown," (4: 1). The little company of consecrated believers there were the first fruits of his ministry, and were specially remarkable for their loyalty and faithfulness to the Lord, the truth and the beloved Apostle, who at this time was a prisoner in Rome. Thither, in his time of need, they sent their gifts, and these expressed their love and sympathy and care for his temporal welfare, which they had always been forward to do while he ministered to them in spiritual things. (4: 10-19). In them the Apostle was comforted and cheered, and he rejoiced even in his afflictions in that they also were for their sakes; for the example of his patience in tribulation and joy and in self-sacrifice was as valuable a lesson to the saints as were any of his most profound and logical instructions.

Being desirous that these disciples should continue to manifest the fruits of the spirit and to grow in grace, this epistle is one of encouragement and wise counsel—to stand fast in the faith and spirit of the gospel and to learn more fully how to deny themselves even as Christ did (1: 27, 29; 2: 1-11); to work out their salvation with fear and trembling (2: 12); to beware of false teachers and evil workers (3: 2, 18, 19); and to seek to be all the same mind—the mind which was in Christ Jesus; to esteem each other in the Lord; and to do nothing even for the cause of Christ through any spirit of strife or vain glory.

Then follows this beautiful final admonition of our text, so in keeping with the thought that out of the heart are the issues of life. The heart represents the will, the intentions. The will must be true and centred in God: it is the governing power of the whole man. Blessed are the pure in heart—those of fixed uncompromising purpose. Yet though the will is the controlling power of man, it is also subject to influences. If the thoughts be impure, unjust or unholy, the power of the will becomes more

and more impaired. Hence the wisdom of the Apostle's advice as to what would be the character of our thoughts. In those who are striving to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord—to adorn themselves with the beauty of holiness—the thoughts must not be neglected and permitted to browse in every pasture, but must be disciplined to feed upon convenient and healthful food, such as the Apostle directs, viz.:—

(1) "Whatsoever things are true." That would exclude indulgence in visionary and foolish fiction, which does do much to corrupt the mind and squander time. It would also exclude all the idle speculative theories of men who, ignoring the true gospel, seek to draw away disciples after them. It would banish also the vain philosophies of the creeds of "Christendom," when once the symmetry and beauty of the Divine Plan of the ages has been seen. It would avoid all idle gossip and evil surmises; and, having escaped the gloom and discontent and the perplexity, care and worry consequent upon entertaining such thoughts, the mind can be at peaceful leisure for the contemplation of that which is true. Then it may draw from the abundant storehouse which our bountiful God has supplied, both in His Word of law and prophecy and precept and promise and in the open book of Nature.

How richly the mind is rewarded that dwells upon these things. The law of God and its application to all the minutiae of life's affairs should be the most constant theme of meditation among the saints, since it is to be applied in all our business and social relations; and its often intricate problems require close discernment and discrimination. "Oh, how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day," is the sentiment which the inspired Psalmist (119: 97) would put into the mouth of all the Lord's people. Then the prophecies, so laden with good tidings of great joy for all people, and the promises, so exceeding great and precious, how full of blessing they are to all who delight in their contemplation! And in the light of the glorious gospel nature itself wears a brighter face and speaks a loftier language, emphasising the love and power and praise of our God. Whatsoever things are true, brethren,

think on these things.

(2) "**Whatsoever things are honest.**" That would exclude all deceit and hypocrisy, all evil scheming and intrigue, as well as thoughts of deliberate plunder or falsehood or evil speaking, giving place to frank and open honesty of thought, developing daily into good and noble deeds.

(3) "**Whatsoever things are just.**" This would discard all unjust weights and balances in estimating the character and motives of our fellow men, and particularly our brethren in Christ. It would make all due allowances for the infirmities of the flesh, remembering that we also are subject to infirmity, if not so much in one direction, then in another. It would consider surroundings, estimate the bias of influences and calculate the force of temptations, in order to find, if possible, extenuating circumstances for favourable judgment. Yet it would not ignore unpleasant facts and thus encourage evil.

The mind, where justice is enthroned, not only seeks always to judge justly, but it has also a fine appreciation of justice. It delights to trace the lines of justice in God's wonderful plan of human salvation. It so clearly sees the value of justice, which is the very foundation principle of God's throne, that the value of the precious blood of Christ in satisfying the demands of justice and thus reclaiming the forfeited life of the world is keenly appreciated. And so fully is this feature of the Divine Plan and the grandeur of the principle of justice seen and realized, that no vain philosophy of men, which suggests other schemes of salvation which ignore the just claims of justice, can be tolerated. No other plan but this, which is founded in justice and executed in love, can claim the attention of those whose habit of thought is just and to whom the Divine Plan has been revealed.

(4) "**Whatsoever things are pure.**" Blessed are the pure in heart and mind. Pure thoughts, devoid of the slime and filth of sin, how they invigorate and energeise the soul in

every high and noble work! The pure mind demands a pure body and clean clothing, though it be ever so coarse. It courts the society of only the pure and good and shuns the contamination of all others. It seeks also only that which is pure, in literature or in art. The vile insinuation, the rude jest, the unchaste in art, are alike an abomination to the pure mind. The pure mind finds delight in the society of the pure and in the contemplation of the virtues and graces and of the true and beautiful. The blessedness of such a condition of mind and heart is too far above the comprehension of the impure to be to any extent appreciated. Its happifying and ennobling influence is best illustrated by the effects upon the body of thorough cleansing and clean clothing, which give new energy and vigour to the physical man.

(5) "**Whatsoever things are lovely; whatsoever things are of good report (worthy of praise); if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.**" Added to all the solid virtues of truth, honesty, justice and purity, let all the lovely graces and adornments of meekness, patience, faith, godliness, benevolence, kindness and charity occupy our thoughts. And as we hold these virtues before the mind's eye as a mirror, they gradually become more and more assimilated, and the transforming work goes on in our own characters. Thus too, the will is strengthened and inspired with fresh energy to fulfil its great work in governing and controlling the whole man.

This the Apostle saw to be the philosophy of the influence of the thoughts upon the will and vice versa. Therefore, he would have us set a watch and a governor upon our thoughts and feed them with wholesome and life-giving food, that thus the thoughts may reinforce the will, and the will may govern and control the thoughts to the end that both the present and the future blessing of the pure in heart may be realised by those who are diligently seeking for them. Matt. 5, 8.

My Lord come home with me!
Come through the turmoil of the busy street,
Where none can see the shining of Thy face,
Where none can hear the moving of Thy feet.
Yet come, dear Master, to the humble place
Where love hath raised a royal throne for
Thee.
My Lord, come home with me.

My Lord, come home with me;
And when the misty rush of life is o'er,
When all the things of life have ceased to be,
When swiftly passing years come round no
more,
And the eternal dawn breaks o'er the golden
shore,
Then for the sake of Thy great love to me,
Let me—come home—with Thee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MESSAGE FROM AUSTRALIA.

A brother and sister recently arrived in this country bearing with them a message of Christian love and the exhortation contained in Eph. 6 : 23-24, from the brethren of the Melbourne class to the friends of this country. We feel sure that many will appreciate this little evidence of the unseen link that binds us to fellow-heirs in the gospel on the other side of the earth.

ANONYMOUS.

We would acknowledge with sincere thanks the receipt of three anonymous donations of 10/- each.

CHANGE OF NAME.

Brother Walter Bugden, of Birkenhead, desires it to be known amongst the friends that he has changed his name by deed poll to WALTER MERCER. He would sincerely appreciate the co-operation of the friends in making this change generally known.

MANCHESTER.

The friends at Manchester have been impressed by the fact that films in colour have their appeal to the public and have proven a successful medium in presenting Bible themes to interested children and adults.

Weeknight meetings starting at 7.0 p.m. and finishing at 8.30 p.m., just before the blackout, attracted bright gatherings. In the one, 20 adults and 55 children, and in the other 100 adults and their children listened with evident appreciation to the lecture and the amplified musical recordings. Two films were shown, with an address in the middle of the programme. On the Sunday the films were shown to 30 interested members of the public, and questions and answers were entertained.

By leaflet and by newspaper space, attention had been directed to the Message, and the complete effort had shown signal signs of response hardly anticipated. With some diffidence some of the friends had hoped that this modern application of popular appeal might be found to draw the public, and now faith had eventuated into practical reality. These films have been found to awaken the interest of brethren in the days of early endeavour. The Shunnamite's little son has been instrumental in bringing together those whose hearts joyously sought in the past to serve the Lord, and once again refreshed, brethren united in praise to the Lord in happy service. Many friends were observed to be deeply moved by this stirring theme of the Resurrection.

BLABY.

A gathering of friends from Coventry, Rugby, Market Bosworth and Leicester was held by invitation and hospitality of the brethren at Blaby on Sunday, 11th October, the sessions being addressed by Bros. Gillaspay (Manchester), and Chessell (London). A praise and testimony meeting prior to the afternoon address was conducted by Bro. Couling, of Rugby. The brief time of fellowship was much enjoyed by all who attended.

FLORAL CARDS.

A few floral cards; without greetings or lettering of any kind, are available in assorted packets at 1/3d. per packet of 12.

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND CALENDARS.

It is not intended to stock Christmas Cards and Calendars in the bookroom this year.

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

A list of books available from the reference library can be obtained upon application to the librarian. Postage both ways is payable by the borrower, and books may be retained for one month, and for further periods if not required by another reader. A post card request for the desired book is sufficient, and stamps for forward postage may be enclosed with the book when returning same. Please address all requests to Mr. J. Humphrey, 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

BENEVOLENT RELIEF FUND.

Such donations as are entrusted to the Committee for this purpose are administered by three brethren of experience. Correspondence regarding deserving cases should be addressed to Mr. G. A. Ford, 13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds., and donations should be sent to the office at 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

Now ready

LUCIFER THE PRINCE OF EVIL

A study in the personality of the Devil

This booklet is a reprint of the articles recently appearing in the B.S.M. under the same title.

It has been published as one of the series planned by the Committee to deal with the doctrinal aspects of our faith

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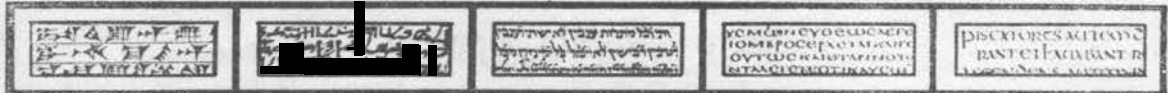
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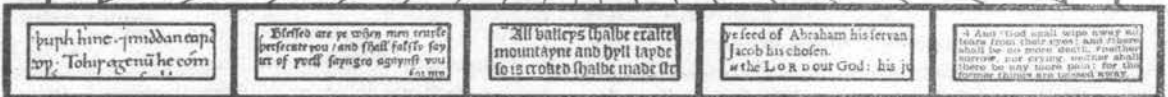
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BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



Vol. 18 No. 12

DECEMBER, 1941

Threepence

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

- That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.
—I. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.
- That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.
—Rev. 15; 5-8.
- That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the truelight which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."
Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. I Tim. 2; 5-6.
- That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.
—I. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.
- That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.
Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.
- That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.
Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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JEHOVAH--THE SACRED NAME

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Part 2.—THE MEMORIALS OF
THE HOLY NAME

*"The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long suffering,
and abundant in goodness and truth"*

Subsequent to the Revelation of the Holy Name (Ex. 3: 6) the most pious souls in Israel instituted Memorials of that Name, in connection with some crisis of their personal or national experiences. Some word, descriptive of the locality or circumstance was attached to the 'tetragrammaton' (or four-lettered Name) and bore its testimony to the fulfilment of the Promise enshrined in the Name. On these occasions "He who becometh" **did become** what a tempted and tried people needed Him to become, and received from Him the help and succour which the occasion called for. To commemorate this display of Divine assistance, compound names were coined, so that they might tell later generations how He who bore 'the Name' had helped them in their need. Thus Moses on one occasion raised the Memorial name of **'Yahweh Ropheka'**—'Yahweh, thy Healer'; on another occasion Moses built an altar in remembrance of a victory, and called it **'Yahweh Nissi'**—'Yahweh, my Banner.' (Ex. 17.)

In later times Gideon built an altar, and called it **'Yahweh Shalom'**—'Yahweh gave peace,' because after seeing the Angel of Yahweh face to face, he was spared from death. (Judges 6: 21-24).

Still later, Israel's God was called **'Yahweh Zebaoth'**—Yahweh of hosts (2 Sam. 7: 26-27). And God Himself on one occasion gave them the compound name **'Yahweh Makaddishken'**—'Yahweh doth sanctify you' (Lev. 20: 8).

In that sweetest pastoral song of all time David calls God **'Yahweh Ra'ah'**—'Yahweh my Shepherd.' (Psa. 23: 1).

Looking forward far down the stream of time Jeremiah sees Israel and Judah cleansed from all defilement and sin and made worthy to bear the name of their God. He calls them **'Yahweh Tsidkenu'**—Yahweh's Righteousness.' (Jer. 23: 6, 33: 16). Ezekiel also, describing a future apportionment of the Holy Land, and

of a City in its midst, declares its name **'Yahweh Shammah'**—'Yahweh is there' (Ezek. 48: 35).

In all these instances some wonderful manifestation of Divine care is called to mind, and kept on record for later generations to see how God of 'the Ineffable Name' had become what His people needed Him to become, and had brought them through to the higher and better state of victory over self and sin.

Most of these occur in late Jewish history, but there is one notable instance where the 'Name' is compounded, which pre-dates the scene at 'the Bush' when Moses was commissioned to become Israel's deliverer and leader.

This occasion arose when a heavy-hearted but faithful old man had taken his long-awaited son up a mountain side, and had laid him on an altar to sacrifice him to Almighty God. The old father's faith was tested right up to the point where the knife was upraised to strike the fatal blow. When the crucial moment had demonstrated that, in intent, the deed was done, the hand was arrested and the blow stayed. The lad was lifted from the altar and unbound, while the Angel of God directed where a substitutionary sacrifice would be found.

Can anyone wonder that that faithful old father, and his restored son should call that sacred spot **'Yahweh Yireh'**—'Yahweh will see and provide'? Would they not remember all their days how near to the brink of sacrifice they stood, and yet how, betime, the Angel interposed, and provided a lamb to die in Isaac's place? To all ages the remembrance will stand of a faithful sire, and a submissive son, and a providential God. Abraham's test was severe; as grievous as mortal man could bear; but in that epochal hour, God saw what was in the grand old man, and became to him all that that patriarchal soul needed Him to be. To every zeal-warm soul in Israel, or in the Church, **'Yahweh Yireh'** is the

token of an Eye which sees, and of an Arm that provides.

Israel had journeyed but three days from the Red Sea (Ex. 15: 22) when their murmurings began. Coming to Marah, they found the waters bitter there. "What shall we drink?" they asked. Moses cried unto God, and God showed him a tree, which, cast into the waters would make them sweet. To commemorate the healing of the waters God set Himself before them as '**Yahweh Ropheka**'—'Yahweh that healeth thee'—'Yahweh thy Healer.'

Behind this was a lesson of deeper import, for there "God made for them a statute and an ordinance"—". . . if thou wilt do what is right in My sight . . . I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians" (see Deut. 28: 27).

The healing of the waters was a symbol of the healing of the nation—as a community and as individuals. Israel needed pure refreshing drink, and God gave it to them. He became to them what they needed Him to become,—'**Yahweh Ropheka**'—'Yahweh, their Healer.'

The Psalmist catches up this refrain and says, "Bless Yahweh, O my soul, . . . and forget not all His benefits. Who . . . healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction . . ." (Psa. 103: 2-4). Thus the Holy Name stood for a symbol of health and deliverance—a memorial of bitter (Marah) experience, softened and tempered by the goodness of their God.

Israel had left the Red Sea borders but a few weeks when another tremendous trouble befell the wandering people. Encamped at Rephidim (Ex. 17: 8-15) at which place God had provided water from the flinty rock, the hosts of Amalek fell upon and would have destroyed them, but for Yahweh's intervention. Israel were an untrained, undisciplined host, handicapped by the presence of women and children. Thus they could have become an easy prey to Amalek's warriors. But while the men of Israel fought, Moses played his part by holding up his arms. While his arms were up Israel prevailed; when his arms were down Amalek prevailed. On perceiving this Aaron and Hur "stayed up his hands," standing one on each side of Moses. This unusual procedure shows Divine supervision of the event, and when "Joshua discomfited Amalek" the victory was the gift of Yahweh. Because of Amalek's treachery, Yahweh declared to Moses that Amalek should be destroyed. In token of ac-

cepting this declaration as a pledge Moses built an altar and called it "**Yahweh Nissi**"—'Yahweh my Banner.'

Israel had been in danger, and God became unto her what she needed Him to be—a deliverer in war. Yet in that deliverance God required them to co-operate—the men-folk to fight, and Moses to intercede. This was intended to teach them a two-fold lesson—first, confidence in themselves; second, confidence in their God. God made up for them, that which they lacked in themselves.

When the people of Israel were setting forth from Egypt, they went forth as "the hosts of Yahweh" (Ex. 12: 41). In course of time, the two nouns in this phrase became transposed. It would be an easy change from 'the hosts of Yahweh' to 'Yahweh of Hosts'. This change of emphasis has taken place well before the period of the Judges ended, for before Samuel's birth, his pious mother had prayed to the 'Lord of Hosts' to take away her reproach and give her a son (1 Sam. 1: 3-18) whom she would dedicate to Yahweh throughout his days. This transposition of nouns would have come about when Israel found Yahweh fighting her numerous foes, and giving her the victory—Yahweh thus becoming the advance guard of the 'host.' From this time on, in Israel, because Israel was so often at war, this Name '**Yahweh Sabaoth**'—'Yahweh of hosts'—was frequently employed by both Prophet and Psalmist.

David celebrates in song the return in triumph of the glorious King (Psa. 24): and admonishes the gates and doors of the great city to be opened and uplifted to admit his victorious train. "Who is this King of Glory" he asks. He then makes answer "Yahweh, strong and mighty, Yahweh, mighty in battle . . . Yahweh of Hosts, He is the King of Glory."

Throughout the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and some of the minor prophets this 'Name' is in constant use, always with the same import. Israel and Judah were frequently at war with neighbours, and to the saintly minds in Israel "the God of Israel was Yahweh of Hosts" all the time, no matter how the fortunes of war fell out.

A deep and wonderful field of study lies in these three words, revealing the strange doings of Israel's God as He stepped along the highways of history, sometimes assisting, sometimes chastising the hosts who had gathered to 'His Name.' But all the time the meaning of His

Name ran true—"I will be what I will be" in every circumstance. "I will bless you, when faithful, I will chastise you when faithless," was always the tenor of His attitude to the wayward sons of those stiff-necked fathers, to whom His Name was first made both pledge and promise.

Space will not permit much to be said about the prophetic foreviews of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, on this occasion. When Israel and Judah are gathered home again, cleansed from all their sin, and living only for their God, that once stubborn people will be a wonder in the earth, before the eyes of all nations.

"In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely and this is the Name wherewith she shall be called, 'Yahweh Tsidkenu' 'Yahweh's Righteousness.'" (Jer. 33: 16). And this city and people shall have a glorious king who will bear this same illustrious Name "And in His days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby he shall be called, 'Yahweh Tsidkenu'—Yahweh's Righteousness or Yahweh our Righteousness" (Jer. 23: 6). Now at long last 'Yahweh,' the nation's king, and the nation itself are all at one, and the "Holy Name" is on them all. "Yahweh Elohim" the God of Israel, by His goodness and long-suffering has won the affection of the wayward sons of Israel, and they are now worthy to be His people. "He has become to them all that He long wanted to become." "He who becomes" has, in ways, strange and wonderful, become their God.

And so, in that last final 'City of Peace' 'Yahweh is there.' (Ezekiel 48: 35).

Just one word more, as we turn back to Israel's shepherd King. "Yahweh my Shepherd," sings David. Memories of his own youthful days would fill the mind of the sweet Singer in Israel, as he gave utterance to this delightful phrase. Lion and bear had sought to rob him of his fleecy charge, but at risk to himself, he had been their defence. He had sought out the luscious grass and quietly flowing waters for his flock, and stood guardian while they fed. He had been to them what they needed him to be,—provider, defender and healer.

The pious mind of the shepherd boy, now king in Israel, catches at the larger thought, and sees himself (with all his people) as the sheep of Yahweh's pasture. A gracious bountiful keeper of His flock was Israel's God—"Yahweh Ra'ah"—Yahweh my Shepherd! In other words David had embraced the promise 'at the Bush,' and adapted it to the shepherd life, and had drawn sweet comfort for himself (and for millions since) because 'He who becometh' had become a Shepherd to His flock.

David had taken the promise "I will be what I will be" and had inserted the words "as a shepherd" within them, and made them to read "He will be, as a Shepherd, what He will be."

To-day that promise stands sure. "I will be all you need me to be"—protector, provider, healer, God and Father. Oh, wonderful Name! and wonderful privileges vouchsafed by that Name!

"Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be THY NAME" yea, hallowed and esteemed by every child who knows its worth. May God help us to Hallow His Name to-day and forever.

Conclusion.



Interesting Texts Considered.



"The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16; 19).

The words of Jesus to Peter in this verse take us back to the Old Testament. Peter had just uttered his memorable declaration "Thou

art the Christ, the Son of the living God" and Jesus knew that here was the man who would take the lead after His own death and be the acknowledged captain of that little band which was to lay the foundations of the Christian Church. Hence His words "Thou art Peter (petros, a piece of stone or rock) and upon this rock (petra, a great mass of rock—the

body of disciples and believers at that time) I will build my Church." Peter's preaching at Pentecost saw the beginning of the fulfilment of those words, a fulfilment which has proceeded throughout the entire Age.

Now with this picture in mind we need to turn to the Old Testament. Jesus was thinking of Isaiah's words in Isaiah 22: 22. "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so that he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." Under figure of Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, the Lord Jesus Christ is pictured here. In the time of Israel's unfaithfulness God has condemned them to captivity, and the sentence pronounced on Shebna the unfaithful steward over the house well fits Israel's national experiences in Babylon. The promise then is that God will call his servant Eliakim and clothe him with the "robe" and "girdle" (both priestly terms indicative of Aaron's "robes of glory and beauty" and commit the "government" (a word is used here meaning complete sovereign power as of a king) into his hand. This Eliakim is to be a father to Jerusalem and Judah, and the key of the house of David is to be laid upon his shoulder. In other words, the priestly kingly rights are to be vested in this one person pictured by Eliakim.

He is then to be fastened as a "nail in a sure place," and all that is in the house shall depend upon that nail. (Vs. 23). Now here comes a strange word. "In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed, and cut down, and fall; and the burden that is upon it shall be cut off." (Vs. 25). This was fulfilled when our Lord, the "nail in a sure place" during His First Advent, was "cut off out of the land of the living." (Isa. 53; 8). During that First Advent He had appeared both as Priest and King, and although He was rejected by the people, His right to both those offices remained unimpaired. He, the rightful heir to the throne of David, and in whom the covenant made with David was fulfilled, held the "key of the house of David," and used that key to "shut" the Jewish Dispensation and "open" the Christian Dispensation. Three and one half years after His death the exclusive call to the Jews ended and the call to the Gentiles went out.

But that key has yet to be used again, for in Rev. 3; 7 our risen Lord declares Himself to be "He that hath the key of David, he that

openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." He must yet "close" the call of this Gospel Age and "open" the call of the Millennial Age.

Now perhaps we can begin to see Peter's privilege in all this. His Lord was about to go away; He had laid the foundation principles on which His Church must be built, but there was as yet no work done. It was as if the architect's drawings of the building had been prepared and the ground cut for the foundations, but only the first twelve foundation stones had been laid. And so our Lord, because of His impending departure, laid upon Peter the responsibility of using the key which was rightfully His own. "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" and knowing that Peter would use those keys in harmony with his Master's will, Jesus declared in advance that Peter's actions would be honoured by his Master away at the right hand of God. Just as the Heavenly Father had entrusted the key of David to our Lord to execute all the details of the Divine Plan as promised to David, so did Jesus entrust to Peter the key which enabled him to enter upon the commencement of that great work which has occupied all the Gospel Age.

To this day the standards set out in the New Testament by Peter and Paul have been the laws which determine entrance into the Heavenly Kingdom. Paul, with all his learning and ability, must needs go to Peter before he could commence his own ministry, and so it is true to say that Peter opened the Kingdom of Heaven even to Paul. The writings of these two men, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have "bound" and "loosed" the things which can either help or hinder us in our pressing toward the mark of the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus, and what has been thus written on earth has had the sanction of Heaven.

At the end of this Gospel Age Peter's use of the "keys" comes to an end. His commission to act expires with the completion of the Church which he proclaimed at Pentecost. Our Lord then comes upon the scene in all the glory of His Second Advent, and proceeds to the execution of the next phase in His Father's Plan—gathering His saints together to Himself, a work which is in progress even now, and opening the doors of blessing to the redeemed hosts of mankind.

THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

WATCHFULNESS.

There is great need of vigilance at all times, for it was while men slumbered that the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. Similarly, when the soul slumbers its great enemy takes advantage of his opportunity of sowing evil in the heart. Watchfulness is the first care of every Christian; for unless we keep a careful watch over ourselves we shall run a great risk of being taken captive by the devil at his will. We are living in an evil world, there are inducements to sin on every hand; sinful suggestions crowd in upon us, forcing themselves through the avenues of our senses; they steal their way into our mind. Thus our plain duty is to set a watch over our desires and affections, so that we may not give place to any corrupt or base insinuation for a moment. We are to check the first approach of sin in any form. Further, we are to watch over our own heart: the heart should be guarded with assiduous, zealous care. It is a great power for good and evil. We are enjoined to "keep it with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Our Lord tells us "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Suggestions come from without; thoughts proceed from within. But our thoughts are not to be free to roam as they please. We are to make captives of them, to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; these temporary deserters must be brought back to their true allegiance to their supreme Commander. Mental self-possession should ever be our aim. It is the only perfect freedom. That is the only way of keeping the heart pure from all taint of evil.

(Selected).

A MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY.

"Always be glad in the Lord; I will repeat it, BE GLAD. Let your forbearing spirit be known to everyone—the Lord is near. Do not be over-anxious about anything, but by prayer and earnest pleading together with thanksgiving, let your requests be unreservedly made known in the presence of God, and then the peace of God which transcends all our powers of thought will be a garrison to guard your hearts and minds in union with Christ Jesus." Phil. 4: 4-7.

(Weymouth).

THE FLEETING YEARS

"Only a few more years to learn our part,
Just a few more miles the race to run,
So gather courage fresh, 'O fainting heart,'
O weary feet thy journey soon is done.

"Only a few more months, but full of toil,
For in the field are hungry souls to feed;
Then struggle on, O weary, burdened one,
For thou shalt find a strength in time of need.

"Only a few more days to fill with love,
Love for all God's creatures, friend and foe;
Love which shall cover every human fault,
And bring a balm for every earthly woe.

"Only a few more hours we know for some
Who in this life have fought a goodly fight;
Henceforth for them remains a glorious crown,
A rest within the radius of God's light.

"Only a few more days of willing sacrifice,
Of patient standing when our work is done;
Soon in His radiant presence we'll rejoice,
And praise Him in our everlasting home."

"THOUGH OUR SINS WERE AS SCARLET."

So far as Jehovah is concerned, we are forgiven through His own provision,—through Christ. And so far as our relationship to the Lord Jesus, who bought us, is concerned, He freely pardons all who would come unto the Father by Him. And so far as we are concerned, the results attained by God's plan are most favourable—to us it amounts to the same though the Father had pardoned us unconditionally and without a ransom, except that a knowledge of the fact enables us to reason with God, and to see how, though our sins were as scarlet, we are made whiter than snow, and how God is just while justifying and releasing us. Thus God has furnished us a sure foundation for faith and trust.

Pastor C. T. Russell.

PROSPERITY

A Sidelight on Paul's
Voyage to Rome.

About Christmas time we wish one another a happy and prosperous new year. Prosperous is a word not much used in Scripture; it occurs in 1 Cor. 16: 2. "Let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him," and means prosperity in worldly conditions and estate. We find it again in 3 John 2. "Beloved I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health even as thy soul prospereth." Here the term is used in a more general sense; the wish is expressed that things in general may go well and smoothly.

In Romans 1: 10, Paul wrote "Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you." Weymouth's translation says "Entreating that if such be His will the way may by some means be made clear for me to visit you." Did God make the way clear for Paul to visit Rome? Yea He surely did but it was in a most unexpected manner. Paul went as a prisoner, not as a free man. Wrongfully accused of profaning the Temple, he suffered imprisonment for more than two years at Caesarea. Failing to obtain judgment he at length appealed to Caesar and claimed as a Roman citizen his right to answer for himself before the Emperor. Preparations were made for sending him to Rome and the journey is described at length by Luke, a companion and eye witness, in Acts 27.

Was the journey a prosperous one? It depends how one views the matter. If a full consecration of oneself and all one possesses is made to God, God takes control forthwith and henceforth nothing happens by chance. Everything is overruled and ordered for the best welfare of that one and at the same time works out some Divine purpose which will glorify our Father in Heaven. Many are the incidents which will happen in such a life, incidents which the world will be only too ready to class as calamities and vexations. The thoughtless and worldly can never realise how the troubles and trials of the Christian can be turned into blessings.

Let us consider the details of this momentous journey and see for ourselves whether it could fairly be called a prosperous one. The voyage began with difficulties; no sooner had they launched forth than they were met by contrary winds (Acts 27: 4) slow sailing (verse 7) and even worse, dangerous sailing (verse 9).

At the beginning of our life of consecration have we not felt like singing all the time? Conscious of what great things the Lord had done for us, our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing, but we had not been very long on our pilgrim journey before there were contrary winds blowing from quarters we never expected and we began to realise that it was not for us to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease.

There was combined opposition to Paul's advice (verse 11). Speaking as an inspired prophet of God, Paul advised that any attempt to leave the shelter of the island of Crete would be attended with grave risk to cargo, ship and human life. Paul knew what he was talking about. As a native of Tarsus he was acquainted with that coast and sea and knew of the sudden and fierce storms which swept that whole region in the last months of the year. October had now come, for the Day of Atonement was past (verse 9). In the eyes of the centurion, master and owner, Paul was only a land lubber and a prisoner; why should experienced seamen pay any attention to his advice? They trusted in their own wisdom ("supposing that they had obtained their purpose they set sail" (verse 13). They knew better than any landsman, was not everything in their favour? Nothing could suit their purpose better than a soft south wind, they would soon be selling their wheat in the markets of Italy! How often south winds and human "supposes" have brought men into positions and places they little thought they would ever see! Unheeding the advice of the man of God and trusting to their own wisdom, they took their own way and were speedily at the mercy of a typhoon, a tempest-

uous wind from the mountains of Asia. The south wind was followed by Euroclydon (verse 14), sun and stars were not seen for fourteen days and there was heavy rain and extreme cold. A vivid description is given in verses 20-27.

How often in the Christian life do storms and squalls follow sunshine; indeed it is in prosperity that more watchfulness is required, for prosperity has occasioned more spiritual fallings than has adversity. The former often leads away from God but the latter draws the heart nearer to God. The Psalmist says "Before I was afflicted I went astray" and that has been said by many pilgrims since.

Acts 27: 15-20 tells of the desperate and frantic efforts which were made to battle against the terrific seas and storm but all to no avail. No longer able to control or steer the ship they let her drive. Then they tried to tie the creaking vessel by undergirding (verse 17). Next they threw out some of the cargo of wheat to lighten the ship and more desperate still they pitched overboard the ship's tackling but it seemed all useless. No light above, no sun or stars visible for days on end, the storm getting worse instead of better, the centurion, soldiers, captain, sailors, owner and civilians gave up in despair; they admitted failure absolute and complete.

This chapter has forty-four verses. The first twenty-two have no mention of God but describe man's efforts which end in complete failure. Then Paul, the servant of God, took control of the situation and they were all ready to listen to him. Like the Master he served, he stood forth on the doomed vessel and said, "be of good cheer," and added, "for I believe God." It needed faith in those circumstances; he believed God against nature, against wind and weather, against opposition of wise heads and nautical experience, against scheming sea-

men who would have abandoned the ship under pretence of letting down anchors (verse 30) against midnight darkness and the dangers of hidden rocks. He believed God for full deliverance for he assured them, "there shall not a hair fall from the head of any one of you." Inspired by his words and example they took heart and were all of good cheer.

It was because God was in all this that the journey was a prosperous one. An unbeliever would not have said so but a journey which commenced with difficulties, continued with storm and tempest and threatened shipwreck, which presented a situation utterly beyond the wit of man to cope with was just the preparation necessary for God to exhibit His saving grace. God came in; His servant's voice was heard expressing his belief in God and immediately Divine providences were set in motion to effect deliverance. Daylight came, they discovered land ahead; a creek with a shore, and they gladly steered the ship into a more sheltered place and not a life was lost.

Who got the victory? Not the devil, in spite of all his efforts to destroy Paul and Luke; he got only the battered hinder half of an old badly strained ship. What did Paul get? His faith in God was strengthened, his word had been honoured by the God he trusted. He had the supreme satisfaction that he had borne a good witness to his Lord. He had demonstrated his confidence in the keeping power of God and had shown that God can control even the mighty forces of nature so that they are but His servants working out His supreme will. We can, as Paul doubtless did, give praise and honour to God for another of His marvellous deliverances. Nine words will summarise this prosperous journey.

All hope gone (verse 20). **I believe God** (verse 25). **All safe home** (verse 44).

"The Bible is the chart of history. It affords a panoramic view of the whole course of events from the Creation and the fall of man, to the final judgement and the inauguration of the new Heaven and the new Earth. It gives us, not events only, but their moral character, tracing the motives of the various actors in the drama, as well as the results of their actions. Events are shown in relation to their causes and their effects, and the judgement of God as to their character is revealed.

Without the Bible, history would be a spectacle of unknown rivers flowing from unknown sources to

unknown seas; but under its guidance we can trace the complex currents to their springs, and see the end from the beginning."—(Dr. H. Gratthan Guinness.)

Now onward, ever onward, from strength to strength
we go,

While grace for grace abundantly shall from His
fulness flow,

To glory's full fruition, from glory's foretaste here,
Until His very presence crowns our happiest new year

F. R. Havergal

* Ambassadors of Christ * Holding forth the Word of Life * Lights in the World *

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

—an outline for the newly interested.

The late Dr. Adam Clarke once offered one thousand pounds reward to any person who could find the expression "immortal soul," or its equivalent, in the Bible.

That was over a century ago.

The money has never been claimed.

The learned doctor was perfectly safe in making his offer, for the expression does not occur anywhere in the Bible. Strange as it may appear, *this which is one of the most commonly accepted beliefs of Christendom has no support in the Book upon which the doctrines of Christianity are based.*

This subject of the soul has intrigued and perplexed Christians and non-Christians alike. *From the dawn of history men have reasoned and philosophised about that part of human personality which survives death, and many conflicting theories and views have become interwoven around the central truth that there is life after death—that human identity will survive the dissolution of this present body.*

The Bible itself is amply sufficient for a clear understanding of this subject. Unfortunately, the early development of the Christian church and its doctrines was at a time when the philosophical thought of several great nations had been made familiar to thinking men of the day, and when many of these men, pagans, became converts to Christianity they brought much of their "science falsely so-called" with them and endeavoured, with some success, to incorporate it into their new faith.

Belief in the immortality of the soul was a prominent feature of Greek thought in the time of Christ. It had its beginnings some six hundred years previously, at a time when the world appeared to be entering upon a new stage of knowledge and the spirit of enquiry was abroad. In Greece the philosopher Pythagoras was delving into the mysteries of life from the standpoint of human reason unassisted by Divine revelation. In Persia, rapidly becoming the dominant power in the world, the religion founded by Zoroaster was making headway with its belief in an immortal soul which would be re-united with the body at the Last Day. A little later the great teacher Gautama

Buddha arose in India and founded the faith known as Buddhism, proclaiming the doctrine of successive re-incarnations of the soul until it becomes absorbed into the Divine Essence and ceases to have a separate identity. In China, Confucius had his day and left his legacy in the shape of another religious faith. These men, and others with them, were profound thinkers and elements of their teachings were intermingled one with another as the years went by until Plato, one of the greatest of Greek philosophers, four hundred years before Christ, began to propound a comprehensive theory of the deeper mysteries of life which eventually became the accepted belief of the pagan world.

Plato claimed that the soul has always existed and must always continue to exist; that it is imprisoned in the earthly body and is set free at death; that if during life the soul has been purified by noble and good thoughts and actions, it will be translated at death to a heavenly region above the earth, but if the man has committed base and ignoble deeds his soul will be condemned to the dark abyss below the earth which the Greeks called Tartarus. Since the soul, being the Divine part of man, was, according to this reasoning, immortal, Plato foresaw an eternity of perpetual happiness or perpetual misery for man after death. These conclusions were not claimed by him to be based upon Divine revelation, but to be the result of human reasoning.

As evidence that this was the prevailing opinion in the time of Christ there may be cited the words of Titus to his soldiers at the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, as recorded by Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian—"What man of virtue is there" said Titus, encouraging his men to the assault "who does not know that those souls who are severed from their fleshly bodies by the sword are received by the ether and joined to that company which is placed beyond the stars?" It was in this environment that the early Christian Church had its growth, and it was philosophy such as this which was brought forward to supersede Bible teaching regarding the soul.

What is that teaching?

Right at the outset the Bible lays down its foundation principle. Describing the creation of man, it declares "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2; 7). Note the expression; "man became a living soul." It is not said that God implanted a soul **within** man, as is required by Platonic philosophy; nor yet that a soul from some other man or creature just dead entered the new-made man, as would be insisted upon by Buddhism. The conjunction of two factors, a body formed of the dust of the ground, (the elements of the earth) and the bestowment of the spirit or breath (*Heb.* "ruach") of life, resulted in a "living soul." Confer upon a human body the spirit of life, and there is a living soul! That is the foundation upon which the story of man's creation, his fall, his redemption by Jesus Christ, and his ultimate conversion and salvation, is built.

The word here rendered "soul" is "**nephesh**." It occurs about seven hundred times in the Old Testament and always conveys the idea of a living, sentient being. About four hundred and seventy times it is translated "soul," one hundred and nineteen times "life," and "person" 30 times, "self" 19 times, "heart" 15 times and "mind" 15 times, and is also rendered by such words as beast, body, creature, man, thing, fish, mortally, etc. Only twice does it favour the traditional view by being rendered "ghost."

Twenty-eight times the word "**nephesh**" is applied to beasts or sea creatures, as for example "The moving creature that hath life" (Gen. 1; 20) "Whatsoever Adam called every living creature" (Gen. 2; 19) "All that make sluices and ponds for fish," (Isa. 19; 10). "A righteous man regardeth the life of his **beast**." (Prov. 12; 10). The close connection of the soul with the blood, which is the lifestream of human beings, is shown by such Scriptures as Lev. 17; 14 and Deut. 12; 33, "The life of the flesh is in the blood" where "**nephesh**" is translated "life."

In the New Testament the word "soul" is translated from the Greek "**psuche**," occurring some hundred times of which about half are rendered "soul" and the remainder, with few exceptions, "life." It will be seen that "**psuche**" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "**nephesh**" and has the same meaning. This is borne out by occurrences of similar nature to those in the Old Testament. Thus in Rev. 8; 9 and 16; 3 the creatures in the

sea are referred to as "souls" (**psuche**). Our Lord Jesus used the same word when He said "The Son of Man came . . . to give his **life** (**psuche**) a ransom for many." "The good shepherd giveth his **life** for the sheep." (Matt. 20; 28, Jno. 10; 11). In quotations from the Old Testament "**psuche**" is used as the equivalent of "**nephesh**," as, for instance, 1 Cor. 15; 45, "The first man Adam was made a living **soul** (**psuche**) and Rom. 11; 3, "I am left alone, and they seek my **life**" (**psuche**).

The clearest evidence that the soul is not immortal lies in the Scriptural declaration that under certain conditions the soul must die. "Fear him" said Jesus, "which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna" (Matt. 10; 28). This saying of our Lord is in direct contradiction to the theory of Plato, that the soul, once created by God, is immortal and cannot die. "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way" says James, "shall save a soul from death" (Jas. 5; 20). Ezekiel the prophet repeated again and again the Divine law "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek., chaps. 13, 14 and 18).

It is clear then that the Biblical expression "soul" is intended to denote the living, sentient creature which owes its being to the union of God-given life with an organic body which is able to live and move and have its being in the environment in which it has been placed. It may be a fish, a beast or a man—the term "soul" or "living being" is equally applicable to all. This study is concerned with man's ultimate attainment of everlasting life and so the "human" "soul" is the one which we are now concerned. The question naturally arises—"if this living man is in a "die-able" condition; if there is no separate "soul" which leaves the body after death to fly away to some other sphere of life, in what way will the Divine assurances of future life be brought to pass?" As the questioner in Paul's epistle to the Corinthians puts it "How are the dead raised up? With what body do they come?" (1 Cor. 15; 45).

Paul himself gives the answer. When speaking from the Court of the Areopagites in Athens he challenged the theories of Plato by declaring that future life for man will come, not as the result of man's possessing an immortal soul which cannot die, but by means of a resurrection from the dead. The Athenians would have none of that; they preferred the beliefs in which they had been indoctrinated; but Paul, writing to the Corinthians, makes

plain that in the resurrection each "seed," as he puts it, each identity or personality, will awaken to conscious life in a body fitted to its new environment. There are bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial, says Paul; natural and spiritual bodies, the former adapted to habitation on this earth and the latter to life in the spiritual sphere, in heaven. He further goes on to show that Christian disciples of this present Age who have become members of the "Body" or "Church" of Christ by whole-hearted surrender to Him and baptism into His death (Rom. 6; 3-6 and 12; 1) are to lay aside the earthly body and in the resurrection be clothed upon with a glorious spiritual body, incorruptible, **immortal**. (1 Cor. 15; 53). Immortality, then, is to be attained by Christians at the time of their entrance into the presence of their Lord, and is not possessed by them in this present life. So Paul exhorts his converts to "**seek** for glory, honour, and immortality" (Rom. 2; 7) and tells us that our Lord Jesus brought "life and **immortality** to light through the Gospel" (2 Tim. 1; 10). The word used is **aphtharsia**, meaning incorruption, and is the same word used in 1 Cor. 15; 42-54 where Paul, speaking of the same matter, tells us that the believer, dying, is "sown in corruption and raised in **incorruption**." "This corruptible must put on **incorruption**, and this mortal must put on **immortality**" (**athanasia**—deathlessness).

The idea behind this use of the word "immortal" or "incorruptible" is that of continuance into all perpetuity without any possibility of decay. The symbolic "crown" which is the promised reward of the Christian is said in 1 Cor. 9; 25 to be of this nature. "They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an **incorruptible** (aphthartos). So also is the promised inheritance of 1 Pet. 1; 41 "An inheritance **incorruptible**" (**aphthartos**); and the Word of God, "Being born . . . of **incorruptible** (seed), the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Pet. 1; 23).

This view of New Testament teaching, that man is not by nature immortal, but that future immortality is the prospect before faithful followers of Jesus Christ, has been held and endorsed by many Christian teachers. Dr. Parker (1830-1902) declared "Christianity treats man not as immortal, but as a candidate for immortality." John Wesley said "It is, indeed, very generally supposed that the souls of good men, as soon as they are discharged from the body, go directly to heaven; but this opinion

has not the least opinion in the oracles of God." That great Christian statesman, the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, wrote this: "With St. Paul for our guide we shall not readily be persuaded to accept the idea that the gospel has propounded to us the natural immortality of all human souls as a portion of the Christian religion." Dr. Watts (1674-1748) said "There is not one place of Scripture that occurs to me, where the word death, as it was first threatened in the law of innocency, necessarily signified a miserable immortality of the soul, either to Adam, the actual sinner, or his posterity," whilst to go back several centuries we have the striking testimony of William Tyndale, translator of the Bible into English, "The heathen philosophers, denying that (the resurrection) did put that the souls did ever live. And ye, in putting them in heaven and hell and purgatory, destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the Resurrection."

In our own days much more is known about the growth and development of religious thought and doctrine through the ages than was available to the men who are quoted above. The study of religions has become a science, and the conclusions of a present day leading authority in comparative religion may be quoted here as throwing an interesting light upon this subject. Prof. E. O. James in his "Comparative Religion" (1938) says that "Because He (Jesus) had established a 'new and living' way to the life of the age to come, here and now, His followers were conscious of the 'power of an endless life' in the spiritual experience which was theirs. . . . In this state of salvation 'though our outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day' . . . Thus, for the Apostle (Paul) the death and resurrection of Christ were the means whereby he was enabled to realise eternal life as an ever-present spiritual experience and to look forward with confidence to the consummation beyond the grave as an accomplished fact."

Jesus said the same thing in simpler language when He declared "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," (Jno. 6; 47). It is only in this sense that the believer can be said to have immortality now—the assurance he has from his Lord that having become a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven he has begun to taste the powers of an age to come and an enduring life the very antithesis of that condition of evil and death which is the lot of mankind in general now.

Actual entrance into that spiritual world is

still conditional upon faithfulness "unto death" (Rev. 2; 10). None will be brought before the "presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24) unless they have remained faithful to their Lord through all the vicissitudes and trials of earthly life. But it is true nevertheless that "He that the Son hath life" of an altogether different order to that which animates his unreconciled fellows, and unless sin is once again willingly embraced and the influence of God's Holy Spirit stifled, that life will develop and progress until it is revealed in full maturity in the Resurrection.

The Plan of God provides for an earthly salvation as well as one in heaven. The earth itself will be the home of a happy race of never-dying human beings, reconciled to God and supremely happy in their destined environment. It is a noteworthy fact that the Bible, whilst guaranteeing them life everlasting, without end, does not describe that life by the term immortality. It is as if the word is reserved to describe the higher form of life which is the prerogative of all whose salvation lies in everlasting association with Christ as members of His Church; whose future habitat is in the heavens and not upon earth. There is some quality in that life which Peter perhaps discerned when he described all such as being "partakers of the Divine nature" (II Pet. 1; 4) and which, little as we can hope to understand it whilst in the bonds of the flesh, must make some vital difference between *athanasia*, immortality, deathlessness, and the condition of never-dying, living without end, which is to be the lot of restored and perfected humanity.

Such an understanding brings the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection into proper focus. As William Tyndale so cogently points out, if the soul is immortal and lives on at death in some other sphere, what need remains for the resurrection? The New Testament consistently maintains that man's hope for future life lies in the certainty of a resurrection from the dead, guaranteed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For some, that resurrection will be to a spiritual world and they will be "clothed upon" with a spiritual body, adapted to that environment, immortal—the promise fulfilled. For others, that resurrection will be to a restored and beautiful earth, to the perfection of human nature, not having the essential quality of immortality and yet possessing the Divine guarantee of endless life; for mankind will have been ushered into that long-promised state

where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Rev. 21; 4).

There is a peculiar significance in the selection of **bread** as a symbol of the Lord's body. It is a picture and parable of the self-sacrifice of the Son of God. Before the mature wheat can become bread which strengtheneth man's heart it must leave the stalks that wave in the sunlight and submit itself to the flail or thrasher. It must give up its germinating power and its beauty of form and must submit to the crushing and grinding of the upper and nether millstones. It must go through the kneading trough and be exposed to the fires of the baking oven. It is through self-sacrifice that the golden wheat becomes bread. In like manner it is through sacrifice that the Son of God becomes the Bread of Life.

(Rev. F. W. Farr).



Christ is Everything.



He's EVERYTHING to us! These words touch deeply
 Within the inner sanctum of our souls,
 And chords responsive echo rare and sweetly,
 From those whose hearts the love of Christ enfolds;
 Who look beyond this world of imperfection,
 To that pure realm of satisfied desire,
 And in the circle of Divine affection,
 Find all those joys to which their hearts aspire.

He's EVERYTHING! But all the hidden meaning
 That lies beneath that all-embracing word
 Is known to those alone who on Him leaning,
 Have had the Spirit's life within them stirred;
 Whose eyes behold in His all-glorious Person,
 An object of their reverential love,
 Who die with Him in deepest soul-immersion,
 Who rise with Him to walk the heights above.

Whose needs so vast and varied He supplieth,
 Each one completely suited to His grace,
 And if sometimes their cravings He denieth,
 His compensating comfort they can trace.
 Yes, Christ is EVERYTHING! And if thus surely
 We find our all in Him who cannot fail,
 What matchless joy to share His love and glory
 In heav'n's unhindered bliss beyond the veil!

M.S. 1941



God will never force His gifts. He always waits for some form of co-operation.

God's exhaustless reservoir is there, free and open to all. The thirsty man may sit on its brink and long for water, but his thirst will not be quenched unless he himself stoops and drinks. Its infinite resources may be used for a large variety of purposes, but man must dig the channel, build the viaduct, or lay the pipe to conduct its flow in the direction in which he wants it to go. Man's province in the Universe is not to create, but by thought and labour to combine and direct the forces that already exist and convert them into different forms for new purposes. So water has been used by man's invention for the generation of steam and electricity. It will work great mills; it will blow the organ to produce wonderful music; it will lift immense weights. Fresh possibilities are constantly arising.

(Selected).

"Another sign of the near approach of the advent of Christ will be the spread of knowledge. Daniel gives us this indication when he says, 'Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.' Do we not see the signs of this around us? A century ago, if a man made a discovery in science and art, it was likely to be his fortune; but now, if one makes a discovery in chemistry, in science, or in any department of knowledge, in which a man would have staked a fortune in former times, he will find that a discovery made in 1848 is superseded by a more brilliant one before the year has closed. We see steam running and executing the errand of man, and carrying five hundred at once at the rate of fifty miles an hour. Man has made the greatest approach to the power, though he has not made a correspondent approach to the holiness of God, when he takes the lightnings and makes them carry his messages. How true is it that many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased."—Rev. John Cumming.

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Gen. 2; 7 (141) 3; 21 (9) 25; 30-34 (49) 27; 33 (49) 28; 20 (50) 31; 19 (101) 32; 24 (50) 43; 5 (64) 49; 1 (64) 49; 10 (74) I Sam. 12; 17-18 (33) 11 Sam. 7; 16 (74) I Ki. 22; 11-17 (68) II Ki. 2; 23-24 (87) I Chron. 23; 3-4 (47) Job 38; 7 (44) Psa. 46 8-9 (119) Prov. 4; 18 (97) Isa. 2, 1-4 (119) 11; 1-10 (73) 14; 12-15 (44) 22; 23 (136) 45; 7 (103) 65; 20 (115) Jer. 32; 6 (8) Ezek. 1; 18 (34) 28; 1-10 (28) Dan. 5; 35 (101) 7; 9 (33) Joel 3; 9-10 (119) Zeph. 3; 8-9 (119) Zech. 3; 2-7 (71) Matt. 5; 48 (111) 10; 29 (32) 12; 26 (18) 22; 41-46 (73) 24; 21 (118) 25; 41 (18) 27; 37 (9) 27 5:8 (22, 67) Mark 15; 26 (9) Luke 4; 7 (76) 12; 7 (32) 15; 16 (60) 23; 28 (9) 23; 46 (32) Jno. 2; 15 (4) 5; 28 (95) 11; 9 (25) 17; 21-23 (52) 19; 19 (9) Rom. 1; 10 (138) 6; 23 (70) 12; 12 (74) I Cor. 5; 7 (58) 11; 26 (27) 12; 27 (61) 13; 11 (85) II Cor. 2; 3 (70) 5; 1 (2) Eph. 6; 12 (18) Phil. 2; 10 (9, 14) I Tim. 2; 8 (32) 2; 14 (70) Heb. 11; 37 (32) I Pet. 2; 21 (88) 5; 7 (31) Rev. 3; 7 (136) 4; 1 (6) 5; 5 (63)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

Bro. H. G. Girdlestone, of Lower Bitchfield, Grantham, and well known to the Midlands brethren, passed away on Nov. 12th, at the age of 93. Our brother had spent much of his early life in America, and upon returning to this country lived in several localities in the Midlands in succession. He was laid to rest in the country district which had been his home in recent years.

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

A list of books available from the reference library can be obtained upon application to the librarian. Postage both ways is payable by the borrower, and books may be retained for one month, and for further periods if not required by another reader. A post card request for the desired book is sufficient, and stamps for forward postage may be enclosed with the book when returning same. Please address all requests to Mr. J. Humphrey, 24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

BENEVOLENT RELIEF FUND.

Such donations as are entrusted to the Committee for this purpose are administered by three brethren of experience. Correspondence regarding deserving cases should be addressed to Mr. G. A. Ford, 13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds., and donations should be sent to the office at 20 Sunnymede Drive, Ilford, Essex.

B. S. M. PRICE INCREASE.

It is with considerable regret that we are compelled as from January 1st to increase the subscription rate for the B.S.M. to 5/- in order to assist in meeting mounting printing costs. Our magazine has a small circulation and even 5/- does not cover the cost of publication and postage. For the New Year, therefore, subscriptions sent at 4/- will pay for 10 months and at 5/- for 12 months.

* * * *

But as for those whose means do not allow for 5/- or even 4/-, the B.S.M. will still be sent, without charge, as of old, all the time that the Lord provides. Please do not go without it if the ministry is appreciated.

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