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THE POWER OF LOVE IN SERVICE FOR CHRIST.

By WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole.

“FAITH, Hope, Love—these three; but the greatest of these is Love.” Such is the testimony of the inspired Record (1 Cor. 13. 13). We read of David’s three mighty men in the old dispensation; and, while it may perhaps be difficult to select three mighty men in the new dispensation corresponding to those in the old, we are at no loss to find the three mighty “graces,” or features of Christian character, that are to dominate us in this day of the Spirit’s power. Faith, Hope, and Love stand out clear above all the rest; and of these three the greatest is *Love*.

We are setting out on the untrod path of another year of our wilderness journey. We have not come this way heretofore. New difficulties lie before us—new trials, perhaps new temptations. Past experience will not suffice to meet the wiles of the great enemy of our souls, to overcome the world, to mortify the deeds of the body. Even the remembrance of past achievements will be no guarantee of future victory. We walk by faith. We must put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day (Eph. 6. 13). And not only must we be equipped to stand, but to go forward in service for the Lord Christ. Yea, and not only to go forward, but to serve Him acceptably, to bear fruit, to leave behind us something of the Christ-like spirit—

“Footprints on the sands of Time”

—telling that a child of the heavenly kingdom has passed that way.

This is a great work. For such service nothing less than a heavenly equipment is needed—an equipment only to be found in the Master’s presence and at the Master’s feet. No doubt there are various elements that enter into that equipment. But, of these, there is one element which is often left out of our calculations in preparation for service; and yet without that one element all the others are only so much sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. That element is *love*. The Christian worker who is great in love has truly a great equipment. His stock of what is known as “gift” may be small indeed; yet, immersed in love, it will go a long way, and feed many—yea, and win souls.

You may dazzle men with eloquence, you may “corner” them with logic, you may hammer them with dogmatic truth, but you cannot reach the heart apart from *love*. Nothing so

convinces the world of God's love as to show them that *you* love them—that the love that shone on Calvary is reaching them, even through an earthen vessel. The poor wanderers on the wilds of sin must be made to feel this. But *how* shall they be made to feel it? Not by our professions of love for their souls. Not by attempting to “work up” the celestial fire in our hearts. You may produce an imitation of zeal that would disarm suspicion, you may array yourself in the robes of a mock devotion that would deceive the elect; but who shall simulate love? It is beyond the dissimulator's art. It needs no trumpeter to herald its approach. It is not *heard*; it is *felt*. It shines; it beams; it is seen in the glance of the eye; it is felt in the touch of the hand. “What did she say to you?” was the question asked of a great sinner, whose heart had been newly melted through the efforts of a true daughter of the King. “Oh, she did not say anything,” replied the prodigal, “she just *beamed* on me.” That was the power of love. This is the power we want to-day. If, in 1898, we are to be found “bringing in the sheaves,” we must go forth, not only in the *faith* that the Lord will work, and in the *hope* of His coming again, but in the power of that *love* that wept over Jerusalem, and endured the woes of Calvary, and proved stronger than Death itself.

We know that a day is coming when *faith* shall be exchanged for sight, and *hope* shall be no more, “For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” Not so with *love*. It bears the impress of eternity. It shall abide through never-ending years.

“Faith, Hope, and Love—
Two of these shall once grow pale;
They burn without,
But Love within the veil.”

CANNOT PLEASE THE WORLD.

“**A**RE you going to the sports to-morrow?”

The question was addressed to me by a man of the world. No doubt he had a very shrewd idea that I would not be there, but he wanted to give me a thrust about my narrowness.

“No,” I answered, “I am not going.”

“Ah!” he added; “just what I expected. What pharisees you ‘converted’ people are!”

The sports came and went. On Monday morning the same

man no sooner got hold of me than he enquired, "Is So-and-so converted?"

"I believe he is," I replied; "at least he professes to be saved."

"*Him* saved!" said my interrogator; "I saw him at the sports on Saturday. What a lot of hypocrites you must be!"

"Truly it is a hopeless business to try to please the world," I said to myself. If you profess conversion, and refuse to go to the sports, you are a pharisee. And if you go, they call you a hypocrite. Happy are they who walk before God, and keep themselves uspotted from the world. After all, we doubt not that the worldling, deep down in his heart of hearts, has a goodly measure of respect for those believers who are "clear out," while he simply despises the professors who declare they are satisfied with heavenly springs, and are yet found rushing with the world to its streams of false delight.

T. K.

A FULL REWARD.

By ROBERT M'MURDO, Partick.

TWO names of more than usual greatness appear in the first chapter of Daniel: Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel—these two, but the greater of these is Daniel. They each shine in their own sphere as a star of the first magnitude—the first in the splendour of outward greatness, the second in the beauty of inward grace; the glory of the one earthly and corruptible, the glory of the other heavenly and eternal.

Concerning the parentage and earliest days of Daniel, we know almost nothing; but, like Timothy, from a child he had known the holy Scriptures, and by the operation of the Spirit of God a work of grace was early wrought in his heart, for, when placed in the midst of the glitter and godless gaiety of Babylon, surrounded with everything that would feed the vanity of the mind or the desires of the flesh, "he purposed in his heart" not to stand in the favour of man, no matter how great, but in the fear of God, though it cost him his life. Counting ease, honour, and preferment in this world as dung and dross, he cast the eye of faith on the city which hath foundations, and lifted his head for God in the midst of the thick of the powers of darkness. Noble youth! Torn from the embrace of all he held dear on earth, forced into the midst of scenes and companionships the most repulsive, he stands forth on the sacred page as a sterling witness to the enobling power of that suffi-

A Full Reward,

ciency which is of God, to lift the child of faith above and beyond the power of things seen and temporal into

THE CLEARER ATMOSPHERE OF HEAVEN,

where Enoch like, he walks with God. How true are the words: "Adversity does not make virtue or vice, but exerts and draws them into practice; it does not change the man from what he was, but only discovers what he really is." Thus the adverse circumstances into which Daniel was brought discovered his true character, declaring him to be a genuine child of faith, whose hope and trust were in God who raiseth the dead.

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." He denied himself the use of that which was pleasant, because it was not pure, although contrary to the king's command, the practice of others, and his own liking. But he pleased God. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way who walk in the law of the Lord" (Ps. 119. 1). "It is better here to forego the pleasures of sin than hereafter to undergo the pain of sin."

Though the purpose of Daniel was high, his speech was humble. "He requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." And the Lord, who "lifteth up the meek," brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs, showing His kindness in His care for His servant, making the way easy for him while he was yet young, and but starting in the race. "Prove thy servants ten days," said Daniel. "So he consented in this matter," and gave them pulse to eat and water to drink. Thus Melzar proved Daniel and Daniel proved God, and the result was satisfactory to all. O for grace to deal in this

EVEN-HANDED MANNER WITH GOD AND MEN,

amidst the corruption of the last days, when all kinds of artifice, duplicity, and bribery are resorted to in seeking to win place and favour with men, and to evade the claims of God.

Daniel stood not alone; Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were with him in his purpose, proving and blessing which followed, but from first to last Daniel was leader. Self-denial is a good thing, but always best under the claims of God. "Even Christ pleased not Himself." So they proved that even for this present life the path of purity brought true prosperity. For "God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and

A Full Reward.

wisdom." And when brought in before the king at the end of the days he found them "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Surely these are among the things that were written aforetime for our learning upon whom the ends of the world are come. Each child of God is like Daniel and his faithful trio, of kingly birth, without blemish and well-favoured. We are this in grace, and much more. The world of to-day in which we are placed is Babylon enlarged, and the poison of sin and infidelity lurks beneath the cover of much that is ornamental and expensive, pleasing to the eye and the palate, as well as flows in the mixed wine of in-us toxicating pleasure. May God the Holy Spirit work in all PURPOSE OF HEART AND PURITY OF LIFE enabling us to flee every youthful lust, and to "follow righteousness, faith, charity, and peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." And when the days of our proving are at an end, and we stand in the light of the "judgment-seat," our profiting shall be manifest unto all. As with Daniel, so with us—the measure of our faith and obedience here determines the measure of reward there. Ten days proving brought the ten times better. Let us look to ourselves that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive "A FULL REWARD."

THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

(Daniel 9. 25-27.)

VERSE 25. "Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto *the* Messiah *the* Prince."

These seventy weeks of years include the whole period from the going forth of the commandment unto the coming of Messiah, the Prince of Peace, to establish His kingdom and reign. They date, not from the edict of Cyrus to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1.), but from the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, according to Neh. 1. 2, 446 years before the BIRTH of Christ, not BEFORE *anno domini*, which commenced four years after His birth (see margin of Bibles, Matt. 2); so that in A.D. 8 He was twelve years of age (Luke 2. 42), and the real length of His life on earth was thirty-seven years.

"*Shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two years : the

The Seventy Weeks

street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

The seventy weeks are thus cut out, or divided. First, the first seven weeks, or forty-nine years, during which the street and wall of Jerusalem were to be rebuilt; they were fulfilled in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. And sixty and two weeks, or 434 years, which added to the previous seven weeks or forty-nine years, made the sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years.

Verse 26. "And after the threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself [*literally*, and nothing to Him]."

From the going forth of the commandment to rebuild to the birth of Christ was 446 years, and adding the thirty-seven years of the life of Christ, we have the exact period of 483 years, or sixty-nine weeks of years, the time when Messiah was cut off.

The expression "but not for Himself" (literally, "and nothing to Him"), is very suggestive, and may imply either that it was not for His own sin that the Messiah was cut off (for He was sinless), or that He did not immediately receive the result of His suffering and death in the establishment of His kingdom on earth, or that the nation of Israel having rejected their own Messiah, were no longer regarded as His people, but "Lo-ammi"—"not my people;" consequently we have the long interval, or times of the Gentiles, between the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth, extending already well nigh two thousand years, during which period the Church of God, composed of Jew and Gentile, baptised by one Spirit into one body, is being called out and formed to be a witness for the name of God in time, and destined to be the Bride of the Lamb when complete and perfected in everlasting glory.

"And the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

We are here told what transpires during the interval between the sixty-ninth week of years and the seventieth, a period which has already extended 1900 years. The first great event was the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary. Jerusalem is not now regarded as the holy city, nor the people of Israel as the holy people. The destruction of the city and temple under Titus, we know, took place A.D. 70, that is seventy-four years after the birth of Christ, adding the omitted four years. By this it appears that the crucifixion of Christ took place exactly half way between His birth and the destruc-

tion of the city. When Christ was thirty-seven years of age he was cut off, and thirty-seven years afterwards the city and temple were destroyed.

The people that executed the judgment were the people of the fourth great empire (chap. 7), that is the Roman people. And the Prince that shall come will be the Head of the Roman empire at the period when the seventieth week commences, the same as the little horn of Daniel (chap. 8. 9-12) and the lawless one, or son of perdition, of 2 Thess. 2, and also the wild beast of the Apocalypse. According to the prediction of our Lord (Luke 21), Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, with a flood or overwhelming judgments at the end.

A NEW-YEAR'S CALL.

“ Press towards the mark ” (Phil. 3. 14).

“ Looking for that blessed hope ” (Tit. 2. 13).

ONWARD! Still increase the distance
Between Egypt and thy soul.
Forward! Quell thy foes' resistance;
Press towards the heavenly goal.
Upwards, heavenward still ascending,
As the seasons roll along;
Joyfully thy course be ending—
Swell the blissful Advent song.

Sing of Him who died to save us,
Jesus, our belovèd Lord,
Who before ascending gave us
Joyful hope—His faithful word.
Promise sweet, “ I will receive you
To my Father's house on high ”;
Sing, ye saints, He'll ne'er deceive you—
Lo! His coming draweth nigh.

On the centuries are wheeling;
Speed, ye slow-revolving years,
For this burdened world is reeling,
And is blinded by its tears.
Drive away the clouds of sorrow,
End the weary night of sin,
Bring the endless, bright to-morrow,
Wheel the day of glory in.

KNOWING AND OBEYING.

IT is sad to see estimable Christians in very questionable company, and doing very questionable things. This tends to impair their moral "weight." It weakens their testimony, and stumbles those who are influenced by their example. There is this consolation, however, if they are honestly seeking to walk in the light, it is only a matter of a little time, and they will come clear out on the side of truth and righteousness. The heart that is true to Christ only wants to *know* in order to *obey*.

W. S.

POST-CARD GEMS.

As soon as we are saved, we commence to run the race set before us. Let us run with patience, "Looking unto Jesus." Peter walked on the sea to go to Jesus, but when he saw the wind boisterous he was afraid, and began to sink—his eyes were off Jesus. We often look at the difficulties around instead of straight on to Jesus, and the result is failure. Immediately Peter called, Jesus caught him. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. .

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING.

PLAN OF LESSONS FOR 1898.—A new plan dealing with the entrance into the "Goodly Land" for Old Testament, and Divine Titles of our Lord for New Testament, is issued in a threefold link: (1) *A Gospel Scheme*, with references, contrasts, &c., 1/ per 100. (2) *Boys and Girls Almanac* and Scripture searching book, with subjects, memory texts, daily portion, prizes, &c., ½d.; 6d. per doz.; 3/6 per 100. (3) *The Pathway*, with weekly subject, memory text in full, and original and evangelistic notes on the subjects. Monthly, ½d.; 1/ per year. One each post free as sample to any teacher.

2nd January, 1898.—**JESUS, THE GIFT OF GOD'S LOVE** (John 3. 1-21). *Mem. verse 16*—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The source, God—The motive, Love—The extent, Infinite—The expression, the Gift—The purpose, salvation—The result, salvation or condemnation.

WE do not propose to deal with the visit of Nicodemus to Jesus, however interesting and important that subject is, but just to catch the wondrous words spoken to him as they fell from the lips of Jesus—the most blessed words ever spoken or heard, telling of the most wonderful GIFT ever given.

God SO loved the world. No man hath seen God at any time (John 1. 18), yet His goodness can be seen (Acts 14. 17; Rom. 1. 20) in

His gifts even in a world under the curse. We might say we can see God's good HAND in creation, but it was reserved for Jesus from "His bosom" (John 1. 18) to show God's HEART. Power is in that Hand—Love is in that Heart. SO indicates the quantity and intensity of the love, as well as the manner of its action and resultant gift.

The world—the object of God's love, not the inanimate creation of earth, fields, hills, valleys, and seas; not animal creation, nor both together, but the PERISHING men and women in dying need, as seen in verse 15 of this chapter—all of them God loved SO.

Gave His only-begotten Son. No one asked this gift. No one would have in wildest fancy dreamed it. Only God's heart and mind could have planned such a thing. FOR and TO a cruel, God-hating world (Rom. 5. 8), unarmed, alone, like a lamb among wolves, pure and holy, like light in darkness (John 1.); tender amongst the cruel—to this God in His love gave His Son.

That whosoever believeth in Him. Into that world—loved so by God even in its sin and enmity, came that given Jesus, Son of God, that out of it He might save any one, every one, that believes. Like a magnet, He attracts (John 12. 32; see also John 6. 37).

Should not perish. Perishing, dying, lost, condemned already, is the present condition of men. God's love interferes with this—God's gift comes in to prevent this—it is God's remedy—the ONLY, not one of many (John 8. 24). This, then, the object in view, to save.

Have everlasting life. Not only to prevent the perishing, but to give a new life, a better, eternal life that can never again be in a perishing state (Rom. 6. 26; John 10. 28; 1 John 5. 11).

The rest of our lesson proceeds from this basis to declare the effect of this love-gift on men's fate. It is true that not to condemn but save, Jesus, God's Son, was sent; yet His coming does make condemnation plainer and surer. Jesus' light shining in the darkness (John 1. 5) like a light should guide to safety; but, alas! it shines in vain to many. Evil deeds love darkness, not light, and darkness shall be their eternal portion (2 Peter 2. 17).

9th January.—**JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD** (John 1. 19-34).

Mem. verse 29—"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The true Preacher's great theme—The great theme of the Bible—The substance of the shadows—Ever the same—Past, present, future.

THE record of John about himself was, only "a voice"; about Jesus, "**the Lamb of God,**" and His work, to "take away the sin of the world."

The Lamb sacrifice. From Genesis to Revelation, all through, the choicest type of sacrifice is the Lamb. Genesis 22. 7 question, "Where is the Lamb?" is answered by John's testimony. Exodus 12 Paschal Lamb is also met in "Christ our Passover" (1 Cor. 5. 7). All the lamb offerings of Leviticus show out the same Jesus in all His worth. Isaiah 53 suffering Lamb is the same; and right away into eternity it is the Lamb that was slain on the Throne (Rev. 22. 3).

The Person—Wondrous PERSON John pointed to on that day on the banks of Jordan. God's chosen, appointed, and approved Lamb, having in Himself all the qualities required: "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7. 26).

The Work—Wondrous WORK John spoke of—nothing less than **bearing away the sin of the world**. One sinner's load is a great burden—a world's sin who can measure? "Caused to meet on Him" (Isaiah 53. 6) was all the terrible iniquity of US ALL; that was what God laid on Him, and that was what His love made Him take up.

From Eternity to Eternity. Before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1. 20; Rev. 13. 8) ordained the slain Lamb; manifested in His life on earth and death at Calvary "the Lamb of God;" now in heaven on the throne (Rev. 5. 6), and in all future eternity carrying through all events and ages one character and one basis of all righteousness, peace and joy, the Lamb of God the centre. Happy they who "Behold Him!" now believingly (Psalm 2. 12).

16th January.—**JESUS, THE KINSMAN-REDEEMER** (Heb. 2.

1-18). *Mem. verse 17*—"Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

Help for the needy—Who can bridge the gulf?—From heaven's side—
From earth's side—Son of God and Son of Man—Eternal union.

PERSONS in distress and debt need help, and those near of kin have the best right to help. This is the crux of the present Lesson.

Son of God, Son of Man. When Adam fell, a great breach was made between him and his God. That gulf is fixed (Luke 16. 26), and only bridged in Jesus Christ. To bridge it, from heaven's side came God's Son, who, while ever being God's Son, became Son of Man, that as man He might redeem (Gal. 4. 4, 5) those who were slaves and doomed under the curse (Gal. 3. 13).

Brother born for Adversity. The beautiful story of Ruth illustrates the principle (Ruth 3. 12), and it indicates how near the Lord Jesus has come in His love as the Son of Man seeking and saving the persons of the lost sons of men (Luke 19. 10), as well as their lost property. Joseph in Egypt is also a picture of the kinsman—going through the pit to the throne to preserve alive his brethren (Gen. 45). How inviting the thought that the poor, wandering, sinful sons of men are welcome to come to One who can be touched with "a feeling of our infirmities," and is a Friend indeed, a "Brother born for adversity" (Prov. 17. 17). When we remember that, voluntarily, God's own Son linked Himself with the human race—passing by angels (Heb. 2. 16)—with a view to the "suffering of death," it should make us marvel at His love, and love Him in return.

The Eternal Friend. And, again, this relationship is eternal. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2. 11) who trust in Him, though they were once poor, bankrupt slaves, cursed law-breakers, "dead in trespasses and sins."

23rd January.—**JESUS, THE CAPTAIN OF SALVATION** (John 19. 1-18). *Memory verse, Hebrews 2. 10*—"For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

A Leader necessary—A Leader qualified—The marks of the War—Tested, tried, found perfect—Victorious—Crowned—Victory assured.

VERY great work requires a director, every great movement a leader. Salvation is a great work—"so great salvation" (Heb. 2. 3)—and Jesus is the Princely Leader of our salvation—past, present, and to come.

It is said that General Wolseley is a much-scarred man; that through the rough path of war he reached his present eminence in the British army. Jesus is the incomparably marred and scarred One (Isa. 52. 14)—the wounds He bears received in the house of His friends (Zech. 13. 6).

Perfected through sufferings. A life of suffering—enduring "contradiction of sinners" (Heb. 12. 3); temptation in hunger and weariness (Luke 4); unbelief, failure, and treachery from His own followers (Psa. 41. 9)—the blessed Lord pressed on to the Cross.

Victorious through death. There, on rugged tree, alone He fought, He bled, He died. He was not defeated—it was a Victor who shouted, "It is finished" (John 19. 30). This Captain is now exalted, "crowned;" a Prince and a Saviour (Acts 5. 31), and by the Holy Spirit carries on the war against sin and death.

Under His banner the army of the saved march through the enemy's land—already saved through His Cross work, being saved by His living power (Rom. 5. 10), and to be saved triumphantly at His coming again (1 Peter 1. 5).

Defeat can never be known in following Jesus; seeming disaster is victory in another shape (Rom. 8. 37; 2 Cor. 2. 14). The great question is, Are you truly under His leadership? Then all is well.

30th January.—**JESUS, THE ROCK OF AGES** (Psalm 40. 1-17). *Memory verse 2*—"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."

A contrast—Sinking or stablished—In the mire, or on the Rock, which?—The nature of a rock—The uses of a rock—The issues from the rock—Warnings about a rock.

SINKING, slipping, being swallowed up; down, down in the deep mire of sin, and surrounded and deafened by hideous noises, is surely an awful picture. It is in such a picture a rock fitly appears in contrast.

A Rock speaks of endurance, stability, and strength; and with the Rock in Scripture is connected safety, exaltation, shelter, and shadow; and with the smitten Rock gushing streams in the wilderness.

The nature of a rock. The Lord Jesus in His own Person contains all these qualities. Enduring for ever (Heb. 1. 12, 13. 8); established and settled eternally (Psa. 45. 6; Heb. 1. 8); having all strength

and power (Matt. 28. 18; John 10. 28). Thus, Jesus is the Rock of Ages—a tried Stone; not a new one, but the same Eternal Son of God.

The uses of a rock. Safety *in* it (Prov. 30. 26). The feeble conies exist there, notwithstanding their weakness and enemies. Shelter and rest *in* it too (Isa. 32. 2)—where a Man is a Rock. Stability *on* a rock (Psa. 40. 2, 27. 5; Matt. 16. 18).

Supplies from the rock. Gives water (Psa. 78. 20); honey and oil (Deut. 32. 13). All that these typify flow from Christ.

Warnings about the Rock. Jesus is called a rock of offence, a stumbling-stone (Rom. 9. 33). To fall *on* it is to be broken; but *in* to fall *on* any one is utter destruction (Matt. 21. 44). The mighty to save is also mighty to judge. Happy they who, for time and eternity, are out of the mire, delivered from the pit of noises, with their feet *on* the Rock and the song *in* their mouth. Divine order of Salvation—*out on, in.*

6th February.—JOSHUA, THE LEADER OF GOD'S PEOPLE

(Josh. 1. 1-18). *Memory verse, Isaiah 55. 4*—"Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a Leader and Commander to the people."

The people's need provided for—God's Vicegerent appointed—Possession vested in a Person for the people—According to the Written Book—Diligent study necessary—Implicit obedience required.

THE faithful Servant of God, Moses, has been "taken up higher," and God has His chosen man ready also for promotion to the vacant post. Tried and tested and fitted, as well as found fit, is the once young servant of Moses, Joshua, son of Nun.

The need of the people was provided for by God. Joshua was God's Vicegerent, and in him the people received the Land of Promise (verse 3) wherever Joshua put his foot, became the property of God's people. So in our Lord Jesus, the believer is in possession "in Him" of all that He occupies as the Leader and Forerunner of His people (Eph. 1. 3; Heb. 9. 12, 15).

Extensive dominion and victory are promised Joshua (verses 4, 5). Universal dominion and victory belong to Jesus (1 Cor. 15. 25; Luke 1. 33).

All this must be done lawfully, in accordance with God's righteousness (verses 7, 8). Joshua was to be a student of God's Word, so that God's work would be done in God's way. Jesus was the Perfect Student of the Word (Psa. 40. 8; Isa. 50. 4).

Perfect and unanimous obedience was accorded to Joshua (verses 16, 17, 18). God's man had his proper place. Jesus is worthy of perfect Lordship. Joshua reached the place of rule by way of service faithful and true to and for the people. Jesus has reached the Lordship and rule by a truer and lowlier path of service, even unto death (Phil. 2. 7-12; Rom. 14. 9; 2 Cor. 10. 5).

Dreadful penalties (verse 18) **ensued on rebellion.** The Gospel of Jesus Christ contains in it salvation and condemnation side by side (2 Cor. 2. 15, 16). It is revealed for the obedience of faith (Rom. 1. 51); unbelief is disobedience—unbelief is death.

THE TEST APPLIED.

By WM. SHAW, Maybole.

IT was altogether a new trial of Abraham's faith (see Gen. 22). He had never encountered anything like it. These words had a special fitness in his case—"Ye have not come this way heretofore." God had tried him *without* a son, and the test was a severe one. Yet he "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform." But this was a new test. God was about to try Abraham *with* a son; yea, he was about to demand the surrender and sacrifice of that "child of promise," in whom all his hopes were centered. Who could have foreseen such a trial? Besides being a new trial, it was also sudden and unexpected. Nevertheless, the man of faith was perfectly assured that "all is right that seems most wrong,"

IF IT BE THE WILL OF GOD.

There cannot be a more searching test applied to our Christian profession than to bring us face to face with some *new trial*. A new form of trial will assuredly manifest what is in a believer. It will bring out either the hidden beauty or the hidden devil, if we may so speak, be it the devil of covetousness, or the devil of worldliness, or the devil of carnal indulgence, or the devil of unbelief in the care and promises of God, or some other "devil" which it might be difficult to tabulate. For years it may be that a believer has kept the even tenor of his way, and passed as good current coin of the Christian realm. He has successfully resisted the ordinary attractions of the world and the "usual" solicitations of the flesh. All is going well, and, to all appearance, everything is going to continue its peaceful and unchequered course. But, ah! a new trial arises. A test is about to be applied that has never been applied before. And no sooner is the test applied than it at once becomes clear that the brother who is being tested is not the kind of Christian he was taken to be. But, be careful to note that the temptation, or the test, did not make him a weaker man than he had formerly been. It simply brought his weakness to the surface—manifested what he really was. And it is well that this was so. It is well that a believer, even through some searching test, should find out his whereabouts in the matter of heart devotion to the Lord's Anointed. And it may be for the glory of God that our brethren should see that we have been arrayed in borrowed

plumes. Sooner or later our God will put the stamp of reality, or unreality, on our testimony here; and we may be certain that His mode of doing so will be by the application of some test of which we have hitherto had no experience whatever.

The particular trial of our faith may not be so gigantic a matter as the giving up of a son. The merest "accidental circumstance" in the path of our pilgrimage will serve the purpose of our God.

THE BELIEVER IS THUS PUT UPON HIS TRIAL.

There is a choice before him—God or the world, God or the flesh, God or self, in one of its many forms. What is he to do? It seems a very small matter—not worth spending much thought upon. Yes, seemingly; but in reality a great principle is at stake. How does he act? That altogether depends on the condition of his heart. That which is strongest within him responds to that which is speaking to him from without, and he stands or falls accordingly. All this has surely a solemn voice for us. It tells us to remember that word which says, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Secret backsliding only waits the application of God's test in order to make our true condition manifest to all who have eyes to see.

But if the heart be kept with all diligence, we may count upon our God that the trial of faith shall be to the strengthening of faith; for is it not written that "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." (2 Cor. 9. 8). Abraham stood the test on Mount Moriah, and his sacrifice ascended as a sweet-smelling savour unto God. But what was the secret of it all? It was simply this, that Abraham had unbounded *confidence in God*. The victory that overcame was the victory of *faith*. The victory that still overcomes is the victory of *faith*. Confidence in an ever-present God, ever compelling all the circumstances of life to conspire for the blessing of His redeemed—confidence in this God of all grace will enable us to rest in Him and choose for Him, even in the perplexing and the evil time. As faith is the spring of all communion with God, so unbelief is the root of all departure from God. When we are assured that God *is*, we are assured that He is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and a stronghold in the day of trouble. w. s.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*,

Daniel 9. 27.

VERSE 27. "And he shall confirm *the* [a] covenant with many for one week : and in the midst of the week he shall cause *the* sacrifice and *the* oblation [gift-offering] to cease ; and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate [and upon the wing abominations making desolate], even until *the* consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate [desolator]."

We now come to the last or seventieth week of years, one of the most momentous periods in the history of the human race. It will be observed that, as each of the sixty-nine previous weeks is a week of seven years only, the last or seventieth week **MUST** also mean a week of seven years, and cannot be interpreted to mean one thousand two hundred and threescore years, twice over, or two thousand five hundred and twenty years according to the year-day theory. With this period a large portion of the book of Psalms is occupied, and much of the prophetic Scriptures. The details of these seven years are given in the book of the Revelation, from the fourth chapter to the nineteenth. In the first three chapters we have the history of the Church on earth, under the symbol of the seven lamp-stands—"the things which are." From the fourth chapter onward, "the things which are about to be after these things," that is, after the history of the Church on earth is complete. The seven seals (Rev. 6.) embrace the whole period from the going forth of the lawless one until the scenes immediately preceding the manifestation of the Son of Man. This week of seven years is divided into two portions, the first three years and a half being the time when the two witnesses prophesy (chap. 11.), and the latter three years and a half the time of the full manifestation of the man of sin. The first portion corresponds with the three years and a half of John the Baptist's prophetic teaching, and the latter three years and a half with the public ministry of the Lord Jesus.

During the first three and a half years the symbolic trumpets will be blown, and during the latter three years and a half the vials will be poured out.

The prince that shall come, who is the head of the empire of the beast, will confirm **A**, not *the*, covenant with the many, or with the mass of the people of Israel, for seven years. Of them, a hundred and forty and four thousand will be sealed according to Rev. 7. as the servants of God, belonging to the

twelve tribes, which sealing cannot take place during the present dispensation whilst the Church is on earth, for in the Church there is neither Jew nor Gentile. But at the close of this dispensation, when Israel will again be recognised as the people and servants of Jehovah, the Prince that shall come will confirm a covenant with them for seven years, allowing them to return as a nation to their land, to re-occupy the holy city Jerusalem (Rev. 11. 2), to set apart a building which will be acknowledged as the Temple of God (see Matt. 24. 15; 2 Thes. 2. 4; Rev. 11. 2), and to offer the daily sacrifice. But in the midst of the week he breaks the covenant, takes away the daily sacrifice, and sets up the abomination of desolation in the holy place (Matt. 24. 15), sitting in the Temple of God as God (2 Thes. 2. 4), and upon the wing of the Temple setting up the visible sign, and commencing that fearful persecution of the saints of God known as "the great tribulation." The dragon, that old serpent the devil, will give him his power and seat and great authority (Rev. 13. 2). The time of the culmination of evil will then arrive to which present things are already tending, when lawlessness which is now working will be headed up in the lawless one, the man of sin; when false religion will be fully developed and manifested in Babylon the Great, and when the oppositions of science, falsely so called, will find a fit exponent and practiser in the false prophet.

Babylon the Great, or the apostate Church, will come to an end through the instrumentality of the ten kings (Rev. 17. 16). Then, after the marriage of the Lamb, He, Messiah the Prince, will come, will execute judgment upon the lawless one and upon the false prophet (Rev. 19. 20), and having taken out of His kingdom all things that offend and them that work iniquity, He will establish His millennial reign of righteousness and blessedness and peace.

"HE HIMSELF KNEW WHAT HE WOULD DO."

By JAMES WRIGHT, Bristol.

ARE we to suppose that the meaning of this expression is limited to the knowledge of the way in which to reach the bodily hunger of that great multitude on the hillside? No, the subsequent part of the chapter forbids this thought. To understand the full scope of that expression we must remember verse 51: "I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever;

“He Himself knew what He would do.”

and the Bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world”—plainly referring to His sacrifice on the Cross, where His precious body was broken and His blood poured out. So the teaching of the remainder of this chapter is present to His mind when it says: “He Himself knew what He would do” (John 6. 6).

And there is a deeply important principle in this utterance applicable to our daily life. We are often, as it says in Psalm 107, “at our wit’s end,” like Jehosophat, who said, “Neither know we what to do.” Now the Lord Jesus, our Head, is never in that position. *He* always knows what He will do; and it is so blessed to apply this to the exigencies of daily life, and to look up into His face and say: “Now, Lord, I do not know which way to turn, but Thou, who seest the end from the beginning, hast ordered this. All things are given into Thy hand; it is not come to pass without Thy permission; Thou hast brought me into this fix, and Thou knowest what Thou wilt do. *I* do not know, but *Thou* knowest.” Oh, the unspeakable rest that brings to the soul; it is doing in spirit what John did, who leaned his head on the Lord’s bosom. And when we are spiritually very weary and worn, and do not know what to do, and cannot hold up our head, let us just lean it on Jesus’ bosom. “Thou, Lord, knowest what Thou wilt do, and whatsoever Thou wilt do is glorious and worthy of Thyself; and what Thou doest at this moment with me is worthy of Thyself, and I shall one day know this for myself. It may be very painful, it may wring my heart; but, whatever it is, it is worthy of Thee.”

Oh, this blessed word, “He Himself knew what He would do.” It is one of those eternal words which form a rock foundation for our faith, and it is this that meets us in our weakness and weariness.

“Unless alone himself he can erect himself,
How poor a thing is man!”

But if a man can link himself with the Living God (Col. 3. 3), then is man hidden in God Himself, . . . and God’s strength is made perfect in the weakness that leans upon God. So I commend to my dear fellow-believers, “He Himself knew what He would do.” It is a word of infinitely wide application.

PEARLS PICKED UP

FROM A DISUSED MINE BY A. B. G

A NEW head without a new heart, a new lip without a new life,
will never bring a man to the kingdom.

That man is for the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of God is for that man, that hath got the kingdom of God within him.

If the kingdom of Grace do not enter into thee here, thou shalt never enter into the kingdom of Glory hereafter.

A new heart is for a new heaven, and a new heaven is for a new heart.

Moral honesty is not sufficient to keep a man out of eternal misery ; all it can do is to keep a man to one of the best rooms and easiest beds that hell affords.

SEVEN AGES OR DISPENSATIONS.

AS there were seven stages in the work of God in creation, so there are seven steps or dispensations in the work of Redemption. The six days of creation, crowned with man in the image of God, may find a counterpart in the 6000 years of redemption, culminating in the likeness of His Son.

First. The *Edenic*, or garden of Eden, in which man's trial, failure, and expulsion are rapidly traced.

Second. The *Antediluvian*, or days before the flood, when man, without law, became utterly corrupt and perished under the waters of judgment.

Third. The *Patriarchal*, beginning with Abraham, separated from idolatry, and ending with Joseph, who, through a life of suffering and trial, reached at last a throne of glory, and became the bread-giver and saviour of the world.

Fourth. The *Mosaic*, or age of law, begun after the Exodus and continued until Christ, who becomes the "End of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Fifth. The *Messianic*, including the life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord.

Sixth. The *Holy Spirit*, or present dispensation, during which the Body, the Church, is being gathered out by the preaching of the Word, and when completed will be caught up into heaven to meet her ascended Lord.

Seventh. The *Millennial* age, or reign of peace. This will be ushered in by judgments on Israel and the nations after the Church is gone. Prophecy will then be fulfilled, Satan will be bound, and our Lord will set up His reign of 1000 years over the earth.

W. G. C.

“ HE WILL BE SATISFIED.”

TUNE—*New Hymns and Solos, No. 16.*

WHEN He shall come, on that fair morn of morns,
When in His glory Christ the Lord returns,
And that eternal day of gladness dawns—
He will be satisfied, be satisfied !

He will be satisfied, He will be satisfied,
When He shall come on that fair morn of morns ;
He will be satisfied, He will be satisfied,
When He shall come on that fair morn of morns.

When He shall see His glorious Bride complete,
Gift of the Father through Redemption meet,
To enter into fellowship most sweet—
He will be satisfied, be satisfied !

When He shall bring us to the Father's home,
And introduce us to that Blessèd One,
And we shall sit with Him upon the Throne—
He will be satisfied, be satisfied !

When He shall hear the Song of Songs begin,
To Him who loved, and washed us from our sin,
When all in Heaven the note of praise shall sing—
He will be satisfied, be satisfied !

GREENWICH.

G. S. JORDAN.

THE RESURRECTION MORNING.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible.*

THE body of Jesus having been laid in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa, after the Passover Day was ended at the going down of the sun, the women who came with Jesus from Galilee followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. Then they returned to their homes, and employed the hours of the day before the Jewish Sabbath in getting ready the spices to anoint the body of Jesus, and rested on the Sabbath-day. This preparation day was regarded as an important period, because the Sabbath following the Passover was a high day. It was on the Sabbath that the Jews made the sepulchre sure, by sealing the stone and setting a watch.

When the Sabbath was past—at sundown, say about six o'clock in the evening—came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, Jesus rose from the dead. “And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven,

and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men" (Matt. 28. 2-4).

Mary Magdalene came while it was yet dark, and perceived the sepulchre was open, and thought that some one with sacrilegious hands had taken the body of her beloved Lord. She ran and told the two disciples, Peter and John. They came and believed, and departed to their own home, where John had taken the mother of the Lord. What tidings to take to that beloved mother! For they did not apprehend that the Lord had risen.

Mary Magdalene remained at the sepulchre weeping, and as she wept she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and saw two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

She was undismayed by their appearance, for she had only room for One in her thoughts. What wrung her heart was this, said she: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." She turned back then. It has been suggested that the angels had fixed their gaze on another object, and she turned to see what had attracted their attention. She saw some one standing whom she supposed to have been the gardener, and said, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away."

The Lord then addressed her by her name—"Mary." She exclaimed "Rabboni!" In Hebrew this is a stronger word than "Rabbi," and indicates an object of peculiar reverence. Not only did the Lord inquire, "Why weepest thou?" as the angels did, but He also asked, "Whom seeketh thou?" He could understand the heart of Mary better than the angels could. It was the absence of His Person that caused her sorrow. Then she would have embraced Him, but He said: "Touch Me not, for I have not yet ascended to My Father."

This, I believe, marks the point of time when He, as the High Priest of our profession, entered into the Holiest, and sprinkled the Mercy-seat with His Blood. "Go, tell My brethren," He said, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father, and to My God, and your God." Subsequently, when He met the women returning from the sepulchre, He allowed them to hold Him by the feet.

And in the evening of that same day, when He manifested

Himself to His assembled disciples within the room with closed doors, He invited them to "handle" His hands and His side.

Thus, when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils; thus comforting in tender compassion the heart of one who loved much, not only because she had much forgiven, but because she had experienced in an especial manner His delivering power, for she had known the sevenfold tyranny of the enemy from whom He had saved her.

The visit of Mary Magdalene was before sunrise, while it was yet dark. The other women came subsequently, bringing the spices they had prepared, at the rising of the sun.

They found an open sepulchre, and not a dead Christ. The stone, the seal, the watch which men had set, had proved of none avail, for the barriers of the tomb were burst by the risen Lord.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING

PLAN OF LESSONS FOR 1898.—A new plan dealing with the entrance into the "Goodly Land" for Old Testament, and Divine Titles of our Lord for New Testament, is issued in a threefold link: (1) *A Gospel Scheme*, with references, contrasts, &c., 1/ per 100. (2) *Boys and Girls Almanac* and Scripture searching book, with subjects, memory texts, daily portion, prizes, &c., ½d.; 6d. per doz.; 3/6 per 100. (3) *The Pathway*, with weekly subject, memory text in full, and original and evangelistic notes on the subjects. Monthly, ½d.; 1/ per year. One each post free as sample to any teacher.

13th February.—**JERICO, THE DOOMED CITY** (Josh. 6. 1-21).
Memory verse, Acts 17. 31—"He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

The doomed city; an offer of mercy—Sevenfold summons to surrender—The only sound—The final blast—The complete overthrow—Saved out of it.

OUR lesson opens with a view of a city in a state of siege—hopeless and helpless, yet defiant. Even at that late hour mercy was accessible to them. See Deut. 20. 10, where we learn that peace was proclaimed in such a case, and the seven days' compassing of Jericho was for the king and his people their day of opportunity, if they had known.

Seven priests, in company with the Ark, are told off to bear **seven rams' horn trumpets**. The sound of that trumpet-blowing was same as jubilee sound (see Newberry, margin); and as the Gospel trumpets blow to-day, it is either a sound of joy or a presage of dark, dark woe (2 Cor. 2. 15, 16). Submission to God's judgment would

have saved them, but they "would not" (Matt. 23. 37); there was mercy for them, but they "knew not" (Luke 19. 42). Happy are the people that "know" the joyful sound (Psa. 89. 15).

Ye shall not shout (verse 10). The *only* sound the trumpet sound. There is meaning in this. The less there is of other noises the better (1 Cor. 2. 1-5), so that God's Gospel be heard in unmixed simplicity (2 Co. 4. 3).

Six days, the seventh day, and seven times. Complete and perfect display of God's patience and mercy (1 Pet. 3. 20; 2 Pet. 3. 9). So does God completely encircle with Gospel Word and opportunity, leaving the unsaved without excuse.

At the seventh time (verse 16). Even as the last pace of encircling was complete, and the last long summons floated on the air, rose the **shout** of the redeemed—what a shout!—shout of the band of God (1 Thes. 4. 16).

The wall fell down under it (margin). Specially noticed is the flatness of the fall. The wall, so strong, so high (Deut. 1. 28), now a pathway for God's people. No protection for Jericho's men in these walls in which they trusted (Jer. 9. 23, 24).

The fate of all who lived in Jericho, and the saving of Rahab out of it, tell out the Gospel lesson of invitation and warning to all unsaved ones.

20th February.—**RAHAB'S SALVATION** (Josh. 2. 1-21). *Memory verse, Heb. 11. 31*—"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."

All condemned—Mercy's visit—Rahab's faith—Rahab's submission—Rahab's reception—Word and token—In Jericho, not of it—Safe under the token—Completely saved.

THE doom of Jericho involved ALL the dwellers therein, as in Adam all have sentence of death passed on them (Rom. 5. 12). But, in judgment, God remembered mercy, and the saving of Rahab was mercy from God. Two messengers of God came to Rahab's door and she took them in. The taking in and sheltering of the spies showed **Rahab's faith** (Heb. 11. 31). She had heard of what God had done and believed (Josh. 2. 10), and knew and confessed that this God was LORD, and Romans 10. 13 tells us that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be saved.

Rahab's faith led to **Rahab's submission**. The sheltering of the spies showed that her lot was cast in with the people of God, as Moses was (Heb. 11. 25). In that act she threw off her allegiance to Jericho's king, and became a subject of Israel's Lord.

Next in order is **Rahab's reception** of the word and token. It was only the word of two men who (so far as she could *see*) might not be able to keep their promise, yet she believed. God has given much greater ground for faith now—His own *sworn* word (Heb. 6. 17, 18). In view of this, unbelief is a great sin—"making God a liar" (1 Jno. 5. 10).

Then **the token, a scarlet cord** in the window. Think of it; "they departed, and she bound the scarlet line in the window." Reminds us of the blood-mark on the door at Passover in Egypt. There that line was glaring in the sunshine and fluttering in the breeze—every one who went in and out would see it. It made that window different from every

window in Jericho. It hung all the days till Israel's army surrounded the walls, and the seven days they marched round it. What did her neighbours say? What would the spies think as they marched round Jericho with their comrades? The whole army, from Joshua downwards, would be cheered as they passed under that window in the wall. Nay more, what did God think as He looked on that little red line? How much of the future it would signify to His heart. He would see all down the ages many, many in similar case with Rahab as she sat in her house under the shelter of a "thin red line," believers in His beloved Son, under the safe token of the scarlet blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. "In the world," "not of it" (John 17. 16). Are you so?

The end of the story is found in Joshua 6.

Practical teaching—**salvation through only believing.** Believing—moving the hearer "to know" of coming judgment, and to come under the shelter of the Person and work of Jesus, as learned through the Word by the Spirit.

27th February.—**ACHAN'S SIN** (Josh. 7 1-22). *Mem. verse, James 1. 15*—"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

The all-seeing eye—The covetous eye and heart—Stealing from God—Resurrection of buried sin—Sin judged and put away—No resurrection of believers' sins

WE have, in previous lesson, seen Jericho walls levelled, and Israel victorious; Rahab saved, and all the others destroyed. Jericho stronghold was thrown down, and in the great event much happened that escaped the eye of man; but God's eye noted what every man did in that great day.

Stealing from God. God had said (ch. 6. 19) that *all* the silver, gold, brass, and iron were to be His. Achan's eyes and heart were stronger than his ears and fears. He *stole* God's property. Same as Eve did (Gen 3. 6). "Will a man rob God?" (Mal. 3. 8). Yes! when *we keep* what God says is His. We were made for God's glory (Rev. 4. 11). We come short of that (Rom. 1. 21; 3. 23). That is sin. So even if we *commit* no sin, yet if we *omit* to give God and Jesus Christ their own, we are sinners.

Searching of God. Achan's sin was hid from man, but it was a trouble to *all*. No sin that wrongs God but hurts man. There was a search made—the story tells how. Closer and closer till the sin and the man are face to face. How solemn! "Be sure *your* sin will find *you* out" (Nunb. 32. 23). Better to find out your sin and have God put it away (Ps. 32. 1; Isa. 1. 18) before the resurrection of it at the judgment (1 Tim. 5. 24).

Judgment of God. Achan owned it too late—when he could do nothing else—but there could then be no mercy. Judgment only (justice). So when the day of grace is past, He will judge the world in righteousness—justice (Acts 17. 31).

"**The Valley of Achor**"—The place where sin was judged—reminds us of Calvary, where sin was judged—completely judged—in the person of Jesus and all His with Him. "A door to hope" (Hosea 2. 15). "Sing there." Yes! in sight of that heap of stones, one can sing. "Sing of

His mighty love," in going down into the judgment-fire of God's justice for sin, and putting it away. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8. 1). Trusting in Jesus, our sins can never be digged up again as Achan's were (see Micah 7. 19).

6th March.—**JESUS, THE FOUNDATION AND CORNER STONE** (1 Cor. 3. 9-23). *Memory verse, 1 Cor. 3. 11*—"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Foundation and building correspond—God's building *versus* man's—God's tried and chosen Stone rejected—A Stone of stumbling—An exalted Stone—Never to be shaken.

EVERY building requires a foundation, and the foundation agrees with the character of the building; that is, a great building should have a great foundation—a permanent building, a permanent foundation.

God's building has God's foundation—Jesus Christ, a tried Stone, chosen, precious (Isa. 28. 16). The builders (not building God's building, but some other) refused this Stone (Psa. 118. 22; Luke 20. 17), and set Him at nought—despised and rejected Him (Isa. 53). Thus stumbling at Him (Isa. 8. 14), Israel fell, and are broken to this day. Jesus is still a Stone of stumbling and Rock of offence to all who obey not the Gospel (1 Pet. 2. 7). Terrible the fate of those who, stumbling, fall upon that Stone; most awful the fate of those on whom it falls (Luke 22. 18).

A Living Stone. Coming to Him, who is God's Foundation Stone—the Living Christ, the coming one partakes of His living character, and becomes part of God's spiritual house (1 Peter 2. 4)—built upon the foundation, an holy temple for God to dwell in (Eph. 2. 20-22).

An unshakable Foundation. Luke 6. 47 tells us that "coming" to Jesus, and "hearing" His Words and "doing them", we are on a foundation that will stand the most violent storms even as a house built on a rock foundation, and when everything else shall be shaken, God's building will stand unmoved (Heb. 12. 28).

On that Foundation should be built material corresponding to its value and character—"WOOD, HAY, AND STUBBLE" (easily gathered, plenty about, and easily built and very bulky) ON a precious chosen stone is a dreadful incongruity which cannot be tolerated; it only defiles and hides the beauty of the Foundation Stone, and fire will destroy the structure and the foolish builders lose their work. "GOLD, SILVER, PRECIOUS STONES" (very scarce, not easily found, have to be digged for, searched for, and purified and separated) are worthy of the Foundation and in keeping with it, and the wise builders will reap a rich reward. Take care WHAT you build, as well as WHERE you build, and HOW you build.

The Chief Corner Stone. Head of the corner—that is, not only at the bottom—all resting on it as a foundation, but crowning all and above all is Jesus. "God hath highly exalted Him" (Phil. 2. 9); in all things pre-eminent (Col. 1. 18). It is Jesus First, Jesus Last, Jesus All-in-all.

Blessed are they who by coming to Jesus are made living stones, founded ON Him and built up IN Him—God's Building, of which Jesus is the Foundation and the Head of the corner.

WORLD - BORDERING ;

OR, LESSONS FROM THE HISTORY OF LOT.

IN Lot's history, as recorded in the sacred page (Gen. 13, &c.), we cannot fail to note certain signs of departure from God—a departure which resulted in open association with the Sodomites and the loss of all moral power over the ungodly. It is interesting and profitable to observe these signs. "Not much in them," the superficial observer may be inclined to think. Yet they proved the outward index of what was going on in Lot's heart.

When there arose a strife between the herdmen of Abraham's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle, Abraham gave Lot his choice. "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." This is thoroughly characteristic of the man who "believed God." The man of faith is ever the man of the large heart. He knows he can count on God, and that he can suffer no real loss by putting his case in God's hand. With Lot it was altogether different. It was clear that *he* did not count on God in this time of difficulty. He was not of those who could say, "He shall choose our inheritance for us" (Psa. 47. 4). Lot, therefore, snatched eagerly at Abraham's generous offer. He ran his eye rapidly over the ground. He noted the well-watered plain, and all the advantages that could be secured by a *first* choice. And he chose accordingly. It seems never to have occurred to him to say to Abraham—"Nay, but *thou* wilt make thy choice of the land." Lot considered only himself—

HE PLANNED FOR SELF AND CHOSE FOR SELF.

They who do not count on God to help them, must needs use every means to help themselves, even although some Abraham should be over-reached and compelled to take what is left.

This little transaction as to the choice of pasturage gives us a certain amount of insight into Lot's character. It shows us that he was not a man of faith—he was not one who was accustomed to *trust God*. He evidently felt that he must keep a very sharp eye on his own interests, seeing he could not expect God to do anything for him. He, therefore, put *self* first. Abraham, on the other hand, put *God* first, and could, therefore, *afford* to let Lot have his choice of the land.

The next thing we read about Lot is that he *pitched his tent toward Sodom*. He is not there yet; possibly he is still a considerable distance from that city of wickedness. But he is *making in that direction*. This is the solemn thing. No doubt

he would be able to fence off any one who might have warned him as to the downward path on which he was entering. He was not *in* Sodom yet. He knew what he was doing. There was no danger of *him*. Where was the harm? His tent was only pitched *toward* Sodom. This is the way in which many reason to-day when world-bordering is brought home to them. "Oh," they say, "we are not in worldly associations. You may think we are drifting in that direction, but we have no intention of identifying ourselves with the world. There is no danger of *us*." But great danger is involved in pitching the tent toward Sodom. We have the express warning of Scripture: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away" (Prov. 4. 14, 15). We are also told to "abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5. 22), which we have heard rendered as "the appearing of the bud of evil." We need not think to despise Divine counsel and yet count on Divine deliverance. When once a believer parts company with *God*, he enters on a path whereof he knows not what the end shall be. All he can be certain of is this, that the end thereof shall not be peace. Lot found it so. And the believer who pitches his tent "toward Sodom," and goes back to the weak and beggarly elements of the Egypt world, shall also find it so.

Thus far we see

TWO CLEARLY-MARKED STAGES.

in Lot's career. We see—(1) That he fails in the great fundamental of faith in the Living God. Failure *here* means failure all along the line. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Whenever a believer loses the sense of an ever-present God, he "falls back on his own resources," as men say. He walks by sight. He reasons like a worldling, strives like a worldling, and views himself and his circumstances *apart from God*. He may sing hymns that tell him he is so near to God that nearer he cannot be. But that refers to his standing as a son, and not to his experience as a saint. His *experience* tells him that in his case God is a God afar off.

We see (2) in Lot's history that he made a distinct movement in the direction of the ungodly. This was quite in the nature of things. There was something *in Lot* that responded to the allurements of yonder city of the plain. Where God is set aside as One to be trusted in, something will be found to take the place of God. If the heart fails to be attracted by the

heavenly magnet, it will yield to the attraction of some other magnet. As faith in God goes out, trust in some "arm of flesh" comes in. Scientific men tell us that nature cannot endure a vacuum. This law would seem to apply to the heart of the believer. The heart will be found either under the domination of *God* or the domination of *self*. If it comes under the domination of self, immediately there is a gravitation towards the world. This is inevitable, for there are powerful affinities between the "old man" and the world.

Considering, therefore, the momentous consequences involved in losing a sense of the abiding presence of God, let us take heed lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that *trust in Him*."

(To be concluded.)

W. S.

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

THE Word speaks of "*unquenchable fire*," of an "*undying worm*," of a "*fixed gulf*," of "*abiding wrath*." What, I would ask, is the meaning of such words, in the judgment of any honest, unprejudiced mind? It may be said that these are figures. Granted that the "fire," the "worm," and the "gulf" are figures, but figures of what? Of something ephemeral—something which must, sooner or later, have an end? Nay, but something which is eternal, if anything is eternal. If we deny eternal punishment, we must deny an eternal anything, inasmuch as it is the same word which is used in every instance to express the idea of endless continuance. There are about seventy passages in the Greek New Testament where the word "everlasting" occurs. It is applied, amongst many other things, to the life which believers possess, and to the punishment of the wicked, as in Matt. 25. 46. Now, upon what principle can any one attempt to take out the six or seven passages in which it is applied to the punishment of the wicked, and say that in all these instances it does not mean "for ever," but that in all the rest it does? I confess this seems to be perfectly unanswerable. If the Holy Ghost, if the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, had thought proper to make use of a different word, when speaking of the punishment of the wicked, from what He uses when speaking of the life of believers, I grant

you there might be some basis for an objection. But, no; we find the same word invariably used to express what everybody knows to be endless; and, therefore, if the punishment of the wicked be not endless, nothing is endless. We cannot consistently stop short with the question of punishment, but must go on to the denial of the very existence of God Himself.

H. C.

DISCIPLES.

THE SCRIPTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR NAMES.—I.

THERE is no attempt in this series of papers to deal exhaustively with a subject so fruitful as the names called upon the family of God in this dispensation. In drawing attention to some of the principal names used, and indicating a few salient points in connection with each, it is hoped desires will be quickened to dig deeper into such a rich mine.

The term disciples is commonly used in the four Gospels, very frequently in the Acts of the Apostles, but never occurs in the Epistles or in the Book of the Revelation. This of itself is very significant. We read of the disciples of Jesus, and the disciples of John the Baptist, who questioned the Lord on the differing practices of themselves and His disciples. The Pharisees made it their boast that they were the disciples of Moses, and had their own disciples, whom on occasion they sent to question the Lord.

A consideration of the sixth chapter of John's Gospel will give some help towards arriving at the significance of the word itself. The whole scene and setting of this chapter is very helpful. The Lord has just wrought one of his most notable miracles, feeding the hungry multitude by a few loaves and fishes. The people were greatly impressed and excited, and would by force have made Him a king. Jesus withdrew Himself, and passed over to the other side of the lake. When morning came, the multitude, finding Him gone, took shipping and followed to seek Him on the other side. Having found and gathered round Him, Jesus, knowing what was in man, and knowing the motives moving the greater number of those who had thus followed Him, proceeded to try them, calling upon them to work the work of God, by believing on Him whom God had sent. This caused speculation and further inquiry, when the crucial test of all discipleship, having Christ for its object, was applied. The various stages are well marked:

1. True bread comes from heaven (verse 32).
2. "Jesus said . . . I am the bread of life" (verse 35).
3. "I am the *living* bread which came down from heaven" (verse 51).
4. "The bread that I will give is My flesh" (verse 51).
5. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (verse 53).
6. "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me" (verse 57).
7. "*This* is that bread which came down from heaven" (verse 58).

Strange words these to fall upon the ears of a people whose minds were filled with thoughts of pomp and power as being the rightful possession of such a wonder worker, in the glory of which they doubtless thought to share. A crucified Christ has always been a stumbling-block to the Jew and foolishness to the Gentile; but it is Christ and Him crucified, the unfailing touchstone by which all profession must be tried. The immediate effect of these words on His disciples was that many said, "This is an hard saying (verse 60);" and again, "From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him" (verse 66). The Lord was not taken by surprise. "For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him" (verse 64). And knowing in Himself that His sayings were murmured at amongst His disciples, He had said, "There are some of you that believe not" (verse 64). With infinite pity He looked on the crowd melting away, and turned to the twelve with the pathetic question, "Will ye also go away?" (verse 67), eliciting the memorable reply from Peter, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and *we believe* and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (verses 68 and 69).

It is evident, therefore, that

A DISCIPLE IS BUT A FOLLOWER

—he may, or may not, be a true believer. The same test as of old remains to-day—Christ and Him crucified. The offence of the Cross has not ceased, and its effects must ever be, "Whereby the world is crucified unto Me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6. 14).

P. H.

To be followed by papers on Believers, Christians, Sons, Brethren, Temple, Church, Body, House, and Bride. The set of numbers for year post free for 1/.

“GOLD FROM THE MINE.”

Transcription by A. W. P. S.

“Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart” (Matt 11. 29).

SOME who are Court-bred will send for the masters of fashion, though they live not in the Court; and though the peasants think them strange dresses yet they regard not that, but use them as finest and best. Care not what the world may say, you are not to stay long with them. Desire to have both fashions and stuff from Court, from heaven—this “spirit of meekness”—and it shall be sent to you. It is never right in anything with us till we attain to this—to tread on the opinion of men, and eye nothing but God’s approbation.—*Leighton.*

Prayer without effort is hypocrisy; effort without prayer is infidelity.—*Evans.*

“ONLY A LITTLE WHILE.”

By GEORGE GROVE, Melbourne.

“ONLY a little while;” how sweet,
And then together we shall meet;
No parting known, and there will be
A joyous, bright eternity.
Now in this “little while” we tread
The desert waste—by Him we’re led;
He cheers us with His gladdening smile,
And says, “’Tis but a little while.”
How bright the Hope, when parting here
With those we love and hold so dear;
“Look up,” we say, and with a smile,
“’Tis only for a little while.”
“A little while;” consoling word,
Uttered by our departing Lord;
His love to us has made it sure—
That love, so boundless, deep, and pure.
Our little love for Him, our Lord,
Has often made us doubt His Word,
And, listening to the tempter’s guile,
We’ve thought it *not* “a little while.”
The Lord Himself will quickly come,
And keep His promise—take us home;
We’ll bask beneath His loving smile,
And praise Him for the “little while.”

THE VISION OF THE ANGEL.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*

DANIEL IO.

DANIEL, whose name had been changed by Nebuchadnezzar to Belteshazzar, had been mourning three full weeks, literally weeks of days, to distinguish them from the seventy weeks of years, the subject of the previous chapter.

In the twenty-fourth day of the first month, in the third year of Cyrus, King of Persia, Daniel had a vision. The Passover was on the fourteenth day of the first month, then followed the seven days of unleavened bread; this vision appears to have been three days afterwards.

On the first day that Daniel set himself to seek God, the angel Gabriel was sent, but was hindered for one-and-twenty days. In this vision, in a most remarkable manner, the veil is lifted, giving us an insight into that conflict continually going on in the heavenly places between the principalities and powers of light and the principalities and powers of darkness. In this conflict WE now have our share, as raised up together and made sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, through the indwelling Spirit of God; therefore the Apostle Paul exhorts us to "put on the whole armour of God . . . for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6. 11, 12).

In these chapters we have the names of two of the angels given to us—GABRIEL, which signifies in Hebrew the power of God; and MICHAEL, meaning like God. The title of God, "El," here used is in the singular, as expressing the unity of the Godhead whom they represent. Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, appears to be the speaker, as in the ninth chapter, and is presented in this vision in surpassing glory, his countenance like the lightning, his voice as the voice of a multitude, and his feet like fine brass. We must be careful not to confound this with similar visions of the Lord Jesus, for He took not on Him the nature of angels. He was not an angel, but the Creator and Lord of them all.

All the proper names mentioned in Genesis up till the confusion of tongues were in the Hebrew, which was evidently the original language given by God Himself. In Zeph. 3. 8, God expresses His determination to gather the nations, that He might execute His judgments upon them—it is remarkable that in the original this verse contains every letter of the Hebrew alphabet—then follows verse 9, "For then will I turn to the

peoples a pure language [or lip], that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve Him with one consent." From this it appears that when the nations go up to worship Jehovah in His temple on the holy hill (Zech. 14 ; Isa. 2), it will be in the sacred Hebrew tongue.

In the first instance, the conflict was between the Babylonian and Medeo-Persian empires, as we have considered them in former chapters ; but at the time of the vision the contention was between the Persian and Grecian empires, and it appears that there were angelic principalities connected with the various nationalities. Hence we read of the Prince of Persia and the Prince of Grecia as representing these empires ; whereas, on the other hand, Michael is spoken of as the prince for Daniel's people, and as helping this angelic messenger.

CHRIST THE OBJECT OF THE HEART.

OH, if heaven and earth, and ten thousand heavens, even round about the heavens that now are, were all in one garden of paradise, decked with all the fairest roses, flowers, and trees that can come forth from the art of the Almighty Himself: yet set but our One flower, that groweth out of the Root of Jesse, beside that orchard of pleasure, one look of Him, one view of His Godhead would infinitely exceed, and go beyond, the smell, colour, beauty, and loveliness of that paradise. Oh, worthy, worthy loveliness ! Oh, for less of the creature, and more of Thee. Oh, open the passage of the well of love and glory on us, dried pits and withered trees.

Oh, that Jewel and Flower of heaven ! If our Beloved were not mistaken by us, and unknown to us, He would have no scarcity of suitors. He would make heaven and earth both see that they cannot quench His love, for His love is a sea. Oh, to be a thousand fathoms deep in this sea of love. He, He Himself, is more excellent than heaven: for heaven, as it cometh into the souls and spirits of the glorified, is but a creature, and He is something, and a great something more than a creature. Oh, what a life were it, to sit beside this well of love, and drink and sing, and sing and drink ; and there to have desires and soul-faculties stretched and extended out, many thousand fathoms in length and breadth, to take in seas and rivers of love.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING

PLAN OF LESSONS FOR 1898.—A new plan dealing with the entrance into the "Goodly Land" for Old Testament, and Divine Titles of our Lord for New Testament, is issued in a threefold link: (1) *A Gospel Scheme*, with references, contrasts, &c., 1/ per 100. (2) *Boys and Girls Almanac* and Scripture searching book, with subjects, memory texts, daily portion, prizes, &c., ½d.; 6d. per doz.; 3/6 per 100. (3) *The Pathway*, with weekly subject, memory text in full, and original and evangelistic notes on the subjects. Monthly, ½d.; 1/ per year. One each post free as sample to any teacher.

13th March.—**JESUS, THE DOOR** (John 10. 1-18). *Memory verse*, 9—"I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

A familiar object—Getting over the wall—Entering by the door—A right to go in—The open way for Shepherd—The way for the sheep—Whosoever way in—Safety inside.

ALL must be familiar with the simile used in this beautiful parable; and full of suggestion are the words uttered by the Lord Jesus in His declaration of His character as a Good Shepherd.

Entering not by the Door. This act of going into a place by the wrong way plainly shows that the one who does that has no right there. The action proclaims their character. Ignoring God's righteous claims, they seek to enter on their own self-righteousness, and so rob God of His glory (Rom. 10. 3, 4).

He that enters by the Door is the Shepherd of the sheep. This is Jesus in His own Person meeting all the right claims and entering "by His own blood" (Heb. 9. 12). The barred way of Gen. 3. 24—barred to sinful man—is now open, sin having been put away at the Cross (Heb. 10. 20). This is the mark of the Great Shepherd of the sheep (Heb. 13. 20).

To Him the porter openeth. The flaming sword is sheathed—the Shepherd is acknowledged—the door is thrown open—the Shepherd and the sheep meet—He calls His own, they hear and follow. Thus we know the sheep (John 12. 32). The voice of Jesus divides now amongst the mass of sheep-like men, and gathers His flock around Himself, He leading them apart (Mark 6. 31; Luke 24. 50).

I am the Door of the sheep. Having Himself entered by the door, He in turn becomes **the Way** (John 14. 6). All that He has done for His sheep He becomes *to* them. He righteously met our sins' deserts for us, and is now the righteousness of God to us (1 Cor. 1. 30). "Through Him we have access" (Eph. 2. 18).

I am the Door. This third reference to the door is in its broadest and widest aspect. It is a door for **any man**; open for whosoever will (Rev. 22. 17), and salvation is its use. He shall be saved. **By Me.** That may mean that by Jesus the one who enters shall be saved, as well as indicating that He is the access to a safe position.

In and out. Surely not in and out the flock, nor in and out of salvation. Does it not mean in to the Father's presence in worship, and out into the world for service, and in that world, so barren of itself, find heavenly supplies of pasture.

Such, then, is the lesson of the Door (space forbids extension of the suggestions). 1st. The entrance is only to be had in righteousness, which means death to a sinner. 2nd. As the Shepherd, carrying all the sins (Isa. 53. 6) of the sheep, Jesus entered *by* the door. 3rd. He is now Himself the way of the sheep. 4th. Jesus is now to all the world a Saviour-door into a safe place—a position of liberty and plenty.

The subject also suggests reference to the Ark Door—open and shut (Gen. 7); the blood-stained Door (Exod 12), as well as the shut Door of Matt. 25. 10 and Luke 13. 25—all significant of inclusion as well as exclusion, of safety and doom.

20th March.—**JESUS, THE SHELTER FROM THE STORM**

(Luke 13. 24-35). *Memory verse, Isa. 32. 2*—"And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

Narrow, but open and wide enough—Inside comfort and safety—The time to enter—Shut out—Shelter for the worst—The wings of the Almighty—Desolation when comfort might be had.

SOMEWHAT akin to our previous lesson is the present. Jesus, the Door, is the entrance to a place of safety, shelter, comfort. **Enter through the narrow Door.** It seems from the outside narrow, stiff, and undesirable; yet there is ample room for an empty sinner to enter. Illustrate by boy with hand in a jar; can get it out if empty, but if full he cannot.

The House. Inside that door is the house—having a master. A house is a place of shelter from the storm—heat when it is cold—comfort at night, and communion by day. Jesus is all that—the storm of judgment and the desolation of darkness can never be known to those who are in Him (Rom. 8. 1; John 8. 12).

The time to enter. The present, "now." Before the Master rises up and shuts the door. When God shut the door of the ark (Gen. 7. 16), He shut some in and many out. Those *in* were there in time—those *out* were out too long, and suffered for their folly.

Punishment of the Privileged Procrastinators. Outside the Refuge they stand, and *begin* to seek entrance, but too late. They plead past misused favours and privileges without avail; nay, it makes their woe and remorse the greater when the far-away ones are seen safely housed and happy, provided for all eternity. (See John 3. 19; Matt. 11. 20-24; Matt. 12. 41, 42.)

How oft would I have gathered thee. This is another beautiful picture of Jesus' sheltering, protecting love. Jerusalem, a city of prophet murderers and stoners of God's servants; yet these are the very persons Jesus would gather under His own sheltering love. His enemies (Rom. 5. 8) He would shelter. The wings of the mother hen are a safe and happy, cosy shelter for the chick; the wings of God's loving-kindness are the same for men (Ps. 36. 7).

The desolate House. To-day the house of these men is desolate because they rejected Jesus. This is a picture of the desolation and ruin that is the portion of all who reject the eternal safety and comfort

that Jesus gives to all who come to Him. "A man shall be as a hiding-place." Such a Man is Jesus—"Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let I hide myself in Thee." Happy they who know His covering power.

27th March.—**JESUS, THE REST OF THE WEARY** (Matt 11. 20-30). *Memory verse, 28*—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Three attitudes of Jesus—Rebuking the impenitent—Rejoicing over the babes—Inviting the weary—Rest *from* and rest *in* Jesus.

OUR lesson to-day culminates in the blessed invitation and promise contained in the memory verse. In three attitudes we see the Lord Jesus (1) Toward the unbelieving and impenitent; (2) Toward the Father, and the babes given by Him; (3) Toward the burdened and weary sons of men.

Woe unto thee, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, all highly favoured with manifestations of Christ's power, yet unmoved. What did these lack? Repentance (Luke 13. 5); such a view of themselves as seen in God's presence, as would lead them to see their need and take the remedy. The light had shined amongst them, and they hated Him and rejected Him (John 3. 19, 20).

Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom—Places conspicuous for sin and its judgment—not so guilty, because not so privileged (Luke 12. 48).

I thank Thee, O Father. Though all around was much to call forth the warning and rebuking words of Jesus, there was also that which filled His heart with joy and His lips with thanks. It was the little company of babe-like ones—humble (Matt. 18. 3, 4), tractable (Ps. 131. 2), dependent (Matt. 7. 11).

Revealed and hid. The word revealed indicates an action in one outside of the subject. Revelation is from God, and of God (Matt. 16. 17); it is not a discovery, scientific or intellectual. God finds a mind ready and receptive, and shines into it (2 Cor. 4. 6). So, of necessity, the absence of that state means a hid Gospel, a hidden Christ, a hidden glory (1 Cor. 2. 7-9).

What is hid? Verse 27 tells us: the Father and the Son. That is what is revealed: the wondrous Son of God, as well as the unknown Father of the Son (John 14. 7; 1. 14).

Come unto Me. The world-wide invitation of Jesus, as He turns to the great mass of weary children of men. Weariness is a part of the curse of sin. Toil and sweat were Adam's lot as a sinner; weariness is the result of toil; burden is a fit picture of sin's weight. He said: "Come; I will GIVE YOU rest." Rest He only can give, because He has done the work—He took the toil, He bore the burden, and now He gives rest. The rest is perfect, because the work is perfectly done (John 17. 4). Notice the word ALL and ME—all to Christ means rest to all—a large provision and promise to a large number: "Whosoever"

A second Rest. The learner FINDS rest. This does not affect, alter, or diminish the first rest. It is in addition to the first, and is the rest of satisfaction—not rest *from a burden*, but rest in a state of soul quiet known only to the meek and lowly heart. How sad the fate of the wicked who cannot enter into rest neither here nor in eternity (Heb. 4).

3rd April.—**THE WILY MEN OF GIBEON** (Josh. 9. 3-21).
Memory verse, 1 John 4. 1—"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Men in earnest—The humble and lowly way—Off their guard—The covenant—Man's way and man's word—God's way and His word—The everlasting covenant

QUERY interesting and suggestive is the story of the way of the men of Gibeon, and the clever way they took to preserve their lives, and it is a standing rebuke to unbelieving ones and a lesson to God's people to this day (1 Cor. 10. 11).

Observe the prudent forethought of those men. They had heard of God's power and judgment, and knew that the same would overtake them, so they set to work to plan an escape from it. No one offered them salvation; they sought it—sought it carefully, laboriously, wisely. This is a great contrast to things to-day; salvation is offered, pressed on men—a full, finished, free salvation, all ready for the taking (Rev. 22. 17).

Old sacks, old bottles, old shoes, old garments, old bread. This is true wisdom, and a picture of man at his *best* state. Just a rag-store! The prodigal came thus (Luke 15).

The Covenant. This they wanted, a pledge and assurance of safety; resting on the oath of men. How much better a covenant resting on God's word (Heb. 6. 16, 17), which may be enjoyed by all who believe in Jesus freely.

The men took and asked not. Verse 14 describes the failure of God's people in what they did and what they did not. What they *did not* led to what they *did*. Over and over again they had been warned about covenants of this sort (Exod. 23. 31-33; Deut. 7. 2; 20. 10-18). This should have made them pause. As Eve sinned by looking on what her eyes saw, so did they fall into the trap by the appearance of things, so they swore unto them.

At the end of three days it became plain that they had been over-reached, and the people would have made a worse mistake in breaking through their oath, but happily they were restrained, and the Gibeonites were spared and became useful in God's service (verse 27). Chapter 10 tells further that the Gibeonites were hated by their neighbours for their treaty with God's people, and how God's people went to their rescue and delivered them.

Turning to 2 Samuel 21. 1, we see the children of these same men, 400 years after this, very carefully protected by God. Saul, in his ignorant zeal, had broken the covenant and slain the men of Gibeon, but God would not have that, and taught Israel that He was a covenant-keeping God, and that He would have His people the same.

Does not this strange incident, then, afford valuable lessons? 1, The wisdom of seeking salvation when it may be so easily found; 2, That the people of God are shamed by the wisdom of men's sons (Luke 16. 8); 3, That God's spoken Word cannot be broken, and, as His covenant is with His Son on behalf of all believers, sealed in the blood of the Cross, eternal life is the portion of all who are Christ's.

CLIMBING THE LADDER!

THOUGHTS ON GENESIS 28. 12, 13, AND PHILIPPIANS 3. 13, 14.

REDEEMING Grace, having rescued us from the lowest hell, sets us down at the foot of a ladder whose top reacheth to Heaven. It is our birthright, as sons and heirs of God, to be where Christ is. The same who for us and for our salvation descended, is the same who ascended up far above all heavens. In that descent He became united to us; and just as He was judged and condemned and crucified for our sin, so does God count us, whose sins He bore, justified and risen in our Substitute. By Divine Grace, and also by Divine Righteousness, we are there in Him. God hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places *in* Christ Jesus. All this is, judicially, accomplished fact, even as He, in whom was no sin, was made sin for us. But it is a fact *reckoned* to us by God; and it is a fact which we also are to "reckon" as true of ourselves (Rom. 6. 9-11). God's thought about it is that in which all truth and reality centre. The Holy One of God was never more entirely holy than when for us He hung on the Cross of Calvary. God made Him, in His infinite purity, to be sin for us.

How far was this Divine reckoning counted fact? Just so far that every wave and billow of God's fiery wrath against sin rolled over His spotless soul, and that His feet sank in deep mire where there was no standing—the mire of the sinner's guilt (Psa. 69. 2). Was He not holy still? Yes; but He loved the Church and gave Himself for it. He took us as we were, debt and all, and when God came to reckon He had to count the sin to Christ. Then He restored that which He took not away (Psa. 69. 4). We say He paid our debt in blood, but we can never know the anguish of that hour when for us he forfeited the lovingkindness that is "better than life" (Psa 63. 3)—when the "power of darkness" came in like a flood on Him who in all the past eternity had known only the bosom of the Father. Faith fails to grasp the great "mystery of godliness," and can only bow her head and worship.

But a ladder suggests climbing, and God wants us to climb. "Reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press on toward the goal, unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3. 14., R.V.). In Christ, at the ladder's top, seated where He is; in actual experience down here in frail earthen vessels, mortifying our members which are upon the earth; moment by moment living out God's reckoning—

counting God's way our death unto sin and our new and risen life unto righteousness; going on in the strength of Christ's victory over every enemy—within and without.

How shall we do it? Not by dwelling on what Christ has done for us, however precious; not on His Spirit's work in us, real and blessed though it be, but by entire heart occupation with CHRIST HIMSELF, in all His infinite grace and glory; following on to a fuller knowledge of His unsearchable riches, even as He is known to God as the "chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely;" letting Christ rule and reign, and take full possession; bringing into captivity every thought to His obedience.

Let us ever remember that Christ is the centre of God's thoughts: not our blessing, but His beloved Son; and if we would have fellowship with God, it must be about Him in whom is all His delight; then the blessing is sure to follow. The Holy Ghost was given to testify OF HIM—not first to make us holy, but first to lift up Christ, that we might fix the gaze of our souls on Him, and reflect His image without an inward glance, for as we look within the work of "reflecting" must cease. We, beholding not the grace imparted to us by Him but "the glory of *the Lord*," are changed into the same image, even as by the Lord the Spirit. It is given to us to gaze; the rest is the work of the Holy Ghost. We shall not need to gauge it or make it our theme it is the divinely-promised consequence of obedience.

A. E. W.

THE REST OF HEAVEN.

THIS heaven will be one scene of God's rest or Sabbath: and the saints, in their measure tasting the same refreshing, will dwell in that rest, in bodies fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. They shall be like Him in His glory, seeing Him as He is. They shall shine "as the sun" in the kingdom of their Father. In mind, body, and estate they will be conformed to the Beloved. And there will be the seeing or understanding of all the precious revelation of God, not as through a glass, darkly; but as face to face, knowing even as we are known. And there will be the white stone; the hidden manna; the morning star; the white robes, wherein to stand before the throne of God; the white garments wherein to walk with the Lord through the dominions; and the white raiment, wherein to sit on their own thrones (Rev. 2. 3). All these will be ours then.

J. G. BELLET.

WORLD-BORDERING;

OR, LESSONS FROM THE HISTORY OF LOT.

AFTER Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, his downward course was rapid; for the next thing we read of him is that he "dwelt in Sodom" (Gen. 14. 12). It is dangerous work trying how near you can go to the edge of a precipice without falling over. Can a man take fire into his bosom and his clothes not be burned? They who pitch their tent toward Sodom need not doubt that they shall, ere long, find themselves within its walls. Sooner or later the heart will reach the object of its search. The secret hankering after forbidden fruit, if it be not at once crushed in the presence of God, will rise into a hunger that shall take no denial. It is useless for us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," if we are deliberately walking into temptation. We cannot exercise *faith* in God, if we are at the same time committing the sin of *presumption*; for it is presumption to tamper with that which God has forbidden, and yet expect that He will keep us from falling.

But Lot had evidently persuaded himself that he was perfectly justified in being in Sodom. Whatever qualms may have troubled him at first, were soon got rid of; and he settles down in that city of wickedness. Strange to say, the first thing we read of Lot in Sodom is that he was taken captive by a hostile company that swept down on the cities of the plain, and overthrew the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot had identified himself with the ungodly, and now he had to share with them the humiliation of defeat and captivity. No doubt he thought he was doing a good stroke of policy when he settled in Sodom. But he was poor enough now; for we read that the enemy "took Lot, Abraham's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed." We are told by some that they associate with people of the world in order to *influence* them in the right direction. We are also told that those who remain separate from the world *lose* their influence with men. But such is not the teaching of Scripture, nor is it the lesson taught us in Lot's history. Something very different is brought before us here. Lot was powerless to help the Sodomites in the hour of danger. He was unable even to deliver himself. Deliverance came, it is true; but he was indebted for that deliverance to Abraham—the man who met with God in Mamre's plain. The man with the "influence" was not the man who dwelt in Sodom, but the man who was *outside* of Sodom (See Gen. 14. 14-16). This was all made manifest in the hour of trial. Abraham was in God's path,

and *that* is ever the path of power, however "uninfluential" it may seem to the carnal eye. The man of faith in God was the man of separation from the ungodly, and the only man who had power to deliver when the evil day had come.

This dear-bought experience might have taught Lot that Sodom was no place for him. Yet he seems to have gone right back to his former associations. Signs and tokens—yea, the plainest "writing on the wall"—appear to have no effect in turning some men from a self-chosen path. Sickness, trouble, calamity, speak in vain. They hear not God's voice; for as there are none so "blind" as those who do not want to see, so there are none so deaf as those who do not want to hear. Lot plunged again into Sodom, little thinking that God would speak once more, and this time with a voice that would compel the wanderer to listen.

"And there came two angels (angels of judgment truly) to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom" (Gen. 19. 1). No doubt he was "a prosperous man" according to the world's reckoning. He had "risen," as people say. His was the place of honour. He sat in the gate of Sodom. It is clear that he had become a mighty man in the city, and he would be flattering himself that his cup of earthly bliss was about as full as it could well be—when lo! the angels of judgment reached the gate of Sodom. What a rude awakening was Lot's! It was only after great entreaty that he persuaded the heavenly messengers to accept his hospitality. And when the crowd of Sodomites surged about the door, Lot had an opportunity of showing what power he had acquired over these men by his long sojourn among them. He bore testimony, in a kind of way, as to their wickedness. But alas for his "influence"! He may have been an influential and an honoured man, so long as he flattered the Sodomites, and *never said a word about their wickedness*. But the moment he bore testimony that their deeds were evil, they turned on him.

"Stand back," they cried. "This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge; now will we deal worse with thee than with them. And they pressed sore on the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door." But for the angelic hand put forth for his deliverance, it would have gone hard with Lot.

His testimony to his sons-in-law was also destitute of power. He warned them of the impending doom of Sodom. "But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law." A

powerless, fruitless testimony was his—a testimony utterly rejected by those among whom he had long passed as a great man. And the angelic hand that drew him into the house from the fury of the Sodomites, had to draw him out of Sodom, from the vengeance of heaven—saved, so as by fire! Such was the character of Lot's influence, through being mixed up with the ungodly. Yet there was one man whose influence—whose power *with God*—was so great that his intercession for Sodom almost proved the deliverance of that city. Who was that man? and where do we find the record of his intercession? He was Abraham—still outside of Sodom—the man of the tent and the altar. If any man on earth was near to averting the destruction of Sodom, that man was Abraham. You will find all about it in the eighteenth chapter of Genesis. The “moral” is not far to seek. Those who have power with God are those who have power with men. The men of influence are those who find it—not in association with the world, but in separation to God.

W. S.

BELIEVERS.

THE SCRIPTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR NAMES.—II.

FROM the frequency with which the name is used in current speech, it would be inferred that it is to be found very often in the Scriptures. The command to believe, the promise to whosoever believeth, the records of individuals who had believed, are to be found all through the Bible; but the term “believers” occurs but twice in the Authorised Version. The Greek word so translated occurs, however, in many places, conveying in every case the thought of faith and trust. The only two places in which the name believers is found are Acts 5. 14 and 1 Tim. 4. 12.

“Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not” (John 6. 44). “With the heart men believeth unto righteousness” (Rom. 10. 10). From these two texts we learn believing is a thing of the heart, and as the heart is known to God alone, it follows that He only knows who are believers.

We can never say assuredly who are or who are not believers. All believers are “added to the Lord” (Acts 5. 14). “The Lord knoweth them that are His” (2 Tim. 2. 19), draws the line between those known to Him who with the heart believe

unto righteousness, and those confessing with the mouth; which may or may not indicate the true state of the heart.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 3, supplies an object lesson. God had a house of old composed of the tribes of Israel. In this house, Moses was faithful as a servant in preaching the law. The law takes to do with acts, and all men's acts were transgression of and disobedience to God's law.

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," in contrast with the law which came by Moses. Grace takes to do not only with what a man does, but with what a man is. The law had demonstrated that man was ruined and lost. The grace that came by Jesus Christ brought "a great salvation," offered in and by the gospel to the obedience of faith" (Rom 16. 26). Another house is thus formed, called "the household of God" (Eph. 2. 19) and "the household of faith" (Gal. 6. 10), this house being composed not of men in the flesh, but of all believers in Christ. The Hebrews addressed in this epistle had made profession of faith in Christ Jesus, and it is as if the Apostle had said, You will make manifest you belong to this new house; that is, that you really and truly believe in Christ Jesus, "If you hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end;" but if you give up your profession, taking your place again amongst your brethren according to the flesh, over whose heart is the veil of unbelief, it will make plain you never with your heart believed on Christ, but are still in the house where Moses served, ministering as a preacher of law's condemnation and death. Then follows in this chapter the solemn warnings against the evil heart of unbelief, and the reminder of how their fathers in the wilderness, although having seen God's mighty works for them, yet did provoke Him, because with the greater number their hearts were not right within them, and so they knew not the ways of God. With Moses it was different; he saw "to the end of that which is abolished" (2 Cor. 3. 13), and whilst preaching law was also a prophet of the grace to come, of which grace he had an unfolding, leading him to worship as a true-hearted believer (Exod. 34. 5-8). Many in Israel were like Moses. Many others hardened their hearts, and so perished.

The attempt to prove from Hebrews 3. 6 that some believers form part of the house to-day, whilst others are outside, is to ignore the plain teaching of the whole section, which is one of the many contrasts with which this Epistle abounds, drawn between God's house composed of men in the flesh, many of

whom never with their hearts believed in God, and the house to day, over which is set the Son, and composed of all those who with their hearts have believed, and so known and spoken of by the Lord as "the household of faith." P. H.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

(From the German of Tersteegen, 1697-1769, by M. I. R.)

MY soul is lost in contemplation,
And feels the power of love divine ;
How rich in Christ its revelation !
I bow in worship, Lord, I'm Thine !
Forgetting self and all its pride,
I'd calmly in that love abide.
How bright the glow of Thine affection ;
Why dost Thou after *me* inquire ?
O wondrous love ! Thy deep perfection
Draws out my heart in fond desire ;
Beloved before the worlds began,
I'm lost in love no thought could span.
I feel Thou art my homè for ever—
Thou meetest all my cravings now—
Thy power prevails each link to sever
With creature pleasures here below ;
My resting-place in Thee alone,
I gladly follow, by Thee drawn.
All that I have—I set no measure—
I yield to Thee, my only good ;
My heart is now with Thee, my treasure,
And Heaven is mine, secured by blood,
O Saviour from the pit of hell,
What Thou to me no tongue can tell.
O Jesus, on my heart's affections
Imprint Thy name with Love's own power.
So that Thy love's profound perfections
May be my study hour by hour,
And thus my life, fashioned anew.
The life of Jesus only shew.
Name before which my soul is bending,
Name which *the Father's* heart unfolds,
Fountain of love, peace, life unending,
The sinner eyeing Thee beholds ;
My God ! if others only knew,
Their hearts, like mine, would love Thee too.

SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY OF THE NATIONS

CONNECTED WITH ISRAEL TO THE END OF THE AGE.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

DANIEL II.

FROM the visions of Daniel it would appear that that which takes place amongst the nations of the earth, such as the rise and fall of empires, are matters of interest to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, and are foreknown by them.

The various particulars given in this chapter for the most part have been subjects of history. For example, verses 3, 4 refer to Alexander the Great, who died suddenly, and whose kingdom was divided amongst his four generals. Verse 5. The king of the south, Ptolomy, king of Egypt. Verse 6. The king of the north was the king of Assyria. But into the details of those times we cannot now enter; other writers have gone into them most accurately. Much concerning them will be found in the books of the Maccabees. In the actions of Antiochus Epiphanes, who polluted the sanctuary, we have a striking foreshadowing of the last days; and the lawless one who becomes antichrist. It appears that much, especially towards the close, will have a second fulfilment at the end of the age in connection with the lawless one, who will set up the abomination of desolation in the holy place, as foretold by our Lord (Matt. 24. 15), and exalt himself above all that is called God or is worshipped, according to 2 Thess. 2, while the dragon, which is the old serpent and Satan, will give him his throne and his authority (Rev. 13), and whose final overthrow is the subject of prophetic vision in Rev. 19.

BREATHINGS OF HIS LOVE.

OH, how little were it for that infinite Fountain of love and joy, to fill as many thousand thousands of little vessels, the like of me, as there are minutes of hours since the creation by God! I find it true, that a poor soul finding half a smell of the Godhead of Christ, hath desires paining and wounding the poor heart so, with longings to be up at Him, that make it sometimes think, were it not better never to have felt anything of Christ, than thus to be dying twenty deaths, under these felt wounds; for the want of His cheering smile. Oh, where is He? Oh, Fairest, where dwellest Thou? Oh, never-enough admired Godhead, how can clay win up to Thee? How can creatures of yesterday be able to enjoy Thee? Oh, what pain

is it, that time and sin should be so many thousand miles betwixt a loved and longed-for Lord and a dwining and love-sick soul, who would rather than all the world have lodging with Christ! Oh, let this bit of love of ours, this inch and half-span length of heavenly longing, meet with Thy infinite love! Oh, if the little I have were swallowed up with the infiniteness of the excellency which is in Christ! Oh, that we little ones were in at the great Lord Jesus! Our wants should soon be swallowed up with His fulness. S. RUTHERFORD.

“OH, THIS IS HEAVENLY JOY.”

OUR fellowship is with the Father, and fellowship with the Father is the soul's highest exercise. It is that most excellent and spiritual occupation wherein the believer loses himself in wonder, love, and praise, as the Father unfolds to the heart of His child (as he is able to bear it) all the purposes of His Love, all the treasures of His Wisdom, the possibilities of His Power, and the exceeding riches of His Grace in Christ.

“Here it is I find my best
Seasons of delight and rest,
With His Love my heart o'erflowing,
And His peace, which passeth knowing—
This, ah this, is heavenly joy,
Which doth now my soul employ.”

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING

PLAN OF LESSONS FOR 1898.—A new plan dealing with the entrance into the “Goodly Land” for Old Testament, and Divine Titles of our Lord for New Testament, is issued in a threefold link: (1) *A Gospel Scheme*, with references, contrasts, &c., 1/ per 100. (2) *Boys and Girls Almanac* and Scripture searching book, with subjects, memory texts, daily portion, prizes, &c., ½d.; 6d. per doz.; 3/6 per 100. (3) *The Pathway*, with weekly subject, memory text in full, and original and evangelistic notes on the subjects. Monthly, ½d.; 1/ per year. One each post free as sample to any teacher.

10th April.—**THE VICTORY OVER THE FIVE KINGS** (Josh. 10. 1-27). *Memory verse, Rom. 16. 20*—“And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.”

A powerful confederacy—Opposing God and His people—Power to destroy—Power to control in Heaven and on earth—Victory complete.

THE fate of Ai and submission of the men of Gibeon—who were looked upon as great men—caused fear and dread to fall on the inhabitants of Canaan. Adoni-zedec, king of Jerusalem, sought to form a combination of all the power of the country against

the inroad of the Israelites and against their allies, the Gibeonites; and now we see war brought to the very walls of Gibeon. So is it in spiritual matters still—the enemy is filled with fear and hatred on every advance of God's kingdom (1 Thess. 2. 14, 15), but our faithful God is ever at hand to deliver (1 Cor. 10. 13; Ps. 50. 15).

The cry of the Gibeonites was speedily heard and answered, the Lord encouraging Joshua and promising victory. Travelling all night, Joshua and his men arrived at Gibeon to find an easy victory, for the Lord overthrew the great confederacy and helped them greatly, using the weapons of nature's artillery against the enemy—great hailstones showering down upon the flying foe (Ps. 76. 7-9). Fearful the fate and great the overthrow of all who "know not God and obey not the Gospel" (2 Thess. 1. 8).

Sun and Moon obey. It was on this occasion that Joshua, seeing the necessity for a longer day to complete his work, sought the Lord to stay the sun and the moon in the heavens; which came to pass, and the sun "hasted not to go down about a whole day." Sun and moon are quite at God's command (Ps. 121. 6); they are His servants—He set them in order (Gen. 1. 16, 17), and has never given up their control. In Coloss. 1. 17 we are told that by Jesus, God's Son, all things consist or hang together. We are also reminded that on the day on which Jesus died on the Cross, the sun was in sympathy with the suffering One—refusing to shine when its Maker hung there (Luke 23. 45).

The complete victory. The five kings brought out of the cave and abased before the people—the captains placing their feet on the royal necks. What a sight! a picture of what yet will take place (see memory text, Rom. 16. 2p)—when the Captain of our Salvation returns, leading the armies of the redeemed into possession and rest, every enemy shall be subdued under Him and His.

17th April.—**CALEB'S PORTION** (Joshua 14. 1-15). *Memory verse,* 2 Cor. 5. 10—"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

The faithful spy—Forty years after—A faithful Promiser—Faith's claim—Faith's endurance—Faith's courage—Faith's confidence—Faith's prize.

THE life-story of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, is beautiful reading. We first meet with him in the narrative of the spying out of the land (Numb. 13). His words on that occasion were all courageous words of faith; but the unbelieving people harkened not, and would have stoned Caleb and Joshua (see John 11. 31).

Forty years after this, in the plains of Moab (Numb. 26. 65) we find just two men besides Moses alive, of all the multitude that left Egypt. Joshua and Caleb, and only these two, crossed Jordan and entered the Promised Land. What made the difference? Faith; all besides perished through unbelief (Heb. 4. 6).

The veteran in the land now appears, preserved hale and hearty, eighty-five years of age, unto the inheritance promised of God so many years before. Faith claims that promise, and expects the reward (see 1 Peter 1. 5).

The deeds of faith are never forgotten of God (Heb. 6. 10), and **the words of promise** should never be forgotten by us (Heb. 6. 12).

But not altogether in the past does Caleb's faith exist—it had not diminished but had grown, as faith should (2 Thess. 1. 3), and at 85 years of age Caleb is a stalwart believer, still ready to accept the most difficult portion as his, in the confidence that God could and would make it his.

Caleb's choice was Hebron (*i.e.*, "communion"); though "walled up" and occupied by mighty foes, nothing less would satisfy the man of faith. There Abraham had dwelt after separating from Lot; there was the burying-place of Sarah, Abraham's wife; there Caleb wanted to live and die. That was his choice, as it was Mary's (Luke 10. 42), and it was her portion.

Joshua blessed and gave. God's representative had joy in blessing God's faithful one—the same kind of joy belongs to Jesus (Matt. 25. 34). What satisfaction to the once Man of Sorrows to divide the spoil with the strong (Isa. 53. 12); those whom He justified and made strong in their weakness (2 Cor. 12. 9).

Happy Caleb, and happy all they who, like him, "believe God"—believe in Him who gave His Son to redeem, and believe in the Son who died and rose again, whose faith and hope is in God, and who follow the faith (Heb. 10. 7) of those who have gone before, looking off unto Jesus, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

24th April.—**THE CITIES OF REFUGE** (Josh. 20. 1-9). *Memory verse, Psalm 46. 1, 2*—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the seas."

Merciful provision—All of God for man's need—Within reach—Protected and provided for—Released through death.

FOR all erring and helpless people God has ever made provision in His love and pity, in justice remembering mercy. His law was strict and just—the manslayer should die (Num. 35. 16-21), and no provision was made for intended and deliberate murder; yet, to shelter the life of the poor man who was unfortunately the cause of his neighbour's death, God made provision in six cities of refuge.

It was God's plan. In the plains of Moab, before the people crossed Jordan, the plan was prepared by the Lord and proclaimed by Moses (Num. 35). Part of the Levites' portion was to be devoted to this purpose—the priestly tribe giving expression to the mercy of the God they served (Mal. 2. 7).

In our lesson we see Joshua reminded of this by the Lord, and the people instructed to act out the mind of God in the matter. It is good to see that God was the author of this; that it was not Moses, Joshua, or the people, but God knew the need and met it (Eph. 2. 4).

Easy of access were these six cities of refuge—three on each side of Jordan—so that the hunted refugee might reach the shelter quickly (Gen. 19. 17). Though close on his heels the avenger pressed, the city was near, with open gate, entering which he was safe. Salvation is nearer every flying sinner now (Rom. 10. 7-9).

Protection was given in the city of refuge and a place. The elders of the city took the manslayer in hand and appointed his portion. Reminds us of Luke 10—"Take care of him."

The death of the High Priest released the manslayer. What a wonderful idea! The man had an interest in the death of the High Priest, for his release and restoration to his former place depended on the priest's death. Nothing else could free him. It is an evident truth that the death of our Lord Jesus Christ is the basis of our release from banishment and all law claims (Gal. 4. 4), and restoration to perfect liberty.

Chief lesson: There is a Refuge for sinners now; there is no safety outside; there is perfect security in the God-appointed place.

1st May.—**JESUS, THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER**
(John 7. 37-53). *Memory verse, John 4. 14*—"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The week of joyful memories and happy promise—Water from Salvation's well—The shadow and the substance—For all—The water in and the water flowing out.

THE Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem is the time and place of our lesson. The people had been gathered together, and for seven days kept the feast, dwelling in booths—memorial of the time when God brought them out of Egypt and made them a pilgrim band (Lev. 23, 42, 43).

It was a time of great joy and thanksgiving. The Atonement Day was just past, the harvest completed, and the people were at leisure to celebrate the past, present, and promised mercy and grace of their God. Yet it was only a shadow picture of a greater truth meant to reach the soul and lead to better things (Heb. 10. 1).

It was the custom on the seven days of the Feast to draw water from the pool of Siloam and carry it into the Temple with singing and using Isaiah's words: "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. 12. 3). It was this custom and these expressions which our Lord availed Himself of to call the attention of the people to the substance and import of their own feast.

If any man thirst. Of all that crowd, if any saw deeper than the external, and longed for blessing true—indicated by it, the voice of Jesus said, **Come to Me.** The feast and the waters pass away, but Christ remains ever ready to satisfy (John 6. 35). See also the invitations of Isa. 55. 1, 2, and Rev. 21. 6.

He that believeth on Me. Coming to Jesus and drinking satisfies the coming one; believing (that is a continuous action) on Him makes the same one a channel of blessing to others. **Out of his belly shall flow** rivers of living water—others shall partake of the blessing (Gen. 12. 2). Many shall see it (Ps. 40. 3).

This spake He of the Spirit. We are thus taught that Jesus is the Source of living blessing; that the Spirit is the Agent active of blessing in us, and the Power for blessing all around. *Believing* is the necessary state of soul for such a happy and fruitful experience.

We must ever remember, too, that the Source of supply is the **smitten Rock** (Exod. 17. 6). No living water could ever have come to any had Jesus not died; no Holy Spirit come down unless Jesus had been glorified.

ALL OF GRACE.

Address by the late Mr. GEORGE MULLER, of Bristol.

Read ROMANS 5. 1-9.

FOR the sake of our younger brethren and sisters, I will just say once more what is to be understood by "*being justified by faith*" (verse 1). On the part of God, irrespective of any of our doings, we are reckoned righteous through the instrumentality of faith. In the case of Abraham we see how this was brought about. He had no child—not a single child; he had not any prospect of having a single child, yet God said to him that his descendants should be as numerous as the stars of heaven. He called him out (Gen. 15. 5), and asked if he could count them, and told him this, though he had not a single child. He believed God would do as He had said; that He had the power, that He had the love, to do it, and this was reckoned to him for righteousness. Ah! he was an excellent man, but he had his defects, just like us; but God reckoned this to him as if he had been perfect. So we, if we depend on Christ for the salvation of our souls, shall reach Heaven as surely as Christ is there, for the only thing that shuts us out is sin; and if we put our whole trust in Christ we are reckoned righteous, we are reckoned perfect in God's sight. This it is that makes the Cross of Christ so dear to us. "We have peace with God." We no longer dread God; we no longer are in fear of God, on account of sin being found in us. We can look our Heavenly Father in the face, because we have peace with Him. Oh, what a happy condition this is to be in! Though we are sinners, we are saints. Though we are sinners, we are reckoned as if we had never done anything amiss; and this enables us to look God in the face through our Lord Jesus Christ. To Him we are indebted for all.

Verse 2. "*Grace, wherein we stand.*" Not works. We have to hold fast that this is our position. The churches in Galatia lost spiritual peace and joy because they stood in works, not grace. False teachers came in and taught them that if they were not circumcised they could not be saved. We must keep this always in mind: In grace we began to have peace, and in grace we continue in peace, looking entirely away from ourselves or anything we can do. It is Christ! Christ! Christ! from beginning to end in the matter of our salvation. The result of this is not only that we have peace, but rejoicing. We deserve punishment, but we shall not be punished, but be

given to drink of the river of God's pleasures (Ps. 36. 8). Eternal joy will be our portion.

Now, before going further, let us ask ourselves—"Do I habitually think of myself as justified? I am a miserable sinner, but God does not see me as one, but as a justified one. I see spots in myself, but *He* does not, but sees me in Christ." So much of our habitual peace and joy depends on this. . . . I press on my young brethren and sisters habitually to lay hold on this—That they are righteous in God's sight by believing Him, even as Abraham did, and to see that we never lose this truth. . . .

Verses 5-9. Oh, what precious, holy links we have in this chain! "*Without strength.*" Having no spiritual life, living in sin, ungodly. Let us hold this point fast. Christ died for such; therefore there is hope for sinners—hope for the most hardened sinners. There is no limiting here—"the ungodly." History gives a few instances of those who laid down their lives for others, but in the way of friendship. In this case there was no friendship between us and Christ; at that period we did many things contrary to God's will. Christ did not die for good people, but for sinners. If we want to know in what true love consists, here we have it.

Verse 10. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is the Living One and the Interceding One, as our Great High Priest, constantly pleading our cause.

Verse 11. This is the climax of the whole. Not only salvation, not only present peace, but "*joy in God!*" The One whom we feared, the One from whom we shrunk back, as did Adam and Eve, it is now pleasant to be with Him, to commune with Him, to be in His company; and this is brought about more and more by dwelling on what He has done, is doing now, and will do for us when He comes to take us to Himself. A most precious portion this!



TRUST.

*O grant me, Lord, a heart like Thine,
To trust beneath the wings
Of God the Father's Love, and see
Unseen, eternal things.*

R. C. CHAPMAN.

CHRISTIANS.

THE SCRIPTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR NAMES.—II.

THE circumstances under which this name first appears on the sacred page call for special attention. In Jerusalem and over Judea had the Gospel been preached. Samaria had also been reached through the ministry of Philip the evangelist. The word of salvation had been carried to the Gentiles, the household of Cornelius having received the Holy Spirit through the special mission of the Apostle Peter. In addition, an entirely new departure had taken place. Those who were scattered from Jerusalem by the persecution that arose subsequent to the stoning of Stephen had gone everywhere preaching the Word (Acts 8. 4). Some of these preachers had come as far as to Antioch, and as the result of their ministrations numbers of Gentiles as well as Jews professed faith in Christ, because to both Jew and Gentile was the Word fully preached, Led of the Holy Spirit, the Church at Antioch was thus formed. Tidings of this great work having reached the ears of the Church at Jerusalem, Barnabas was sent forth to investigate the matter, who, when he had come, and saw the grace of God so manifest in its working and results, rejoiced and was exceeding glad, exhorting them "with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord." Realising the importance of this work, and possibly distrustful of his own ability to give all the help needed, he went to Tarsus to find Saul, bringing him down to Antioch, where they together laboured for a long time.

It was in these circumstances and in this place the disciples were for the first time called Christians. It has been advanced that this was a nickname or term of reproach called upon the followers of the Lord by the unbelievers, but an examination of the words "were called" dispels this idea, and shows clearly that "Christians" was a name given by God Himself. The Greek word "*kreematizo*" occurs nine times in the New Testament, and as the point is one of considerable importance, an examination of its use will be helpful.

Matt. 2. 12—*Being warned of God in a dream.*

„ 2. 22—*Being warned of God in a dream.*

Luke 2. 26—*It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost.*

Acts 10. 22—*Was warned from God by a holy angel.*

Rom. 7. 3—*She shall be called an adulteress.*

Heb. 8. 5—*As Moses was admonished of God.*

„ 11. 7—*Noah being warned of God.*

„ 12. 25—*Who refused Him that spake on earth.*

Acts 11. 26—*The disciples were called Christians.*

From the foregoing, it is a word only used when God speaks,

and so the term Christians becomes in a very special manner the distinctive name of those composing the "new man"; (Eph. 2. 15). Here at Antioch is seen for the first time the Jew who was "nigh" and the Gentile who was "far off" (Eph. 2. 17) sitting side by side, with the middle wall of partition broken down (Eph. 2. 14), and with one mind and one mouth glorifying God, and both having access by one Spirit to the Father through Christ (Eph. 2. 18). Upon those who were no longer looked at by God as Jew or Gentile, but alike men in Christ, God calls this new name, so expressive of the relationship of each to each, and of both to Him who was made for them "Lord and Christ."

In the order of time, the second occasion on which the word is used is found in 1 Peter 4. 16. This apostle was especially the messenger to the circumcision, and writing to those who were Jews by birth, he calls upon them to suffer if need be for and in the name of Christian. It shows how on the one hand all racial distinctions were abolished, and on the other hand how they ought to glorify God in this new name, joyfully bearing reproach because of it, and refusing to shelter themselves from trial by denying it, having this exceeding comfort and encouragement, that in so suffering "the Spirit of Glory and of God rested (*i.e.*, was refreshed) in them." Let us, then, on whom the ends of the age have come, take our stand before the world as Christians, declaring all other appellations as unworthy of our calling and our hope. What's in a name? has been asked. Not much if given by man, is a ready answer. A name given by men is as a rule originated in strife and division, and continues expressive of difference and division. Any name, and this included, given of God, unites and binds, and should be valued for the sake of Him who gave it and for what it expresses, and contended for as one of our most cherished possessions.

The third and last time the name is found, is in the lips of King Agrippa (Acts 26. 28), when he said to the Apostle Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Here we learn that in a little over twenty years from the time it was first given of God, it had become the common name by which the early disciples were known amongst men.

Gathering together what we have thus cursorily gleaned, it would appear that this name, amongst the many called by God upon His own, was meant to be that which should especially distinguish them from the world in this present evil age. P. H.

“LEAVE THE MIRACLE TO HIM.”

“**WHATSOEVER** He bids you, do it!”
Though you may not understand;

Yield to Him complete obedience,
Then you'll see His mighty hand.

“Fill the water-pots with water,”
Fill them to the very brim;
He will honour all your trusting—
Leave the miracle to Him.

Bind your Isaac to the altar,
Bind Him there with many a cord;
Oh, my brother, do not falter,
Can't you fully trust your Lord?
He it is who watches o'er you,
Though your path may oft be dim;
He will bring new life to Isaac —
Leave the miracle to Him.

Note that scene on plains of Dura;
See the Hebrew martyr band
Firmly standing for Jehovah,
Trusting in His hidden hand.
“He is mighty to deliver”
From the power of death so grim.
Fiery furnace cannot harm them—
Leave the miracle to Him.

Bring to Christ your loaves and fishes,
Though they be both few and small.
He will use the weakest vessels—
Give to Him your little all.
Do you ask how many thousands
Can be fed with food so slim?
Listen to the Master's blessing—
Leave the miracle to Him.

Oh, ye Christians, learn the lesson,
Are you struggling all the way?
Cease your trying, change to trusting,
Then you'll triumph every day.
“Whatsoe'er He bids you, do it,”
Fill the water-pots to brim;
But remember, 'tis His battle—
Leave the miracle to Him.

“Leave the Miracle to Him.”

Christian worker, looking forward
To the ripened harvest field,
Does the task seem great before you?
Think how rich will be the yield.
Bravely enter with your Master,
Though the prospect may seem dim;
Preach the Word with holy fervour—
Leave the miracle to Him.

T. H. A.

THE MIDIANITISH BONDAGE.

ISRAEL'S bondage under the Midianites was no mere accidental circumstance. There was nothing mysterious about it. The philosophers of that time might be at their wits' end to account for such an extraordinary condition of things. The chosen race were under the heel of an alien power. The people whom Jehovah had set apart as His own were under the dominion of a foreign yoke, and there seemed to be no deliverer. But Israel had not been brought to such a pass without a cause. It was no part of God's design that His people should be led captive by the surrounding nations, and be groaning under a yoke from which they were helpless to deliver themselves. But His power, exercised on behalf of His heritage, was dependent upon certain *conditions* to be observed by His people. If these conditions were observed there would be victory from all their enemies. If these conditions were not observed, Jehovah had distinctly declared that His people would be delivered to the power of their enemies. These conditions may be summed up as a seeking of the Lord with the whole heart (Deut. 30. 10), and a hearkening to the voice of the Lord to observe to do that which He had commanded (Deut. 28. 15). If these conditions were fulfilled on the part of His people, the Divine pledge was given, “The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways” (verse 7). But if Israel failed to observe the conditions on which deliverance depended, then there could be no deliverance. Yea, in that case, the solemn word had gone forth, “The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them” (verse 25). This lets us into the secret of the Midianitish bondage. Israel had thrown off Jehovah, and He had left them to their own devices.

They had sown the wind, and they were now reaping the whirlwind. If they imagined for a moment that the power of God would be exercised on their behalf while they had departed from Him, they were woefully mistaken. They had to learn that there was a direct connection between their departure from God and their bondage to Midian. These two things stood toward each other in the relation of cause and effect. No doubt they had tried to forget this ; but they were reminded of it by the prophet sent to them with the solemn message, "Ye have not obeyed My voice" (Jud. 6. 10).

WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING.

Now, this is no mere piece of history, which we may view as an interesting picture of Israel's condition in a bygone day. These things were written for *our* learning, on whom the ends of the world are come. In the Old Testament history there are lessons of eternal value for *us*. And it seems to us that there is one lesson which stands very prominently out in this narrative of the Midianitish bondage. It is the same lesson, applied in a spiritual sense, which Israel learned by dear-bought experience, namely, that we need not flatter ourselves that, because we are God's people, we may depart from Him and yet enjoy Divine deliverance from our enemies, whatever these enemies may be. Israel's enemies were the surrounding nations, and their bondage might be called a bondage of the person. But *our* enemies are of a different order. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. Our enemies are spiritual enemies. The bondage into which a child of God may be brought goes far deeper than an enslaving of the person, or a loss of what is called "political liberty." Israel in bondage under Midian may be taken as illustrative of a child of God in bondage to some besetment—some defilement—some forbidden thing—that "wars against the soul." An unequal conflict is waged against the "enemy," for such it is undoubtedly recognised to be. The case is considered peculiar, perhaps mysterious ; yet, if the matter were taken honestly into the presence of God, we doubt not that a *cause* would be discovered. And we doubt not that the root of the matter would be found to be this—secret departure from God. Once upon a time there was victory. When we were "all for Jesus"—when "all our being's ransomed powers" were laid on the altar—the enemies of our soul were resisted in the power of salvation's joy. We were led in triumph in Christ. We were more than conquerors through Him that loves us. But it may be that all this has

been changed through departure from the Living God. If we have ceased to seek Him with the whole heart—if we have ceased to hearken to the voice of His mouth, to walk in His ways, and rejoice in His counsel—we need not be surprised if we are not experiencing His power in delivering us from our spiritual enemies. Our God has not pledged Himself, even in this day of Grace, to deliver us from the enemies of the soul, if we elect to walk in the light of our own fire, and sanctify not Christ as Lord in the heart. There is deliverance with Him—a blessed and joyful deliverance—but it is in the path of His will and in the light of His presence. They who seek Him with the whole heart, and set Him above their “chiefest joy,” shall assuredly know that He is able to deliver *to the uttermost* all those whom He is bringing on their way to God. w. s.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING

PLAN OF LESSONS FOR 1898.—A new plan dealing with the entrance into the “Goodly Land” for Old Testament, and Divine Titles of our Lord for New Testament, is issued in a threefold link: (1) *A Gospel Scheme*, with references, contrasts, &c., 1/ per 100. (2) *Boys and Girls Almanac* and Scripture searching book, with subjects, memory texts, daily portion, prizes, &c., ½d. ; 6d. per doz. ; 3/6 per 100. (3) *The Pathway*, with weekly subject, memory text in full, and original and evangelistic notes on the subjects. Monthly, ½d. ; 1/ per year. One each post free as sample to any teacher.

8th May.—**JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE** (John 6. 35-51).
Memory verse, John 6. 35—“And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”

All needs included—Life-giving—Life sustaining—Soul satisfying—Resurrection—Eating an essential act—a personal act.

HUNGRY and destitute multitude had just been fed with loaves and fish, fed to satisfaction with “bread that perisheth,” bread that can neither give nor maintain the life of those who feed on it. The crowd followed after Jesus all unconscious of a deeper need than that enforced by their natural appetite—their soul’s deep need. The Lord, ever taking the natural to teach the spiritual, spoke of a bread of wondrous value—this is the theme of our Lesson.

The expression bread covers in Scripture all the food need of man (Gen. 3. 19; Matt. 6. 11); and Jesus is all-inclusive supply for spiritual life and supply.

Life-imparting Bread. The flesh and blood of Jesus in atoning sacrifice laid down for us and appropriated by a needy sinner—the word concerning it and Jesus’ resurrection conveyed by the Spirit—is life-giving (see verse 63). The metaphor “eating” is used to describe the “hearing” of faith (Isa. 55. 2).

Life-sustaining Bread. The fathers had bread from heaven

direct, yet they died—it could not keep them alive (verse 58): Those who have Jesus as their life-supply shall never die (Jno. 11. 26): their life is of the *nature* of that on which they live (Gal. 2. 20; Col. 3. 4).

Soul-satisfying Bread (verse 35). Never hunger, never know want. "He that cometh" (present tense), equal to ever abiding—ever drawing from Jesus soul nourishment (Jno. 15. 4, 5). Daily the Manna was found by the Israelites (Ex. 16. 21) for forty years—every man "according to his eating"—the giant and the babe alike knew no hunger.

Resurrection life (verse 54). "I will raise him up at the last day"—so truly one with Him who died on the Cross that, if we have received Him and His life by faith, His power will raise up the poor, dead one who has life in Him (Rom. 8. 11).

Further, it may be noticed that bread is obtained and made fit for man's use by crushing in the mill and passing through the fire—a shadow of the great sufferings of Christ before He could be for us suited to our need. Again, bread in our partaking of it has to be "broken," a familiar expression of Christ's own—"Broken for you!" (1 Cor. 11. 24).

Warning words should be noted (verse 53): "*Except ye eat.*" The only way to be saved is by "coming," "believing," and "taking." All are invited—none cast out—none go hungry away (verse 37). Each must eat for himself—no other can do this for him.

15th May—**JESUS, THE TRUE VINE** (John 15. 1-17). *Memory verse, John 15. 13*—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Fruit for God—The Real One—From and off the Father—The knife and the fire—Prayer—Love—Friendship.

FOR the glory of God were all things made (Rev. 4. 11); and man the chief work of creation, conspicuously so. How man has failed is evident—no fruit to God is his state (Luke 13. 7). Jesus, Son of God, Son of Man appears, and what man failed in Adam to do, Jesus Himself did, and enables those who live in Him to do—thus He appears in our lesson, the Head of all fruit-bearing.

I am the True Vine. True means more than true as distinct from false, but includes the idea of "real" as the filling up of all that is typical and superficial. So that all that a fruitful vine can signify naturally, the Lord Jesus is spiritually. Other vines had failed (Isa. 5. 7; Ezek. 17. 6; 19. 10); but Jesus completely glorified God on earth.

My Father is the Husbandman. For His Father's glory He lived and died and rose again; and He was always subject to Him and dependent on Him.

Every branch in Me. Two kinds of branches appear in this verse: fruitless and bearing fruit. One is removed; the other is pruned, or cleaned, as verse 3, so the hindrances to *more* fruit are taken away. 1 Cor. 11. 30 may refer to the first, and Heb. 12. 10 to the latter.

Abide in Me. The great essential to the life of vine branches is union and continuous drawing of sap from the vine. Cut the connection, and the branch is not only fruitless, but withers. Withered branches! Men gather such; they are worthless, and burn them.

Ye are branches. Not vines, but branches of one vine; members of one body. All branches equally dependant on the vine itself, and equally part of it (1 Cor. 12. 12; Eph. 5. 30).

Fruit . . . more fruit . . . much fruit. Some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold (Matt. 13. 8). In Christ, fruit; purged, *more* fruit; in Christ and Christ in the believer, *much* fruit.

Ye shall ask. Add to this, abiding in Christ is prayerful (verse 7) and successful in prayer. **My Father glorified.** A fruitful disciple is God's delight and justification of His wisdom and grace. "For His own name's sake" (Psalm 23.). **As the Father hath loved Me.** In the warm atmosphere of God's love, the Holy Spirit keeping the soul, fruit will ripen.

Greater love. Measure of God's love—gave His Son (John 3. 16; Rom. 8. 32); measure of Christ's love—gave His life (1 John 3. 16). It is impossible to learn any love above this. **Friends.** Not servants, much less enemies, though once that (Rom. 5. 10). Now converted to God; in the circle of His friends. What a title! But we must not forget the "if." That is our part.

Chosen. By Jesus Christ chosen; by Jesus accepted, for a purpose, to be fruitful and bring forth fruit that will be eternal (Rom. 7. 4).

22nd May.—**JESUS, THE TRUE NEIGHBOUR** (Luke 10. 30-42). *Memory verse, 2 Cor. 8. 9*—"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might, be rich."

In need of a Friend—A Friend in need—Unworthy and unfortunate, yet loved and helped—Everlasting friendship—More to follow.

THE duty of man to his neighbour stands in a high place in Scripture. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," includes all duties toward him. The lawyer's question, "*Who is my neighbour?*" brought out the beautiful portrait of a true neighbour which only Jesus Himself could answer to. He was NEIGHBOUR to—

An unworthy man. Going *down* from Jerusalem to Jericho—on a bad road—and downward—yet he was somebody's neighbour (Titus 3. 3. 4).

An unfortunate man. Robbers infest the downward path—cruel robbers—spoilers and murderers (John 10. 10). Wounded, left for dead, he needed a neighbour.

A distressed man. In the ditch (Ps. 40. 2): naked (Gen. 3. 7); as dead (Eph. 2. 1).

A destitute man. Robbed, everything gone—money, food, his beast; he was in absolute poverty (Luke 15. 14).

A neglected man. Priest and Levite passed him by; some ceremonial excuse they would have. "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4. 9).

The True Neighbour. One who came to show the real fulness of every duty and relationship, journeyed that way, in the time of man's need. **Came where he was.** To Sychar's well (John 4. 9); to Bethesda pool (John 5. 5); to dying thief (Luke 23. 42); to the death prison (Heb. 2. 14)—Jesus came to save:

A compassionate Neighbour. "Had compassion on him." Out of the great heart of God came salvation (Eph. 2. 4); Jesus' flowing tears reveal His pity (Luke 19 41).

A bounteous Neighbour. He had just what met the man's need—wine, oil, bandages for his wounds; a beast to carry him and

money to maintain him. A FULL salvation Jesus brings—all a dying sinner needs. First-aid and all the aid (2 Cor. 1. 10; Phil. 4. 19).

Take care of him. See John 21, where Jesus lays the care of the sheep on Peter. See also Acts 20. 28, and 1 Peter 5. 2.

When I come again. The Benefactor is coming again; the rescued man will meet his Rescuer; the care bestowed on the rescued one will be rewarded. Surely the man would be expecting his Good Neighbour and be ready to welcome Him. The lesson is plain.

29th May—**JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD** (John 10. 1-18).
Memory verse, John 10. 11—"I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

The false and the true—The lowly path and the lowly one—The door of the sheep—Salvation and pasture—Life through death—Eternal life—Assurance.

THIS parable of the Good Shepherd was spoken to the Pharisee persecutors of the blind man of the previous chapter, and is a searching exposition of the qualities necessary in true shepherding—qualities only found in the True Shepherd Himself.

Nothing condemns the false like the true; and this parable is largely a showing out of His lovely character as a Good and True Shepherd.

Others had come "**climbing up**" (verse 1)—Jesus came **down** to the door, and entered that way, as the lowly man. He went into the fold (of Jews) to "call" and "lead" them out after Himself.

Notice, "other sheep," of verse 16, "not of this (Jewish) fold." He has a "voice" for them, they hear His voice, there is "one flock," "one Shepherd" (Eph. 2. 16).

"I am the Door," that is, He is to the saved all that a door represents—the entrance, the way (John 14. 6)—by Him we enter salvation's fold, with liberty to find pasture in old and new fields.

Two features in the Good Shepherd are pronounced, viz.: He loves His sheep unto the death (verse 11), and knows them (verse 14).

"**Good Shepherd**" is doubly sweet. When He says "Good Shepherd" He points to the nail prints—these are the lasting proofs and measure of His goodness. Life laid down is *greatest* love (John 15. 13).

Abel was the first shepherd—he did not die for his sheep—we read of at least one offered in sacrifice for Abel (Gen. 4. 4). Jacob was a shepherd, and tells how he cared for his flock (Gen. 31. 39, 40). He was a good shepherd, but he was not THE Good Shepherd. David, too, was a good shepherd, and we are told in 1 Samuel 17. 34 how he fought for a lamb. But all these are far short of Jesus, who died—and such a death, "even the death of the cross!"—for His sheep.

Then in verse 28 He tells of what He **gives to them** "eternal life," as well as what He **does for them**, that is "**keeps**" them. He is in partnership with His Father in this keeping—a double wall of protection—a unity of purpose—"I and My Father are one." Indissoluble partnership. Joint interests in salvation's plans and execution. How safe the one who is Christ's!

Time will be too short to speak of Shepherd's care and experiences in Psalm 23. They may be referred to. How happy! saved by death of the Good Shepherd; cared for by the love of the Great Shepherd (Heb.

13. 20); and kept by the power of God waiting for the return of the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5. 4).

How sad to miss all that, and be found in eternity outside the door! Unsaved!! (Rev. 22. 15).

5th June.—**GIDEON AT HOME** (Judges 6. 11-24). *Memory verse, Luke 16. 10*—"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

In poverty, in danger, in low place, yet right with God—A man with a character—The All-seeing Eye—Link of love—The strength needed—work at home.

DARK days had fallen on poor Israel because of their sore back-sliding. The subject of our lesson shared with his people the misery of their oppression. His name was **Gideon** (one who "cuts down," a "feller"), and such a work is needed (2 Cor. 10. 5). He dwelt in **Ophrah** (the dust), the low place out of which God raises the poor (Ps. 113. 7): his family were poor, and he was least of them all (Jud. 6. 15); so God takes up the base and weak to do His work (1 Cor. 1. 27-28).

Gideon's standing. It is important to notice that Gideon was instructed in the use of sacrifice; his gift-offering of the kid and unleavened cakes shows that, and though living in evil days among idolatrous people he doubtless was right with God, and fit for His use (2 Tim. 2. 21). No one can serve God acceptably before he is saved (Heb. 11. 6).

Gideon's character. When the people enquired, "Who hath done this?" at once they said, "Gideon." There was one who had a character for doing things like that, one who paid no respect to their idols—he was known as a man of God (Dan. 6. 5).

Gideon's way. We see him in the wine-press busy threshing wheat when the Angel visited him. Wine-presses are often excavated in the earth for coolness—such a place would suit, not readily seen. Doing his duty all unseen, One Eye was on him lovingly and graciously approving (Ps. 33. 8; 94. 9; Ezra 5. 5).

Gideon's Visitor. Sitting under an oak was One who came down to see and help His erring people. Looking for an instrument He found one in Gideon, who all unconscious, with sad heart, toiled in secret, thus we learn that labour is not in vain "in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15. 58). His greeting, "the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour," seems unfit for the man and his secret work, yet the Lord seeth not as man seeth (1 Sam. 16. 7; Matt. 6. 4).

If the Lord be with us. Note the us, Gideon was not self-occupied—like Daniel, like Jesus, linked in love with his people (Dan. 9. 5. 6, 7; Matt. 3. 15).

Thy might . . . have not I sent thee.—What power is available to the believer—"I am with thee, Go!" said Jesus (Matt. 28. 19, 20). With Him, anything; without Him, nothing (Jno. 15. 10).

Gideon's work. First at home, to pull down the false and build up the true, to face the angry citizens and stand for his God—to get a new name in harmony with his work—overcoming in the earlier stage, in the city, by faith (Heb. 11. 32), just on same principles as in the wider area of the battle-field.

S O N S.

THE SCRIPTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR NAMES.—IV.

HERE are various Greek words translated children and sons in the Authorised Version of the Scriptures, a consideration of which will throw considerable light on the significance of this name.

Teknon denotes descent from, and, when used, directs our attention specially to whose we are. It is this word that is used in 1 John 3. 1, 2: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the *sons* of God, therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the *sons* of God."

"Ye must be born again" is like the flaming sword of Genesis 3. 24, "which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life." There is no getting over it, under it, or round about it. Only those who are born again (or from above) can see or enter the kingdom of God. There is a point of view from which this doctrine of the new birth can be viewed, wherein it is so plain a child can understand it. If to be born again is a necessity to eternal life, "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3, 14, 15). To be a possessor of eternal life is to be born again, so we read: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. . . . And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you" (1 Peter 1. 23-25). From another point of view, there are depths here which the wisest confess they have not yet fathomed, It is not more true that "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1. 35), than it is true in the case of every sinner passing from death unto life; there is the operation of the Holy Spirit by whom "of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first fruit of His creature" (James 1. 18); "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of One" (Heb. 2, 11). Hence both Christ and the saved sinner are of one begetting. "For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2. 11).

"Soon as my all I ventured
On the atoning blood,
The Holy Spirit entered,
And I was born of God."

This is absolutely true of every sinner the moment he believes in Jesus, and is always true, because "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Christ" (Phil. 1. 6). Confusion of thought and a troubled mind result from not carefully distinguishing between Scriptures which deal with the aspect of Sonship and those dealing with our calling as servants. Sonship is unconditional, resting on the sure promise and I will of our God, and all Scripture where we are considered in this relationship is absolute and without reservation. On the other hand, our calling and work as servants of the Lord are wholly conditional on faithfulness, diligence, and obedience, and it is possible for our service to be wholly or in great part disapproved of, whilst our relationship as sons resting alone on the perfect work of the perfect Saviour brings the many sons into glory. A man may have one of his sons in his business as his servant whom for good reasons he may discharge from his service, and yet on that same day dine with his son at his table, because he is his son, and the son goeth no more out.

Brephos is a word when used that refers to the very beginnings of life. "The *babe* leaped in her womb" (Luke 1. 41); "Ye shall find the *babe* wrapped in swaddling clothes" (Luke 2. 12); "As new-born *babes*" (1 Peter 2. 2).

Neepios brings us a stage further. The thought here is still childhood, when the speech is imperfect and the individual under tutelage. "Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a *child*" (Gal. 4. 1). "Even so we, when we were *children*" (Gal. 4. 3). Here the Apostle is contrasting the by-past time, when the rudiments only were revealed, and but little comparatively was known or understood, with "the fulness of the time," when "God sent forth His Son," as a result of which there was clear knowledge and definite speech, by the Spirit of His Son in our hearts crying "Abba, Father."

Paidion carries us still further. Boyhood and youthful days are now reached, but where knowledge of good and evil is as yet small. This is pointedly brought out in one Scripture—1 Cor. 14. 20—the meaning of which is very obvious when the thought of extreme youth is imported into the word *children*. "Brethren, be not *children* in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye *children*, but in understanding be men." Well for us if we always remain the youth in malice, frank and open, and without guile, whilst pressing on to mature age in enlightened understanding.

Huios speaks of mature years, and conveys the thought of conformity or likeness to our Father, manifesting in action, demeanour, and life from whom we have sprung. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, 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; that ye may be the *children* of your Father which is in Heaven. . . . Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5. 43-48). "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the Living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my *sons* and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6. 14-18).

These two portions will serve to illustrate the force of this word. It is not to be understood that when we "love our enemies," or "come out from among them," that we become the sons of God. This, as we have already seen, is accomplished by the Word and Spirit of God: but when we fulfil these and kindred precepts, the expressed will of our Father, we are showing the family likeness. It needs not that we go up and down the street labelled "Sons of God," or bearing this testimony with our lips merely; but when our lives are so ordered to His pleasing, in accordance with His will, our brethren and the world even will testify of such—He is a child of God.

P. H.

PEACE V. WAR.

THE world rejected the Prince of Peace, and she has had eighteen centuries of war, and is likely to have more terrible times still. Yet the Prince of Peace is coming again. "Even so, *come*, Lord Jesus."

PAUL entered Corinth penniless, yet left the town after having made many unspeakably rich.

THE BLESSING OF JEHOVAH.

By the Late GEORGE MULLER, of Bristol.

“Thy blessing is upon Thy people” (Psalm 3. 8).

OH, how precious this is! Wherever we may be—on the land or on the sea, at home or abroad, in sickness or in health, surrounded by friends or enemies, in our business or resting upon our beds—in whatever position we may be, “Thy blessing is upon Thy people.” God’s blessing is now on every one of the children of God here present, on every one of the dear children of God in Bristol and Clifton, on every one of the children of God throughout the land and the earth.

Our business is to lay hold on it, to believe it, to take it as the Word of God, and this not now and then merely, but habitually. When we awake in the morning to say to ourselves, “The blessing of God is upon me. I am a vile, worthless creature in myself; I do not deserve to be noticed in the least by my Heavenly Father,

YET HIS BLESSING IS UPON ME.”

When dressing in the morning, the blessing of God is upon us. When we sit down to our meal in the morning, the blessing of God is upon us. When we give ourselves to prayer and reading of the Word, the blessing of God is upon us. When we go to our earthly occupations, the blessing of God is upon us. And thus all the day it goes on—hour by hour, moment by moment. And when we go to rest at night, the blessing of God is upon us. And thus it goes on all the next day and the next day, to the end of our course, and the blessing of God is never removed from us. Oh, how precious this is!

And hence we see how deeply important it is to take the Word of God *as* the Word of God, for it is God Himself who speaks there to us by the Holy Spirit. It is just as if the Lord Jesus were literally in Person in our midst and told us this, or if God the Holy Ghost now with an audible voice were to speak to us, or if God the Father were now to speak to us, and say, “My blessing is upon every one of My children.” Our business is to take the Word of God as the Word of God, and the result habitually will be peace and joy in the Holy Ghost—brimful of happiness we shall be, when we are able to enter into it, that it is God speaking to our hearts in the revelation He has been pleased to make of Himself.

I do not know what more we could want than this single sentence—“Thy blessing is upon Thy people.” Oh, let us carry it home, let us say it till we go to rest to-night. If we awake in the night, let it be freshly again before us—“The

blessing of God is upon *me*, because I am His child." And to-morrow morning let it be present to us—"The blessing of God is upon us."

And thus, in all our various positions and business, we should never lose sight of this precious truth which is contained in these words—"Thy blessing is upon Thy people." We have not to look at our own unworthiness—that is perfectly true; it is not that we are in the least deserving that it should be so—it is all in the way of grace. And all the dealings of God with us are in the way of grace—never of merit, for the one single thing we should have, if we had what we deserved, is hell. But it has pleased God to deal with us poor sinners in the way of grace, and hence we are cleansed by the Blood of Christ Jesus, and hence we have peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and hence we have the forgiveness of all our sins, and hence it is stated—"Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more;" and hence it is stated—"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." All—

EVERY BLESSING IS IN THE WAY OF GRACE,

for it is true that God always acts according to it. And I, by God's grace, a poor, vile sinner, have found it precious true for seventy years and five months, and I expect to find it thus to the end of my course.

[Mr. Muller departed to be with Christ on Thursday, 10th March, 1898. Whilst he might have left many thousands which were given to him *for his own personal use*, his will, which has just been proved, demonstrates his faith in the blessing of God, as taught above, for the whole of his "real and personal estate has been sworn at £160 gs. 4d."]

CONSECRATION.

IN consecrating, Lord, to Thee,
My lips, and heart, and hand,
With righteous fear and trembling knee
Before Thy Throne I stand.

But Thou wilt help me, O my God,
For my Redeemer's sake,
Since trusting wholly in His Blood,
Anew this step I take.

And may Thy Grace sufficient be
To aid me day by day,
Until I rise to dwell with Thee—
My Rock, my Strength, my Stay.

E. A. H.

THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

OUTLINES OF DANIEL—DANIEL 12. 1-4.

“**A**ND at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people.”

“At that time,” the time of the end. One great crisis in the world's history occurs in the middle of the last week of Daniel's seventy weeks of years. During the first three and a half years of that last week, as shown in Rev. 11, Israel are seen as a nation in their own land, Jerusalem again becomes the holy city, the temple at Jerusalem is owned as the Temple of God, the sacrifices are acknowledged, and God raises up the two witnesses, in fellowship with Himself, who will come in the spirit and power of Moses and Elijah. During this period the four seals of Rev. 6 have their accomplishment, the lawless one goes forth conquering and to conquer, and the consequences are bloodshed, famine, pestilence, and death.

At this period, also, the symbolic trumpets (Rev. 8) are blown; all this time the lawless one does not manifest his real character, but comes in peaceably and with flatteries, foreshadowed by Ahithophel (Psa. 55. 12-14), not as an adversary, but professedly as a friend of God's people, an Absalom in beauty, a philanthropist of the first order, and a genius of surpassing power, whose number is six hundred, sixty, and six. This is the time symbolised in Rev. 12, the woman is Israel, or Zion, under the New Covenant, Jehovah is her righteousness, ordinances are kept in their proper place, and the twelve tribes of Israel share the kingdom. Meanwhile the godly in Israel are undergoing deep spiritual experiences, as shown in Isa. 26 under the simile of travailing in birth. Then comes the crisis; the lawless one breaks his covenant with Israel, takes away the daily sacrifice, kills the two witnesses, and sets himself up as God in the Temple of God, and places the abomination of desolation where it ought not. Then commences that period of persecution known as the great tribulation.

As the result of the war in heaven under Michael the archangel, the dragon and his angels are cast out into the earth (Rev. 12. 7), and the old serpent gives his power and authority to the usurper.

Those faithful ones who claim the kingdom for God and His Christ, symbolised by the man child in Rev. 12, are slain, and instead of having their part in the earthly millennial kingdom, share in the heavenly reign, for, according to Rev. 20, they have part in the first resurrection with those that are Christ's.

See also Isa. xxvi. 19: "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise." This also is the resurrection mentioned in Dan. 12. 2, 3, when those that have been slain for the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ in this time of persecution, will awake—those that are thus raised to everlasting life, and those that are left, the rest of the dead, to shame and everlasting contempt, at the time or session of the great white throne.

After the Son of Man has been revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, the kingdom of Satan among men destroyed, the beast and the false prophet slain, and rebellion crushed with a rod of iron, then those that are found written among the living in Jerusalem will be delivered, and all Israel will be saved, for there shall come out of Zion the deliverer who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, in fulfilment of God's new covenant with Israel; then the nations of this world will rejoice with God's ancient people in the blessings, peace, and prosperity of Messiah's millennial reign.

In a most remarkable manner during the last few years a wondrous flood of light has been thrown upon the prophecies of Daniel and on the book of the Revelation, clearing away the obscurity of a mystic application in the past, and presenting them to the view as clear, simple, and certain. The agencies at present employed in communicating and diffusing information on these subjects are too numerous to be mentioned; everything combines to assure us that the time of their fulfilment is at hand.

BARNABAS WAS GLAD.

A REMARKABLE revival was in progress at Antioch (Acts 11. 22). It was not a revival in which Barnabas had been "used"; for he had been away at Jerusalem while the great awakening was going on. Nevertheless, when he came down to Antioch and "had seen the grace of God," he "was glad." Barnabas could rejoice in the salvation of sinners and the blessing of saints, even although *he* had no hand in it whatever. Nor was it a merely pretended joy put on for the occasion. The Searcher of hearts bears record that he "was glad." Barnabas was in fellowship with the great Lover of souls; and that which was causing joy in heaven brought a kindred joy to the heart of that man of God. The "great men" at Jerusalem had been passed by in this Revival, and God had

been pleased to use humble and nameless brethren in turning many souls from darkness to light. But this mattered nothing to Barnabas. He was prepared to rejoice all the same. He had heard the Great Shepherd saying, "Rejoice with Me"; and Barnabas rejoiced.

This trait of character ever marks those who have caught the Master's spirit in going after that which is lost: theirs is the unselfishness of true devotion to an absent Lord. No doubt you have fallen in with Christian workers who seem to have no real interest in anything beyond their own work, or in anything outside of their own particular circle. If you have something good to report as to work going on within that charmed circle, you will cause undoubted joy. But if you have to report "God working mightily" over in such-and-such a corner of the town, you cause no joy whatever. Those whom you expect to rejoice are dull and uninterested; or if they profess to be glad, you cannot fail to perceive that their joy is of a very superficial kind. This is not difficult to explain, for in serving the Lord in the Gospel there are two kinds of joy. There is joy in the success of *my* work—a joy of the earth, earthy; and there is joy in the success of *the Lord's* work—a joy of the heavens, heavenly. The first will ever be found associated with a narrow soul; the second with an enlargement of heart which has come from God.

W. S.

PEARLS PICKED UP AT A CONFERENCE.

THERE is but one way to obtain the Lord's blessing—
"Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God."

Our sorrows burden God more than they burden us; therefore we may well leave them with Him.

When a man gets out of his nothingness he gets into it.

Mary's college was the best—at the feet of Jesus.

When James and John asked for the highest place the other ten were angry. Why? Because they wanted the same place.

He who would be *great* in the Church must be servant; he who would be **GREATEST** must be slave of all (Mark 10. 43, 44).

The king asked Nehemiah a question and he could not answer, so counted himself "a fool," and looked to the God of heaven and got the answer.

Our Lord wanted to be the greatest giver that ever was, so took lowest place—born in a stable, lived in a carpenter's shop, died on a wooden cross, buried in a borrowed tomb.

There is no moment when our evil heart of unbelief is not in danger of departing from the Living God, therefore it says, "Take heed TO-DAY."

Fancy the children of Israel building the Lord's house, and yet forgetting the One who was to occupy it; and yet are we not in danger of doing the same?

If we had half the confidence in God's power and prayer that we have in our arguments to "convert" our brethren, what different results we would see.

Hy.P.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING

PLAN OF LESSONS FOR 1898.—A new plan dealing with the entrance into the "Goodly Land" for Old Testament, and Divine Titles of our Lord for New Testament, is issued in a threefold link: (1) *A Gospel Scheme*, with references, contrasts, &c., 1/ per 100. (2) *Boys and Girls Almanac* and Scripture searching book, with subjects, memory texts, daily portion, prizes, &c., ½d.; 6d. per doz.; 3/6 per 100. (3) *The Pathway*, with weekly subject, memory text in full, and original and evangelistic notes on the subjects. Monthly, ½d.; 1/ per year. One each post free as sample to any teacher.

12th June—**GIDEON AND THE FLEECE** (Judges 6. 33-40). *Memory verse, James 1. 5*—"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

The active enemy—The Spirit withstands the incoming flood—The call to unity and action—Little faith borne with and helped—A patient Teacher.

REEPING in memory the teaching of our last lesson on this subject, Gideon's fitness for the work, the revelation of the Lord to him, and the trial of his faith and obedience, in his father's house, and the prominent position that he obtained by his valiant action, we are now prepared to see the Lord's further dealings with him.

The Midianites and the Amalekites. Every movement of God is sure to set the enemy in motion; it was so here. The enemy is not unaware of what is going on. All Jerusalem was troubled when the Babe Jesus was born (Matt. 2. 3). When Paul visited Ephesus (Acts 19. 23) "no small stir" took place.

The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon (literally clothed Himself with Gideon), a wonderful expression, conveying the idea that Gideon's person was indwelt by the very Person of the Holy Spirit (Mark 13. 11; Acts 7. 35; Isaiah 59. 19).

He blew a trumpet. Not a great thing to do, but it was a note of defiance, as well as a calling together of those who had a desire for better things and those who had an ear and a heart for God (Numbers 10. 4). Gideon also sent messengers abroad through the land to gather the Lord's people together.

And Gideon said unto God. At this point Gideon seems to waver in his confidence, not necessarily in God, for he said, "By mine

hand," as if he thought it hardly possible that he could be the instrument used. Moses felt so (Exodus 4.); so also Jeremiah (Jer. 1. 6). In each of these cases it was weakness arising from their occupation with themselves; at the same time it shows out their due apprehension of their own worthlessness (2 Cor. 1. 9).

A fleece of wool. This was his simple Urim and Thummim, and it was beautiful grace and pity in our great God to condescend to the level of His poor servant's little faith and simple plan (Isaiah 42. 3).

And it was so. The fleece was wet with no doubtful dampness, as if God would have His servant without a doubt as to His mind; but, alas, slow to believe is ever true of man (Luke 24. 25).

Again does Gideon ask for further token, and reversing the test puts it beyond the possibility of doubt that he was approved of God as the leader of His people in their great enterprise. It was the same long-suffering tenderness that dealt with Thomas (John 20. 27).

It is the same longsuffering and love that bear with an unbelieving world to-day (1 Peter 3. 20; 2 Peter 3. 9). To the believer this lesson speaks, telling of God's patience in teaching and strengthening of faith, and to the unbeliever showing that God is gracious and has given the greatest and best ground for faith in that He gave His Son to be the object of faith, and His Word as a sure Rock of Belief.

19th June—**GIDEON AND THE BATTLE** (Judges 7. 9-23). *Memory verse*, 1 Cor. 15. 57—"But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Chaff versus wheat—God's three hundred—Barley cake overthrows tent—Strange weapons—Following the leader—Each in his place—Victory.

WE have now reached the interesting story of the victorious battle of God's people against the invader and oppressor. Thirty-two thousand persons gathered at the sound of the trumpet and the call of the messengers. But there must be a sifting. God is not deceived by a crowd—quality, not quantity, is the essential. At the first application of the fan, chaff equal to two-thirds of the whole flew away; this would have made a natural man despair, but it was not enough. Yet another test was applied, and only three hundred were left. The world speaks of its noble six hundred; this was God's three hundred, ready.

"Arise, get thee down . . . but if thou fear." Gideon might have gone straight away without the help of hearing the dream of the Midianite, and perhaps he ought to have done so, but again the consideration of God for the actual condition of His servant's faith and heart-strength appears (Isa. 40. 11).

A cake of barley bread. A very plain cake of the commonest material tumbled into the host against a tent, with its cords, and stays, and supports, when lo! down went the tent; that was the dream that Gideon heard, and the interpretation was given too (1 Cor. 1. 27-29).

Gideon worshipped. Revelation of God and His Sovereign grace ever leads to highest worship. The Cross of Christ, where complete weakness won the greatest victory, is the cause of eternal worship (Rev. 5. 12).

Trumpets and pitchers. Strange and unearthly weapons of

warfare these. The voice of the trumpet and the light of the pitcher might very well represent the Word of God and the Light of the Glory. These are the mighty weapons of our warfare, not carnal, nor wise in men's eyes (1 Cor. 1. 18), but mighty through God (2 Cor. 10).

Look on Me and do likewise. An exhortation full of meaning. As Jesus did so are his followers to do (1 Peter 2. 21); and the victory is to be won "Looking off unto Jesus" (Heb. 12. 2).

They stood every man in his place. The picture is very beautiful, and suggestive. Every man in his place; imitating Jesus means victory all along the line. So the host of Midian "**ran, cried, and fled**" (2 Cor. 2. 14).

So prospered the servant of the Lord in his work, and thus were the enemies of the Lord overthrown by the little band of chosen warriors, who fought for the people and overcame in their weakness.

We may well here remember the great battle fought by the Lord Jesus Christ when, without sword and in His weakness, He overcame the host of the devil, and wrought deliverance for all who will put their trust in Him. He is the Captain of our Salvation, perfected through suffering (Heb. 2. 10).

26th June.—**GIDEON IN PEACE AND PLENTY** (Judges 8. 22-35).
Memory verse, Jer. 17. 9—"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Giving the instrument the glory—A temptation overcome—A temptation overcoming—Gideon's choice—Riches and honour—A religious snare.

TO begin well is good, to run well is excellent, but to end well is glorious. How few there are that learn to abound, as well as suffer want. This is the sad lesson of Gideon's last days.

Rule thou over us, said the men of Israel. They could see no higher than Gideon, though God had taken means to make it evident that it was not man's work, but His own (Isa. 42. 8; 1 Cor. 3. 21).

The Lord shall rule over you. That answer was wise and good, and from that first temptation Gideon was delivered; but the enemy has many arrows in his quiver. Three chosen darts he had for the Lord Jesus, but they failed (Luke 4. 13; Heb. 4. 15).

Golden earrings. Gideon's eyes had lighted on the Ishmaelites' adorning, and his heart went out after the glittering metal, the love of which has ruined so many. Exodus 32. should have been a warning.

What a heap of wealth is described in verse 26; Gideon became all at once a rich man, besides being famous—a dangerous position and condition to be exalted to. Agur knew something of his own heart when he prayed, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" (Prov. 30. 8).

The Lord Jesus said (Luke 18. 24): "How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God." Again, in Mark 10. 24: "How hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God." "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul" (Matt. 16. 26).

Gideon made an ephod thereof. The ephod was the official vestment of the High Priest, made of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine-twined linen, and connected with it were the curious girdle, shoulder-pieces, and breast-plate; it was a splendid garment, and costly. When put to its proper use the ephod was essential to the glory of God's worship, and was typical of the glories of the Person of the Lord Jesus

Christ. Most likely Gideon thought it a devout thing to do, thus to spend his new wealth, but, alas! men come short of God and His glory in all their supposed aids and inventions, and we find the ephod no help, but a snare. Many well-meant endowments and embellishments, however beautiful and seemingly harmless, prove the same now, occupying the attention and taking the place of the Person of the Lord. "Jesus only" is Saviour and object of admiration.

3rd July.—**JESUS, THE SON OF GOD** (Mark 9. 1-13). *Memory verse, Psalm 2. 7*—"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee."

The best knowledge—Going *with* Jesus—The shining Face—The radiant vesture—Heavenly visitors—The absorbing theme—The voice of God—The voice of Jesus.

TO know Jesus as the Son of God is the most blessed of all knowledge (Matt. 16. 17; Phil. 3. 8). The Scriptures are written to make Him known as Son of God, and the object of faith as such, and the source of life eternal (John 20. 31; 1 John 5. 13).

To Jesus belonged glory before the world was (John 17. 5), and His Person was the express image of the Father here on earth (Heb. 1. 3), though that glory was veiled and seen only to faith (John 1. 14).

Our lesson embraces the scene of that little outshining of glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, when our Lord, drawing near the dark Cross shadows, gave three chosen witnesses a glimpse of His glory.

Jesus taketh with Him. With Jesus men can draw near to the glory—without Jesus none (John 14. 6). He leadeth them **up and apart**—two suggestive words—nearer to God, apart from the world.

He was transfigured. In Luke's narrative we are informed that as "He prayed (Luke 9. 29) the fashion of His countenance was altered;" in Matthew 17. 2, "His face did shine as the sun." See also Rev. 1. 16. The three disciples had seen that face wear a sad, sad look, and they had seen joy beaming from it, too. Now it was glory shining out of it—not reflected glory from the outside, but His own indwelling brightness shining out. This view of Jesus gladdens the believer—the same glorious face is terror to the unbeliever (Rev. 6. 16).

His raiment white. All connected with Him in harmony with His own Person. White raiment is the garment of glory all through the Book of Revelation. Contrast with His vesture in Rev. 19. 14 and Isaiah 63. 1.

Elias with Moses. Two typical men in glory. One caught up without dying, the other dead and buried; yet seen alive, and active in glory. Much suggested here.

Talked with Jesus. The theme, His exodus through suffering (Luke 9. 31). *What* they said, we know not now; we know the subject—the most interesting of all subjects (Gal. 6. 14; 1 Cor. 2. 2).

This is My beloved Son.—God's own voice is heard—Elias', Moses', Peter's hushed; we hear it too. They looked round about suddenly, and there's only One, **Jesus only**. There can be no mistake—only Jesus is God's only Son.

Hear Him! All that God wants to say to us is spoken by Jesus (Heb. 1. 2). And what words He speaks! Hear Him say, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

THE VALUE OF THE NAME OF JESUS.

An Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Editor of *The Witness*.

WHETHER we act for God in this world, or whether we speak to God in prayer or praise, it is our privilege to do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is evident what a sanctifying power that must have upon a life which is obedient to it.

Suppose I entrust a person with a bank cheque. I sign it, and leave the amount to be filled in when needed. The amount required is filled in, the cheque is taken to the bank and cashed for the name that is on it. Suppose an amount is filled in that is not required, and such as I would not have sanctioned. Suppose, again, the amount filled in by the person was used for his own purposes, or he absconded with it. That would be a grievous offence, for which those who commit it are liable to be punished. This would be an abuse of the name which would render the defaulter obnoxious to the law of the land, and on account of which he could be prosecuted for embezzlement.

It is somewhat after this fashion that the Lord has

ENTRUSTED US WITH THE USE OF HIS NAME.

“If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 18. 19). What a solemn thing this is! Two of God’s children have been pondering a matter over in which they are mutually interested. They believe it is according to the will of the Lord, and they have agreed to ask it, and they attach to it “the Name that is above every name.” We have here the assurance that the thing shall be done. Of course we are liable to commit mistakes. We might mistake the mind of God. Then it might not be God’s will to grant an answer at once, or it might not be His will to grant it for a long time, or it might not be His will to grant it in the way it was expected. But the prayer is registered in heaven, the name of Jesus is attached to it, and answered it shall be according to God’s infinite wisdom. That gives wonderful power in prayer with God.

When the lame man who lay at the gate of the temple was made whole, it was in the Name of Jesus, and through faith in that Name that this miracle was wrought (Acts 3. 1-16). When asked by the rulers and elders concerning what they had done they answered, “By the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, doth this man stand before you whole” (Acts 4. 10-12). The apostles had confidence that what they did was according to the will of

God, and having faith in the Name of Jesus, the answer came at once. The power of God was exercised through the Name.

Let us apply this to our words and deeds: "Whatsoever we do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3. 17). That means that all we do should be such that the Name of the Lord Jesus can be attached thereto. If I am the Lord's servant, I am to

ACT WORTHY OF HIS NAME.

That is the thought when He says: "Ye shall be My witnesses." That is the main idea in testimony. Whatever the circumstances, the Lord's servants were as witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ. In all that they did, in every step they took, in every testimony they bore, in every word they spake, it was all done in His Name, conscious of His presence with them, as He promised, "Lo, I am with you always." Faith in His Name gave them power.

In Matt. 18 His Name is particularly used in connection with prayer: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18. 19, 20). He endorses their petition. He identifies Himself with the petitioner. Just like Hannah, who, whilst praying to the Lord, was misunderstood and misjudged by Eli, but finding he was wrong, he said, "The God of Israel grant thee thy petition." As High Priest he attached his name to her petition, and it was granted. How different with our High Priest; He never misunderstands or misjudges His people. God's High Priest identified himself with Hannah in her request, and the Lord in like manner identifies Himself with the "two or three gathered in His Name," and, as it were,

ADDS HIS NAME TO THEIR REQUEST

when in conformity with His will.

1 Cor. 5. 4, 5: "In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." The Apostle Paul is in fellowship with the Church at Corinth in this act. Here is a specific act of judgment done in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sin has been committed of such a character that the Lord calls upon His Church to pronounce His judgment upon it and separate the person from them. It is not left to human

judgment or caprice. Provided that the sin is proved, and that there is no doubt about it, then they are to act in His Name, and that act done in His Name he endorses. Note, He does not endorse separations not according to His will. But where it is done in obedience to His command and in His Name, His authority and power are attached to that act. So it is a very solemn act.

If we only looked at our daily life rightly, we would see that the Name of the Lord Jesus was concerned with all our actings and ways, and that our honouring or dishonouring of that Name was in our power every day. Every hour of our life ought to be such that the Name of the Lord Jesus could be written across it, and that it could be said,

“THIS IS A LIFE LIVED FOR GOD,”

a life which has His approval.

That is a high standard. Who can attain to it? It is not our business to cut down the standard to our life, but to judge ourselves wherein we come short of it.

The apostles were not ashamed to confess the Name of Jesus before the world, for they knew that almighty power was connected with that Name. If we drank into the Spirit of those early days of power, when we used this Name in our simple testimony, power and blessing would follow.

It has been remarked in connection with Acts 4. that these early disciples pleaded that Name with confidence for blessing to men, with boldness in the presence of the ungodly, and with faith and tenderness in the presence of God. How sweetly they use it before God. They say, “Thy Holy Child Jesus.” They ask that God would honour their testimony to that Name. They could not have done that if they had a bad conscience— if their life had not been consistent with their testimony.

You see how it is all bound up together, and how our relationship to that blessed Name has a sanctifying power over our lives if only realised in a small degree.

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS.

NEVER attempt to carry your own burden, but learn to roll it upon the Lord. Seek to deal with Him about everything; if you have any trial, any perplexity, cast it upon Him, then you will find out how ready He is to help, and you will be able to say, even in view of all these circumstances, “I am happy.”

GEORGE MULLER.

BRETHREN.

SONSHIP and brotherhood are intimately related, and lie close together in the Word of God. As has been already pointed out, Christ Jesus is not ashamed to call those brethren who are begotten of God. In the recognition of this great fundamental truth is found the true meaning of this term. All must be brethren who by the Spirit of the Son cry, Abba, Father. To use this name as a party cry or symbol is to do despite to the Spirit of Grace, which ever leads us to willingly and gladly acknowledge the bond that has bound for ever in the bundle of life *all* who have believed in the Son.

There is here no question of obedience or faithfulness. The names brethren, believers, Christians, sons, are God-given, and include without exception all who have passed from death unto life. To limit them to any section of the children of God is analagous to the spirit of division so rife at Corinth, which called for the searching question, "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1. 13). Herein is shown the infinite wisdom of God, that all names given by Himself take in all the redeemed, and exclude only those still unsaved, whereas no name devised and used by men but links together saved and unsaved, and leaves outside its pale some who belong to Christ.

When Moses numbered the people at the bidding of God, their number was ascertained on the ground of redemption—each brought in his hand the atonement money. When David numbered Israel without a commandment from the Lord, Canaanites were counted in, and some of Israel were missed out. So it ever is, and must be, where aught but life in Christ is taken as the test of relationship.

The elder brother of Luke 15 would not acknowledge kinship with the younger, but spoke of him to his father as "thy son." It was the father who said "my son" and "thy brother" of the wanderer just returned.

Shall we not vehemently desire to be so in fellowship with our Father, that like Him we shall always be found willing and glad to recognise and own as brethren *all* who have named the name of Jesus to the salvation of their souls. Even if they have become "wicked persons" (1 Cor. 5. 13), and we cannot for the time company with them, they have not ceased to be our brethren, and as the father strains his eyes for the return of the prodigal, and the mother agonises in prayer for her wayward boy, shall we not even in such circumstances call to mind

the one begetting and the tie between that never can be broken. "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Mark 10. 9), is true of more than the married state. Many things God hath joined together; woe betide us if we divorce them. Brotherhood and love are so joined of God, they go together hand in hand. These two are one. It is one of the tests of the possession of life. "We should love one another" (1 John 3. 11), and "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren; he that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 John 3. 14). "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3. 15). It needs not the positive activity of hatred to be a murderer; to withhold love, and all that springs from it, from my brother is to murder him, by withering and sapping his spiritual life.

It is idle to talk of love if there is not a corresponding manifestation. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3. 18).

"A little bird sat on a leafy spray,
Pouring its soul in its song away;
And this was the burden of its lay,
If you love me show it, show it."

A man may say, "Deep down in my heart I love my wife." Well indeed if this be so, because there it must first have its spring and root; but if it remain there his wife is not cheered and comforted: she thirsts for its manifestation in look and tone, and above all in deed. To prate of loving my brethren whilst withholding every proof of affection, is a mockery and a snare.

Christ loved His own which were in the world, and He loved them to the end. Their selfishness, their waywardness, their want of faith, their positive disobedience, and, not least, their want of receptivity—they were so slow to learn—were all a trial to Him; but He loved them none the less, and he showed it none the less. He bore with them in spite of all, and used them with all their failings; and because He loved them perfectly, when need arose He reproved and corrected them; but "even when He chideth tender is His tone." He never was otherwise with them than tender and compassionate. Here, then, is our true pattern. May His love so fill our souls that we will be constrained thereby to imitate Him.

And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also (1 John 4. 20-21). P. H.

STRIFE.

IT was written of the Promised One, "He shall not strive" (Matt. 12. 19). It is also written that "The servant of the Lord must not strive" (2 Tim. 2. 24). And for the whole family of God the word has been given, "Let nothing be done through strife" (Phil. 2. 3). In following up the earthly path of the Spotless One we cannot fail to see how perfectly and how beautifully the prophet's words were fulfilled in Him. We never find Him identified with tumult, or with seeking place or honour for Himself. The merest muttering of the storm of faction was to Him the signal for departure. When the surging multitude arose, He withdrew into a desert place. Sect and faction and party received no patronage from *Him*. He sought not honour from men. If He contended, it was for His Father's glory. To strive for name and fame and place, was utterly foreign to the nature of that meek and lowly One. Others might strive—the Jews strove even about Him and His claims to the Messiahship. But the Christ never strove. So far as He was concerned, there was nothing for which to strive. His cup was full—the cup of unbroken communion with His Father, God. The whole world could add nothing to the fullness of that cup. And is it not here that we have the secret of much strife among those who claim to be followers of Christ? The cup is not full. The dignity of their calling as children of God is not apprehended. They are not satisfied with the secret springs of heavenly communion. Therefore they are prepared to strive, especially if that strife will give vain *self* an increased importance. They would not admit this for the world; for it is the office of the Evil One to persuade men who strive for the exaltation of self that they are contending *only* for the glory of God. But strife, even assuming the "cause" to be good, is forbidden. It is a carnal weapon, only fit to work out the purposes of a carnal mind. If "*this* mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," strife will be far away. The surest preservative against strife is to drink of the Master's Spirit. The flesh must wither, and dreams of self-exaltation must fade away before the glory of that light—the light of the Saviour's presence.

Strife among God's children may seem to gain its point at the time, but the end thereof will not be peace. Strife can only bring forth fruit after its kind. Strife is so bound up with *self* that if you could eliminate *self*, then strife would be no more. Strife is found in that formidable list in 2 Cor. 12. 20 containing "wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults."

It is one of the most undoubted works of the flesh (Gal. 5. 20), and although it may be tolerated in worldly associations, it should be unknown among the people of God and in the assemblies of the saints. Any lengthened experience in the Lord's work must have shown the significance of that solemn word (Gal. 5. 15), "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

Some have sought to justify strife and "pitched battles" in the Church on the plea that it was all to preserve the Ark of Truth. But our God needs no hand of fleshly strife to steady His Ark. The strange fire of party zeal or personal ambition can never ascend to the place where His honour dwelleth. God will take care of His own Ark. If we would be in fellowship with Him in that great work, we must take heed to our manner of spirit. They who have the Master's spirit, and who possess that gentleness which made *Him* great—these are the true bearers of the Ark of God in this evil day. w. s.

DEPTHS OF LOVE.

Tune—St. Agnes, Durham. "Believers' Hymn Book," No. 5.

SAVIOUR, to Thy dear feet I come,
Weary of this world's care;

Thy heart, Lord Jesus, is my home—
I would be resting there.

Jesus, my *best*, my truest Friend,
My love, my life, my all;
Thou, in the darkest hour, defend,
And answer ere I call.

The depths of love I cannot know
That bound Thee to the tree;
Nor understand Thy soul's deep woe
When suffering there for me.

But Thou hast loved me unto death,
And I my voice must raise,
While I have still this fleeting breath,
In my dear Saviour's praise.

And when this life on earth is done,
To brighter realms I'll soar,
To find my song is but begun,
And praise Him evermore.

JOY IN OUR LORD JESUS.

COMMUNION with Jesus is not only sweet in itself, but it has a preserving power by bearing us aloft above gunshot of the enemy. Thoughts of heaven prevent discontent with our present lot; delight in God drives away love to the world, and joy in our Lord Jesus expels pride and carnal pleasure; thus we escape from many evils by rising above them. Up, then, my heart! Up, then, from the weedy ditches and briery hedges of the world into the clear atmosphere of heaven! There, where the dews of grace are born, and the Sun of Righteousness is Lord paramount, and the blessed wind of the Spirit blows from the everlasting hills, thou wilt find rest on the wing, and sing for joy where thine enemies cannot even see thee.

C. H. SPURGEON.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING

10th July—**JESUS, THE IMAGE OF THE FATHER** (John 14. 1-14). *Memory verse, 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."

What is God like—Many diverse pictures—The True Image—Faith is Heart's-ease—Home thoughts—Family dwelling—A special place—With the Father and the Son—The Father manifested.

NO man hath seen God at any time" (John 1. 18) is true, and "great is the mystery of Godliness" (1 Timothy 3. 16), and the question has often risen among men: "What is God like?" Many answers have been given, and vain man has not been willing to confess his reason useless (Job 11. 7), and his utter dependence on revelation. In the blindness of his own evil imagination man has shaped God in "gold, silver, and stone graven by art and man's device" (Acts 17. 29), and even in their foolishness "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things." To the believer this darkness is dispelled, and the theme of our lesson is "Jesus, the True Image or Likeness of the Unseen, Unknown God."

"Let not your heart be troubled." "Believe" in God, in Me. God and His Son known by faith as ever-living and ever-loving is the preventive (better than cure) of heart trouble.

"My Father's house." A mere man could only have said "the house of God," or "in heaven"; Jesus says, "My Father's house;" familiarly expressive of more than a dwelling-place, a place of love.

"Many abodes." Room for a large family—all the family—every child. Provision made before the world was founded (Matt. 25. 34) for an eternal home.

"If it were not so." Not to raise false hopes or futile aspirations did Jesus come: not to love and leave, but to beget hopes that will certainly be satisfied (1 Peter 1. 3).

"Prepare a place for you." What depth of meaning is in these words we can hardly fathom. Amongst those *many* abodes of possibly *many* kinds (1 Cor. 15. 40, 41), there is a place possessed and prepared by the One who loved His own, and for His own, that is *where He is!*

Where and How? Jesus said they knew; Thomas said, "We know not." Jesus said, "I am the Way!" The Father's house is reached *via* the Father's Son—no home in heaven except we come by Jesus Christ. "To bring us to God" (1 Peter 3. 18).

"Ye have seen Him." God had been in flesh dwelling amongst men so graciously, so adapting His ways to their weakness, that His divine glory had never been fully apprehended by them.

"Henceforth." Significant this that His divinity would become a real fact to them.

"Show us the Father." What Philip meant by this would likely be an outshining of the dazzling glory of the Father God. Surely this would not have been desirable. Better as it was, infinitely better to see the glory in the face, words, and works of Jesus, His Son.

The subject opens out from this point like a vast ocean—when we look at Jesus' marred face and pierced hands we see and know the Father's love (John 3. 16); when we see Jesus receiving sinners and blessing them we see the Father's grace; when we see Jesus ruling stormy winds and waves and taking the dead out of the grave we see the Father's power—for the Son is the "express image of the Father: the "brightness of His glory" (Heb. 1. 3). We need anointed lips to speak of "His glory."

17th July—**JESUS, THE SON OF DAVID** (Luke 2. 1-19). *Memory Verse, Luke 1. 32*—"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David."

Earthly and Heavenly in One—A Royal decree—The Humble One—No place—The stable palace—Working men—Herald from heaven—Joy, not fear—Lord and King—A glorious reign.

THE title of our lesson has to do with the earthly glory of our Lord Jesus Christ as "great David's greater Son." In His God-Man Person Jesus combines the two glories—perfect God, perfect man. We cannot understand this—we need not—we can believe it. "The throne of His father David" (Luke 1. 32) is His, and will yet be His, and that for ever.

There went out a decree. Cæsar Augustus at Rome, under the hand of God, wrote the edict that brought to pass the word spoken by Micah (5. 2) that Israel's Ruler should be born in David's city. This decree enjoined that each should be enrolled in their own city.

Wrapped in swaddling clothes. Lowly in a manger laid was the one "born King of the Jews" (Matt. 2. 2). So true is it that He "humbled Himself" (Phil. 2. 8).

No room in the inn. Already occupied by others. Often the case still. The stable was made a palace by the presence of the King.

Shepherds abiding in the field. Grace choosing to visit the humble, diligent men in the way of their work (Matt. 11. 25).

Angel of the Lord—Glory of the Lord. Not earthly herald and earthly pageantry, but heavenly, announced the advent of the Kingly Child.

"Fear not." When Herod heard of Jesus' birth he trembled, and no one said to him, "Fear not." To humbled, waiting hearts there is no fear connected with the Lord Jesus Christ; joy is in the approach of His person.

"Unto you is born . . . a Saviour." He is a Saviour before He is King. His people He must *save* before He can reign (Matt. 1. 21). The King must reign in righteousness (Isa. 32. 1). This made the Cross necessary—this is what Israel did not understand.

"Christ, the Lord." The Anointed (Ps. 2. 2), the appointed King whom David called "My Lord" (Psa. 110 1), though He was his Son (Matt. 22. 42).

This, then, was the manner of the birth of the Kingly Son of David. His life of lowly love and holy ways is written in the Gospels, and His wondrous death was marked as that of "the King of the Jews" (Luke 23. 38). His history is not completed by His death—He is now sitting at the right hand of God waiting till His enemies shall be made His footstool (1 Cor. 15. 25; Ps. 2. 8; Ps. 110. 1).

Then shall come (after the overthrow of His enemies and the repentance of His ancient people (Zech. 12. 10) the glorious reign of the Royal Son of David. Read Psalm 72 which describes the glory of the King's Son. The saved will share in that glory in a peculiar way, and will rejoice to see the glory of their Lord Jesus Christ established in the scene of His rejection. The unsaved, alas! in their lost eternity will be filled with remorse at their folly rejecting the King while the opportunity of kissing submission was theirs (Psalm 2. 12).

24th July—**JESUS, THE SON OF MAN** (Luke 9. 43-58) *Memory verse, Heb. 2. 17*—"Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

A lowly title—The devoted One—Hands of men—Little yet great—Great yet little—Rejected but patient—A Saviour—A homeless Man—Poor making rich.

OUR last lesson occupied us with Jesus' glory as David's Royal Son. We in this will look on Him as Man's Son. As David's Son He is the Restorer of the Kingdom; as Son of Man He is the Rescuer and Restorer of lost blessing. The name conveys also the idea of weakness, emptiness, toil, and privation, for sons of men are in such a case.

The Son of Man shall be delivered. Three times the title appears in our reading lesson: here it is as a *devoted* sacrifice, willing in Himself, and sent and given of God (Acts 2. 23; John 3. 16; Rom. 4. 25).

Into the hands of men. Hands of cruelty, hatred, murder—wicked hands (Acts 2. 23).

They understood not. Amongst men ignorant and slow to learn, how patient the Man Christ Jesus.

There arose a reasoning. Nothing in any of them *great*, yet all wanting to be great: He took a child, a little child, helpless and humble, and taught them that the low place was the great place. He took that place (Luke 22. 27).

Samaritans . . . did not receive Him. Going through Samaria towards Jerusalem every door was shut against Him. Man's way would have been to get indignant and punish those inhospitable people. The pattern Man bears with them, and turns "to another village."

Not come to destroy . . . but to save. This second reference to the Son of Man speaks of the activities of Jesus—negatively, not to destroy even though men deserved it; and positively, to save though they deserved it not (Luke 23. 34).

Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. This third word regarding the Son of Man shows His self-emptying as well as His rejection. Doors shut in His face, the face of Him who owned the whole (2 Cor. 8. 9).

Marvellous the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ thus to take upon Himself our weakness, sorrow, sicknesses, and even our sins—becoming partaker of human frailty and sorrow that He might redeem and deliver the children of men (Heb. 2. 14-16).

Moreover, Jesus not only came down to man's level and likeness, but He provided the ways and means of raising men's sons up to His own place of Sonship (John 1. 12) and Heirship (Rom. 8. 17). Happy they who "receive Him."

31st July—**JESUS, THE PERFECT SERVANT** (John 13. 1-17).
Memory verse, John 13. 15—"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

For God to man—Complete obedience—Endless love—Intelligent love—Love at work—Future understanding—The perfect example.

WE now seek to consider Jesus as the Perfect Servant—Servant of God, and Servant of man—perfect in loving obedience to His Father God—perfect in His love service to man.

Before the feast. Within hail of the great proof of His obedience (John 14. 31; Phil. 2. 8)—the Cross of Calvary—we see Jesus gathered with His own in the upper room.

Having loved. Love is the root of all true godly service (1 Cor. 13; 2 Cor. 5. 14). Undying is Jesus' love to His own—"to the end."

Jesus knowing. In fullest consciousness of His own original glory, and in view of its resumption—no false humility—no mistake about what was His own rights. Laying aside His garments—a very significant act (Phil. 2. 7)—Jesus took a towel (a servant's utensil) and girded Himself (an active servant's act), and poured water in a basin (a servant's duty) and began to wash (a lowly servant's work) the disciples' feet.

Amazing sight! to see the Heir of all the Glories at the feet of poor men. No wonder Peter protested: shall his Lord take the slave's place? (1 Sam. 25. 41). Yes, if Peter is to have any share with Christ it *must* be.

Yet this is but an outward symbol of a greater truth (see verses 14-17); not only must the Perfect Servant—serving His own masterful love—stoop to wash His disciples' feet, but He must stoop to the Cross to bear their sins, ere they could be His disciples at all.

Thou shalt know hereafter. By-and-by, the believer will know fully all the work of love wrought for him and on him (1 Cor. 13. 12)

I have given you an example. The lineaments of the Model stand out clear and distinct. Perfect Servant of God (Ps. 40. 7, 8); approved and commended (Isa. 42. 1); prosperous (Isa. 52. 13); and glorious (Isa. 49. 5). His service as Servant was to men and among men—not serving men as His master, but serving God and so serving men (Col. 3. 23). This is the Pattern set for our imitation (1 Pet. 2. 21).

7th August—**MANOAH AND HIS WIFE** (Jud. 13. 1, 25). *Memory verse, Heb. 9. 14*—“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the Living God?”

Backsliding people—A faithful God—God's chosen way—A family blessing—Separated to God—Born for a purpose—The sacrifice—The revelation—Fear dispelled.

“**T**HE children of Israel did evil again,” and for forty years the Philistines spoiled them. To do His work, God would raise up an agent fitted and prepared to contend with Israel's foes. In Sovereign grace He chooses to use Manoah and his wife and their child in His own way.

Appeared unto the woman. The mother's influence great—this is one of the noble women of the Bible, appearing in line with the Shunamite (2 Kings 4.), Mary, Elizabeth, Lydia, Dorcas, etc. She was honoured to train Israel's champion.

“**Beware!**” From God the gift, for God the life. A Nazarite mother to a Nazarite man. Separated to God before he was born (John 8. 58).

He shall begin to deliver. The promised child was born for a purpose, as Jesus was (Matt. 1. 21); but Samson only *began* to deliver; he did not complete the work as Jesus did (John 19. 30).

Come again . . . and teach. Beautiful believing and acceptance of the gift-child, and the responsibility and yet felt need of instruction how to use the grace. Important it is that God's gifts should be received and used rightly. God's gift to whosoever is in John 3. 16; a warning not to neglect it is Heb. 2. 3.

“**A burnt-offering . . . unto the Lord.**” To Manoah the visitant seemed a “Man of God,” and his offering, as far as he was concerned, had too low an aim. So he is directed to offer to the Lord.

“**What is Thy Name?**” The answer indicates that His Name, “Wonderful,” was more than poor Manoah could get fully to know. What an education there is in getting to know His Name (John 17. 6.)

“**Did wondrously.**” Wonderful by name (Isa. 9. 6); wonderful in doing is Jesus; and Manoah and his wife looked on (1 John 1. 1). We look on the action of Jesus. It is wonderful.

The angel of the Lord ascended. The flame rose acceptably to the sky—the sacrifice was accepted, and the Person went up. (See Acts 1. 9.)

“**We shall surely die.**” So said Manoah, but his wife knew better. She said, “*Our* sacrifice is accepted. That is our acceptance.” (See Gen. 4. 4 and Heb. 11. 4.)

So it is now; we know that Jesus was “delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4. 25), and believers have “peace with God.”

OUR ETERNAL SECURITY.

By the late GEORGE MULLER, of Bristol.

THE prospect of our eternal security in Christ is unspeakably blessed.

THE GOOD WORK BEGUN.

“He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. i. 6). The good work, wherever it is begun, howsoever Satan may hinder it, howsoever he may use every possible means to eradicate it, if it were possible (but it cannot be done), *will* be carried on, and the weakest and feeblest believer in Christ will be at last in glory.

And we should increasingly seek to enter into this, not merely for our own comfort but in order that our hands may be strengthened in God. We should seek to ponder more this precious truth: we are apprehended by God in Christ Jesus to be conformed to His image—nothing short of this.

Let us read the last verses of Romans 8 as a confirmation of this. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Here is the question. If we had to go on in our own strength, by our own ability to keep ourselves, if it even depended merely on our prayerfulness, on our watchfulness, O what might not become of us, but through Christ Jesus we shall eminently conquer at the last (verse 37). O the bright and blessed and precious prospect—vile, wicked, guilty, hell-deserving sinners that we are—we shall be found in glory at last.

GETTING STRONGER AND STRONGER.

In Job 17. 9 we read: “The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.” In the first part of the verse we have the confirmation of what has been stated already. But now comes another point. It is not merely to get at last to heaven, and at last to be conformed completely to the image of Christ, but here is something for the time state: “He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.” While yet in the body we may become more and more like Christ by cleansing our hands increasingly, that is, walking to the praise of God, and if at any time we find ourselves defiled, at once coming back to the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, in order to be cleansed afresh. By attending to this continually the result will be getting stronger and stronger spiritually. And this, as well as the other part of the truth, is a matter of importance to be

attended to, to comfort ourselves, and to build up ourselves, by laying hold on it continually.

THE TWO ORDERS OF THIS TRUTH.

“ I am saved for time and for eternity, and all the powers of darkness will not be able to separate me from Christ. I shall be in glory at last, poor, miserable, guilty sinner though I am in myself, because God has been pleased by the power of the Spirit to begin a good work in me.” This on the one hand.

And then, on the other hand, that further and further, while yet in the body, we may glorify God, and to attend to this by seeking to keep clean hands, having before us continually the atoning death of the Lord Jesus. Thus we become stronger and stronger, living more to the praise and honour and glory of God while life is continued to us.

TO SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

WE should like to ask you a question. Do you make it a point of conscience with God always to be in your place at least five minutes before the time for opening school? It strikes us that some teachers suppose that their work does not begin till after the first hymn and prayer; and the consequence is, that the children are under no control for the first quarter-of-an-hour. Many of the parents make a point of sending their children early, and by the time the hour for commencing has arrived, they have got so uproarious, for want of some one to look after them, that it is difficult to quiet them the whole afternoon. Why, those minutes, before the superintendent's bell announced the moment for beginning, might be of the utmost value, if rightly used. What opportunities they often give for a little personal talk with one or another of the scholars, that the regular class-hour does not afford. What would the head-master of a Board school say if half his teachers did not arrive till after school had begun? What sort of discipline would there be in such a school? And is our work for Christ among the little ones of so much less importance, than getting them through their standards?

Think what an advantage we have given Satan when we allowed him to have the first fifteen minutes all his own way. Oh! brethren and sisters, if we pray for the children's salvation, let us see to it that we are not ourselves putting a hindrance in the way of the answer to our prayers.

THE TIME OF THE END.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

DANIEL 12. 5-13.

VERSES 5, 6, 7. "Then I Daniel, looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon [above] the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by Him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

CONNECT WITH THIS

Rev. 10. 5, 6, 7. "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time [delay] no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, also the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His own servants the prophets."

The angel in Rev. 10 testifies concerning the COMMENCEMENT of these last events. The angel in Dan. 12 specifies the TIME occupied by them, and as to their CONCLUSION; and swears by Him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half, that is for three years and a half, corresponding with Rev. 12. 6, "a thousand, two hundred, and threescore days"; verse 14, "a time, and times, and half a time."

In Rev. 11. 2 we read of forty and two months when the holy city will be trodden under foot, and in verse 3 of a thousand, two hundred, and threescore days when the two witnesses prophesy referring to the first three years and a half.

The Holy Ghost thus taking a special care that the time specified so carefully, and confirmed by oath, should not be altered as meaning anything else.

The visions of Dan. 12 and Rev. 10 refer to the same period, namely, the last half week of Daniel's seventy weeks of years, when, according to Rev. 11, Daniel's people are again in their own land, and Daniel's city is again recognised as the holy city. The angel seen by John in vision standing upon

the sea and upon the earth, swares by God, the Creator of heaven and earth, that there should be delay no longer, but that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel the mystery of God should be finished. The seventh angel introduces the time of the end when the various things prophesied concerning the day of Jehovah should be accomplished. The seventh trumpet introduces the time of the seven last vials; it is the beginning of the end.

The lawless one having broken his covenant with Israel, taken away the daily sacrifice, and set up the abomination of desolation (by the authority of the dragon when cast down from heaven with his angels), persecutes the saints of God, and when he has scattered the power of the holy people, taken Jerusalem and carried half of its people into captivity, then the Son of Man will be revealed, the empire of the beast overthrown, and the consummation decreed poured upon the desolator (Rev. 19. 20).

Verse 11. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred, and ninety days."

This adds one month beyond the twelve hundred and sixty days, or the three years and a half of the great tribulation, as marking some event not here specified.

Verse 12. "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, and five and thirty days."

This adds a month and a half, or 45 days, beyond the last-named period of 1290 days, and completes the prediction in chapter 9. 24: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy."

Verse 13. "But go THOU thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

Daniel, as included among the dead in Christ who rise first, will have his part in the first resurrection, and in heavenly glory share in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

PRAY for grace to become a fool, that you may be wise. THE devil never comes in weakness, always in power; and our danger is to meet power with power, instead of with the weakness of our trust in God only.

A FRIEND AT ALL TIMES.*

"They went and told Jesus"—Matt. 14. 12 (R.V.)

"Told Him all things"—Mark 6. 30.

GO to Jesus when in trouble,
When thy soul is weary, faint ;
He will help thee, He will bless thee,
He will list to thy complaint.

Go to Jesus with thy burdens,
Tell to Him thy every care ;
He will hearken, He will comfort,
And thy sorrows gladly share.

Go to Him with *all* thy trials,
Be they great or be they small ;
Tell Him all that grieves or pains thee,
He will sympathise in all.

Go to Him when flushed with gladness,
Tell Him all that causes joy ;
He will share in all thy pleasures,
Give thee more without alloy.

Go to Him whate'er betides thee,
Tell ! O tell Him *everything* ;
All that bows thee down in sadness,
All that makes thy heart to sing.

Go to Him, thy loving Saviour,
He has bought thee, His thou art ;
And he loves to have thee tell Him
All the secrets of thy heart.

Go to Him in full assurance
That He loves to have thee come ;
Let not fear thy spirit conquer,
Keep thee back, or make thee dumb.

Go, for He delights to listen,
Pour thy soul before Him out ;
Tell Him all thy hidden longings,
Every fear and every doubt.

Place before Him thy petitions,
Count thy mercies, offer praise ;
Hold with Him most free communion—
This will brighten all thy days.

S. E. J.

*This choice poem can be had on stout card at 1/ per 100, post free.

THOMAS AND THE PRAYER-MEETING.

AT the first prayer-meeting after our Lord's resurrection, it is recorded that "Thomas was not there." Why he was not there with his brethren does not appear. All the rest of the disciples seem to have been present. There must have been some reason for his absence. But whatever it might be, he had not the slightest expectation of meeting His Master there, for he did not believe He had risen from the dead. If he had expected such a visit, it is to be presumed nothing would have kept him away. That single absence from the prayer-meeting was a very great loss to Thomas. He deeply felt it, and was greatly humbled when, at the next meeting, a week after, Jesus renewed His visit, and so gently chid him for his unbelief. It is not likely he ever after that neglected the prayer-meeting when it was in his power to attend.

Now, there are a great many more *Thomases* in the Church than bear his name. Entirely forgetting the promise of Christ, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," they invent one frivolous excuse and another for staying away from half the stated prayer-meetings. They know that Christ has risen, and if they not only *desired*, but *expected* to meet Him, they would punctually attend. But they do not. They have lost their first love. It is a dark time. The brethren come together, and ere "ever they are aware," the doors being shut, Christ is in the midst of them. They cannot be mistaken. They feel His presence. He speaks peace to their souls. He shows them His glory, and renews to them His great and gracious promises. Oh, how much does unbelieving Thomas lose by being absent from one prayer-meeting. His brethren tell him what a blessed season it was, and how much they enjoyed; but he has lost it all by staying away. And how sad, how inexcusable!

Will such Didymuses suffer the word of exhortation? Have not some of you lost a good deal already by neglecting the prayer-meetings, and can you afford to lose any more? At such and such a time, Jesus came and stood in the midst, the Holy Ghost breathing upon His disciples, but you were not there. Some frivolous excuse kept you away. You did not indeed know that it would be so precious a meeting; but you knew that Christ is always ready to meet with His disciples when they truly desire His presence. Methinks I hear you complaining of your leanness. You wonder, perhaps, why

some of your brethren have so much more spiritual enjoyment than you have, never once suspecting that your coldness may be owing to your losing the blessing of a single meeting by your absence; and that the Saviour may ever since have withheld the light of His countenance as a rebuke for your neglect.

There is to be another prayer-meeting to-night, or within the week. Will you go? Or will you say, It is a very busy season, the evenings are so short, and I have so much to do, "I pray Thee have me excused?" It is not needful to say it in so many words, for Christ knows your hearts. We cannot promise you that he will be *specially* present at any meeting, but He may be at the very next. We hope He will—we believe He will, if you earnestly bespeak His presence. The only way to be sure of His blessing when he comes is never to be absent from the prayer-meeting, if you can help it. If you stay away from one, that may be the very one, of all others in the whole year, when you would have been most quickened and helped on your way, had you been there.

Do as you would, if you had the promise of the dearest friend in the world that he would meet you at some one or more of the stated times he might designate, without telling you which, you would, if possible, be on the spot at every one of them, so as to be sure of not losing the interview. How much more, when it is "the chiefest among ten thousand, and One altogether lovely," who so delights to meet His disciples in all their "Bethel places," and who will meet and bless you in every prayer-meeting (though it may be in some more than in others), if you truly desire His presence! Never let it be said of you: Thomas, or Martha, or any other disciple, "was not with them when Jesus came."

STANDING AND WALK.

WE are to put off the old man, and put on the new—that is, to put on the Lord Jesus; to walk as Christ walked; to be *in life and walk* on earth, *what* the believer *is made in standing*, as described, before God. Our standing, beloved, is our standard. Here comes in practical sanctification; for if you walked even as He walked, what manner of persons will you be? A *prince* cannot mingle with low society, simply

because he *is* a prince. A bride, in her bridal garb, on the bridal morning, is white as white can be. The servants in the house *may* walk carelessly as to anything that may soil *them*. Not so the bride, who is taintless, perfect in her attire, and must walk as such. O what a walk it gives to us believers, when *we* walk as those who *are* clean, *are* perfect, *are* complete in Christ! Such should be the aim of all who *are* believers, to live and act *according to what God has made them before Himself in Christ*. Therefore it is, because I know that I am as Christ is before God, I ought to walk *like Him*. The knowledge of my perfect position is the ground of exhortation for the highest walk here below. When this is not seen by the believer, lowness and defectiveness of walk, because of lowness of standard, are the sure result.

J. D. SMITH.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING.

14th August.—**SAMSON AND THE PHILISTINES** (Judges 14, 5-20). *Memory verse.* 1 Cor. 15. 22—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Going "down"—In temptation's path—God's faithful care—Looking leads to liking and taking—Deadly sweets—Treachery "friends"—God's purpose maintained—Faulty life better than no life.

THE life-story of Samson, the Nazarite, has many instructive lessons. Born in covenant relationship with God, and born for help to the adversity of his brethren, his history does not readily afford Gospel parallels; showing rather God's way with a servant—wayward and imperfect, whose very waywardness and sinful doings were overruled to accomplish the purposes of Israel's God (Gen. 45. 5; Acts 3. 17, 18).

Samson went down. Drawn and enticed by his sight, as Eve (Gen. 3. 6), David (2 Sam. 11. 2), Achan (Josh. 7. 21), Lot (Gen. 13. 10), and a vast host of others—looked, liked, and fell.

A young lion. In the vineyards of Timnath—reminds us of the Eden scene—there a serpent, here a lion (1 Peter 5. 8). Temptation ever assails the wanderer.

The Spirit of the Lord. Even here in Timnath God did not forsake His servant, but came on him in power to protect him and give an earnest of victories over the adversary.

He told not. The servant of God need not proclaim to all everything he does for God (2 Cor. 10. 13).

He turned aside to see. Again his heart directs his feet and eyes—that heart so deceitful (Jeremiah 17. 9) and eyes so lustful (1 John 2. 16). **The carcass of the lion.** A Nazarite was positively

forbidden to touch dead bodies. Perhaps he did not intend to touch, but going near to sin, even only to see, is dangerous (Prov. 4. 25).

Honey in the carcass. There may be sweets in sin and the condemned dead-in-sin world, but God's Nazarite cannot get them without defilement (Numb. 6. 6). The evil he did in that he brought others into, for we read, "He gave to his father and mother, and they did eat" (see also Gen. 3. 6). "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15. 33).

The feast and the riddle. Part of the amusement connected with Samson's marriage was this giving of "guesses." Playing with the uncircumcised Philistine oppressors of his country, he found them overreaching and unfair: even Samson's newly-married wife working against him. So will it ever be, and now it is more pronounced than ever (John 17. 14). There ought to be no trifling with the enemy—our's and God's (James 4. 4). The result was that Samson had to give the thirty young men "thirty linen shirts and thirty changes of raiment"—a pretty heavy price for his fun.

The Spirit of the Lord. God again takes His own instrument in His sovereign way to afflict the Philistine enemy. The fact of God so doing with Samson does not justify Samson's being there.

Samson's wife was given to his friend (the best-man we would call that friend). All along the line Samson was in bad company, and gained nothing but lost everything by having to do with the enemy.

The teaching of our lesson is plainly of use chiefly for God's children, and warns of the danger of being attracted by the world and the flesh into paths of temptation and danger. The unconverted cannot be so taught; they are in the world, of the world, and walk according to its course (Eph. 2), and Christian experience of either defeat or victory cannot be their's till they come to God by Jesus Christ—are saved and born again. The faults and sins of God's people are no excuse for unbelief in Jesus—"a living dog is better than a dead lion" (Ecc. 9. 4).

21st August—**SAMSON'S GREATEST VICTORY** (Judges 16. 21-31).

Memory verse, Heb. 2. 14—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

Reviving strength—The enemy's pride—The false God, a fatal error—Peace before the storm—The refuge of the oppressed—A simple prayer—Dying Victor's triumph.

THE close of the eventful life of Samson will afford a profitable lesson, with a glimpse of another dying Victor mighty in death.

All his life long Samson was the object of the cunning and hatred of the Philistines; Jesus was hated and hunted by His foes; there was this great difference, Samson almost invariably failed to maintain his position and character—Jesus never yielded, never failed. Samson found his way to the prison-house of the Gaza; love for Delilah led him there, and our lesson opens with a view of him, weak, blind, and bound, grinding at a Philistine mill. Reminds us of the prodigal of Luke 15.

Hair . . . began to grow. The sign of a Nazarite's dedication to God was the uncut hair (Numbers 6. 18). When that hair was shaven the vow ceased and the hair was burned in the fire under the sacrifice. Provision was made, in case of failure, for the renewal of

that Nazarite relationship. What reflections must have passed through poor Samson's mind as he reviewed the past. But it was not irretrievable, like Dives' fate (Luke 16. 26).

Then the Lords of the Philistines. All the captains and the nobles gathered in their pride and vain-glory to rejoice and boast over their poor captive. Low though Samson was, God had not forgotten him (Micah 7. 8).

A great sacrifice to Dagon. Dagon was their fish-god—him they would praise—stone idol who could not help himself (1 Sam. 5. 3, 4), much less his deluded worshippers (Isaiah 46. 7).

When their hearts were merry. Everything seemed to indicate an end of their trouble—the cause of it was in their power, a plaything, an object of mockery and misery. We are reminded of another scene (Mark 16. 65, etc.), a blind-folded Man in the midst of the high-priests' officers, spit on, buffeted, and mocked. "The world shall rejoice" (John 16. 20). "They were glad" (Luke 22. 5).

Samson called unto the Lord. "Out of the depths" (Ps. 130. 1) the poor man cried. Source of all help is the Lord. What strange cries! How varied! From what different places and diverse circumstances have they risen to God! From Joseph's pit, from Egypt slaves, from Babel's exile, from prison house, from Cross of Calvary. God hears and saves (Rom. 10. 13).

"Remember Me!" The prayer of the penitent thief (Luke 23. 42).

The two middle pillars. The centre of the whole—the very foundation—Samson tore out. A mighty work was that of Jesus—not a mere attack on the outskirts, but in the very vitals He attacked and destroyed the kingdom of darkness—

"Dying, slew the power of death,
Gained a glorious victory!"

So the dead that he slew. The life of Samson was a trouble to the Philistines; his death was a disaster. The life of Jesus condemns the world (John 3. 19), and the death of Jesus is the paralysis and doom of the world and its prince (John 12. 31; Galat. 6. 14).

Samson's work was one of judgment—not to save, but destroy; Jesus' work is to save, not to destroy (Luke 9. 56)—that is, in this day of grace; the day of judgment comes on apace, when only destruction will be His strange and short work (2 Thess. 1. 9). Great will be the ruin of all the unsaved in that day.

25th August.—**THE MOTHER OF SAMUEL** (1 Sam. 1. 9-28). *Memory verse*, Eph. 3. 20—"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

Hannah's pains—Hannah's prayer—Hannah's promise—Hannah's peace—Hannah's praise—Hannah's performance—Hannah's present—God's portion and the worker's portion.

THE story of the devout and praying mother of Israel's great prophet forms the theme of our present lesson, and sheds light on God's tender mercy toward the desire of the poor and afflicted individual, as well as the woes of the many (Ex. 7. 7). The same God who measured the sorrows of a Hebrew nation took note of the heart-pangs of a woman.

She was in bitterness of soul. The Lord had wrought this in her that He might bring her to Himself (2 Cor. 1. 9, 10).

Prayed to the Lord. With tears of sorrow and definite petition Hannah presented that voiceless prayer. God hears such prayer (James 5, 17, 18).

She vowed a vow. Showing the intensity of her desire to have the prayer answered. A solemn thing to do, and sinful if not faithfully kept (Ex. 5. 5). It would be wrong to put a vow in the place of Jesus' name (John 15. 16).

I will give him to the Lord. What can we give to God but what we have received from Him (1 Cor. 4. 7), yet He graciously accepts as if it were our own.

No razor. See Numbers 6, the Nazarite's vow—voluntary dedication to God.

Eli's mistake. Man looks on the outward, hastily judges and speaks. God's human high priests err and fail and die—Jesus the Great High Priest never (Heb. 7. 26). See Acts 2. 13, where the Jews made the same remark about the disciples.

"Go in peace." Eli is now better informed, and blesses the woman and joins in praying that God would grant her petition. When Jesus says "Amen" to our petitions we may rest assured of the blessing (Heb. 4. 14, 15).

No more sad. That was faith. The Lord was rested on, the burden was gone, peace was possessed, and worship followed.

Called his name Samuel. "Heard of God" is the meaning, because she had asked and obtained.

Until she weaned him. Lovingly, tenderly, and joyfully would Hannah nurse that child for God; "my child, God's child," she would say, and muse over her joy in God's portion. We are reminded of the Nazareth home (Luke 2. 29, 30).

As long as he liveth. To the Lord again came Hannah back, this time with little Samuel to be God's servant, so young, but accepted none the less. God will accept little servants yet—born out of sorrows, Jesus' sorrows, for God to serve His God. How Jesus prayed and wept and suffered, that God might have men brought to God (1 Peter 2. 24). May this be true of many. May many be like Him, like Hannah, praying and wrestling for souls till with joy these precious ones can be presented to God who gave them; His, yet ours and His for ever and ever (Heb. 2. 13; 1 Thess. 2. 19, 20).

4th September—**JESUS, THE FAITHFUL WITNESS** (John 5. 24-40). *Memory verse*, John 5. 39—"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me."

Double assurance—Testimony as to everlasting life—Present and future—The judgment day and the Judge—A great Witness.

TO a world in the densest ignorance of the unseen God and the heavens above, and with no knowledge of God's wondrous plans and purposes—having the Scriptures in which these were all made known, yet not knowing them—came Jesus, the Faithful and the True Testimony-bearer and Revealer of all.

Verily, verily. Double "Amen," surest of sure words—a peculiarity of the gospel of John—in chapter 3. 3, as to new birth necessity; chapter 5. 19, as to the Son's work agreeing with the Father's; here as to the effect of hearing and believing. See also chapters 6. 32; 6. 47; 6. 53; 8. 34; 8. 51; 8. 58; 10. 1; 12. 24; 13. 16; 13. 20; 14. 12; 16. 20; 16. 23—all these have this double assurance of truth and fulfilment.

Hath everlasting life. God desires certainty as to this fact. Life everlasting is in the possession of every one who believes in Jesus. See 1 John 5, where this is specially shown to be the burden of God's witnessing, Father, Son, and Spirit uniting and agreeing in this.

Shall not come into condemnation. "Hath" covers the present hour; "shall not" reaches out into all future time—to eternity. Some may say you have it now, but you may cease to have it some time—Jesus says "shall not," and that settles it (John 10. 28).

The dead shall hear . . . shall live. Again "verily, verily," about life—life to the dead—dead who are living and walking (Eph. 2. 1), who hear the voice of God's Son calling to "look and live."

Life in Himself (John 1. 4). Life that can be imparted to others (John 17. 2), and possessed through coming to Him (1 Peter 2. 5, 6).

The hour is coming. In verse 25 it is "the hour is coming and now is." Notice that in verse 28 it is different—a time of judgment—not the hearing of Gospel day of grace, but the authority of the Judge summoning to judgment on the ground of deeds (Dan. 12. 2; Acts 17. 31).

If I bear witness of Myself. That is, if His words and testimony were of His own origin. It was necessary that He should testify about Himself—but it was not His own conception (Luke 9. 35).

John bare witness. One whom you Jews yourself rejoiced in the light of: him, said Jesus, I refer to, though what men say of Me I am above; yet if men's testimony you will receive about Me ye shall be "saved."

A greater Witness. The works the Father gave Me to do. These tell of His glory, His divinity, storms allayed, hungry fed, blind see, lame walk, the poor have the Gospel preached, the work of the Cross all testify of Jesus' glory.

The greatest Witness. The great and glorious Father speaks from heaven (Luke 3. 22; 9. 35).

Search the Scriptures. Another great witness—the Word of God—in them *ye think* ye have life—and it *is* the Word of Life (Phil. 2. 16) because IT contains the Bread of Life, Christ Himself—it testifies of Jesus "in the volume of the book" written of Him (Ps. 40. 7).

The practical teaching of all this is, then: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16. 31). In the mouth of so many witnesses, in the face of such evidence, unbelief is inexcusable. Jesus has borne testimony, even to death, about God's love and desire to save; witness is Jesus to man's need of salvation; witness is Jesus to the value of the blood that saves, and to the sure salvation that flows from faith in Him.

THE POWER OF FAITH.

WHEN ANXIETY BEGINS, FAITH ENDS;
WHEN FAITH BEGINS, ANXIETY ENDS.

A CONTRAST

BETWEEN THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE MARK OF BEAST AND THOSE WHO DON'T.

THOSE WHO RECEIVE.

1. They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God - - Rev. 14. 10
2. They have no rest day nor night - - Rev. 14. 11
3. Annoying and grievous sore falls upon them - - - - Rev. 16. 2

THOSE WHO REFUSE.

1. They shall be boycotted - - - - Rev. 13. 17
2. They shall get the victory over the beast - - - - Rev. 15. 2
3. They shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years - Rev. 20. 4

T. B.

THE DIVINE HELPER.

"The Lord is my helper" (Heb. 13. 6).

1. Past Helper. "Thou hast been my *Help*" (Psalm 63. 7).
2. Present Helper. "A very present *Help* in trouble" (Psalm 46. 1).
3. Powerful Helper. "I have laid *help* upon One that is mighty" (Psalm 89. 19).
4. Protecting Helper. "The Lord God will *help* me" (Isaiah 50. 7. 9).
5. Precious Helper. "I will *help* thee" (Isaiah 41. 10, 13, 14).
6. Providing Helper. "The *Helper* of the Fatherless" (Psalm 10. 14).
7. Perpetual Helper. "The God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy *help*" (Deut. 33. 26).

F. E. M.

BAPTISM.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Our Lord's command, Matt. 28. 19 | | Qualification-for, - Acts 8. 36, 37 |
| Our Lord's example, - Matt. 3. 13 | | Mode of, - - - - Acts 8. 38, 39 |
| Our Lord's testimony, Matt. 3. 15 | | Doctrine, - - - - Rom. 6. 1-13 |
| Divine approval, - - Matt. 3. 17. | | |

Does the baptism of the Spirit make water baptism unnecessary? No. Acts 10. 47.

Should a person who has been sprinkled when an infant be baptised when he is saved? Yes. Acts 19. 3, 4, 5. J. N.

DIVISION OF PSALM 23.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| The Lord is <i>my</i> Shepherd, | - - - - - | Possession. |
| I shall <i>not</i> want. | - - - - - | Provision. |
| He maketh me to <i>lie down</i> in green pastures, | - - - - - | Position. |
| He leadeth me beside <i>still waters</i> . | - - - - - | Pasturage. |
| He restoreth <i>my soul</i> , | - - - - - | Personal. |
| He <i>leadeth</i> me in the paths of righteousness, | - - - - - | Progress. |
| For <i>His name's</i> sake. | - - - - - | Purpose. |
| Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, | - - - - - | Parting. |
| I will <i>fear no evil</i> , | - - - - - | Peace. |
| For <i>Thou art with me</i> , | - - - - - | Protection. |
| Thy <i>rod</i> and Thy <i>staff</i> they comfort me; | - - - - - | Pilgrimage. |
| Thou <i>preparest</i> a table for me | - - - - - | Participation. |
| In the <i>presence</i> of my enemies; | - - - - - | Presence. |
| Thou <i>anointest</i> my head with oil, | - - - - - | Preparation. |
| My cup <i>runneth over</i> . | - - - - - | Plenty. |
| <i>Surely</i> goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, | - - - - - | Persuasion. |
| And I will <i>dwell</i> in the house of the Lord for ever, | - - - - - | Place. HYP. |

LAW AND GRACE CONTRASTED IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

CHRIST IS

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| 1 | So much <i>better</i> than the angels | - - - - - | chap. I. 4 |
| 2 | That we have a <i>better</i> hope | - - - - - | " 7. 19 |
| 3 | For He is Surety and Mediator of a <i>better</i> covenant | - - - - - | chaps. 7. 22 ; 8. 6 |
| 4 | Established on <i>better</i> promises | - - - - - | chap. 8. 6 |
| 5 | With <i>better</i> sacrifices | - - - - - | " 9. 23 |
| 6 | Having in heaven a <i>better</i> and enduring substance | - - - - - | " 10. 34 |
| 7 | All through the blood that speaketh <i>better</i> things than the blood of Abel | - - - - - | " 12. 24 |

TYPE AND THEME.

A Gospel type in the Old Tes., being a Gospel theme in the New (Gen. 6., 7.).

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Judgment <i>pronounced</i> | Heb. 11. 7 |
| | (see 2 Pet. 3. 6, 7) | |
| 2 | Longsuffering <i>prevailed</i> | 1 Pet. 3. 20 |
| | (see 2 Pet. 3. 9) | |
| 3 | Ark <i>prepared</i> | He. 11. 7; 1 Pe. 3. 20 |
| 4 | Righteousness <i>preached</i> | 2 Pet. 2. 5 |
| 5 | Salvation <i>procured</i> | 1 Pet. 3. 20 |
| 6 | Resurrection <i>prefigured</i> | 1 Pet. 3. 21 |
| 7 | World <i>perished</i> | Lu. 17. 26, 27; Ju. 15 |

J. E. B.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

GROW

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1 | In grace, | 2 Pet. 3. 18 | The Soil |
| 2 | As a tender plant, | Isa. 53. 2 | Gentleness |
| 3 | As the lily, | Hos. 14. 5 | Purity |
| 4 | As the calves, | Mal. 4. 2 | Progress |
| 5 | Like the cedar, | Ps. 92. 12 | Strength |
| 6 | As the vine, | Hos. 14. 7 | Fruitfulness |
| 7 | Up into Him, | Eph. 4. 15 | The Sun |
| | They go from strength to strength | | |
| | Psalm 84. 7 | | J. M. H. |

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

The pith and power of the Gospel are the death and resurrection of Christ.

The former is its pith, and the latter is its power. The death of Christ is:

- 1 *Real as to its Occurrence*—"Christ that *died*" (Rom. 8. 34); "Christ *died*" (Rom. 14. 15; 1 Cor. 8. 11). Towering o'er the wrecks of time there is one fact that shines out in unmistakable reality, and that is the death of Christ.
- 2 *Substitutionary in its Character*—"Christ *died* for the ungodly," "Christ *died* for us" (Rom. 5. 6-8). Christ was acting on our behalf that He might protect us from the consequence of sin in dying in our stead.
- 3 *Definite in its Work*—"He *died* unto sin once" (Rom. 6. 10); "Christ *died* for our sins" (1 Cor. 15. 3). His death had distinct relation to our sin. He died to bear away our *sins*, and to be judged for our *sin*.
- 4 *Freeing in its Aim*—"He *died* for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who *died* for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5. 15). In the death of Christ we have the magnet which draws us from self to Himself.
- 5 *Practical in its Purpose*—"To this end Christ both *died*, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Rom. 14. 9). He died that He might gain us, and now we are His absolute property.
- 6 *Assurance of future Glory*—"Who *died* for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thess. 5. 10). The blood-red mark of Christ's cross is stamped on every certificate of heaven.
- 7 *Guarantee that our loved ones, who have fallen asleep, shall be with us in Christ's coming glory*—"If we believe that Jesus *died* and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thes. 4. 14). There is one ray that shall make the golden glory of Christ's splendour bear a rosy tint, and that is the red light of Calvary. F. E. M.

CHRIST THE SACRIFICE—NOT CHRIST THE EXAMPLE.

By WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole.

IN this lukewarm age, the great men of the religious world are willing to give Christ a certain place in theology. But what is that place? It is this—they acknowledge Christ as an *Example*. They admit that His life was a pure life—a spotless life—an ideal life. They set the life of Christ before people as the most perfect example to be found in history. They urge upon their hearers to follow the *example* of Christ, and virtually say, "This do, and thou shalt live." But "Christ *the Example*" is *not* the Gospel—the good tidings of great joy to all people. We certainly hold that Christ's life upon earth was the perfection of beauty and purity, and that His life is the highest of all examples. But we must be clear as to this, that it is the *death* of Christ, not the *life* of Christ, that makes atonement for the soul. Without the shedding of *blood* there is *no* remission. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His *blood*" (Rom. 3. 25). Paul declares that Christ *died* for our sins according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15. 3). The tidings of salvation do not consist in this, that Christ lived a beautiful life on earth, and if the sinner *copies* that life he shall be saved. The sinner is *dead* in trespasses and in sins. He must have life before he can be in a condition to imitate the life of the Spotless One. What folly to go to a sinner lying under condemnation and say, "Yonder is a stainless life: imitate it, and you shall gradually regain your freedom and reach heaven at last." Such a gospel is not to be found in the Scriptures. Yonder poor creature in the condemned cell will not thank you to go to him with the story of some one who lived a beautiful life. What he wants is pardon. Yonder bond-slave will be unmoved by the same story. What he wants is someone to sever his bonds and set him free. What will it profit yonder drowning sailor if you point him to the example of a splendid swimmer, and say, "Imitate that example"? You will simply mock him. What he wants is a strong arm to snatch him from a watery grave. Thus it is with the sinner. He is perishing. He needs a deliverer. His sins are taking him down into the billows of eternal death. He wants some one able to take these sins away—some one to cleanse him. The poor captive of sin wants some strong arm to break his chains and set him at liberty. The sinner under condemnation wants some one to

Christ the Sacrifice—not Christ the Example.

make him free from the law of sin and death. What is the God-appointed remedy in all these cases? It is

CHRIST THE SACRIFICE.

Be clear as to this, all ye who seek to tell lost ones of God's salvation. Tell them of the precious Blood—the glorious Death—the accepted Sacrifice of the Son of God on Calvary. Jesus on the Cross; Jesus the Victim; Jesus the Sin-bearer—such is the great need of their souls. Tell them that Christ *died* for the ungodly, that He made His soul an *offering* for sin, and that His *blood* can cleanse the foulest stains. And *after* they have believed the good news and been “justified by His blood,” *then*, but not till then, you can tell them of *Christ the Example*. You may then show them that He who died for us has left us an example that we should follow His steps (1 Peter 2. 21). Being alive from the dead, and having the eyes of their understanding opened to know what is the hope of their calling, they will be prepared to listen while you say to them, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2. 5). *Christ the Example* is your message to the saints, but *Christ the Sacrifice* must be your message to a perishing world. It is the Gospel of Christ, not the Example of Christ, that is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

THE MANIFESTATION OF FAITH.

“**B**Y faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents” (Heb. 11. 23).

From God's point of view the hiding of a little baby three months old may be as great an instance of admiration and acceptable faith as any.

Though it was a natural thing for a mother to do, the Lord is not praising the natural affection, but the supernatural faith.

Nature prompted, but faith constrained and enabled them to do what their timidity would not have ventured upon.

Faith rides a whirlwind, but it threads a needle; it climbs up to the throne of God, and yet it stands by a baby's cradle. It can obtain the promises, but it can sit down and twist bulrushes, and boil bitumen to pitch a little ark if necessary.

There is nothing faith cannot make noble when it touches it. You need not say, I want to get away from my daily business, or from my domestic concerns in order to show my faith. No, no, stop where you are and show it. C. H. SPURGEON.

MY FATHER'S CARE OF ME.

By JAMES WRIGHT, Ashley Down Orphan Homes, Bristol.

Numbers 33.

THE movements of the people of Israel were of sufficient importance to the heart of Jehovah for Him to have their journeys recorded imperishably, for this Word is "for ever settled in heaven," therefore the movements of Israel are recorded for ever. What an illustration that gives us of the tender care of Jehovah over His people. He redeemed them out of Egypt, and the preciousness of that people was in one respect because they were a *redeemed* people, redeemed from an earthly bondage, instrumentally through the shedding of the blood of inferior animals.

But what shall we say about a people who have been redeemed from an eternal hell, delivered from the wrath of God, "not with corruptible things such as silver and gold," not with the comparatively valueless blood of inferior animals, but "with the precious blood of Christ." How dear *they* are to the heart of God! And, fellow-believers, each one should say, "How dear *I* am to the heart of God, because of the price at which I have been redeemed!" The blessed God our Father delights that we should thus apprehend the value that He puts upon us.

Now, would it not be a wonderful thing if He set such value upon a people redeemed from an outward bondage by inferior blood, and did not take account of the details of the daily life of those whom He has redeemed from eternal wrath by the precious blood of His Son? The Lord Jesus assures us on that point by a wonderful statement He gives us to show the accurate, minute account taken of everything that concerns the people of God, viz., that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

It also comes out beautifully in an incidental way when God wants to direct one servant of His to reach another servant of His in a distant place; He tells the locality, and the very house in which he is lodging: "He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side" (Acts 10. 6), just giving us an incidental hint, as much as to say, "Now you see, my child, I know every bit about you; I know where you are, and the trade you are carrying on."

These typical instances in the Word are given to assist our faith. Each child of God, when reading such a passage as this, should say, "Now, that is my Father's care of me." It exercises a wonderful practical influence on our lives when we can simply believe that. When we can realise "My Father is watching over me;

He knows that which is exercising me at this moment ; He knows my perplexity, and sees a way out of it that I don't ; He is perfectly aware of those influences that are operating upon me—of those whose thoughts and ways are giving me joy or grief. He knows all about it ; not one of the least of these conditions can be without His holy will, and therefore my position," we should say to ourselves, "is the very best that infinite wisdom and infinite love and infinite power can devise for me, the child of His love."

O what sunshine that would bring to us if we entered into it ! And the Lord means us to walk in the sunshine ; He has dispersed the dread cloud of guilt that was gathering over our heads, and we look up and see not a cloud. What happy, joyful people Christians ought to be !

"Why should a Christian, then, be sad ?
None have such reason to be glad."

O let us take it in, beloved fellow-Christians !

This is the purpose for which He caused these journeys to be recorded, to teach the minute, constant care which our Father in heaven exercises over us, His children.

DELIVERED FROM ALL AFFLICTIONS.

AT the close of the prayer meeting on 21st February, 1898, Mr. Muller said : There is one word that has been laid upon my heart, "MANY ARE THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS ; BUT THE LORD DELIVERETH HIM OUT OF THEM ALL." Now, let us take this word home and ponder it, and ponder it again and again. What a bright to-morrow we shall have ! If we fall asleep, none of these afflictions are taken with us to the other world. If our blessed Lord Jesus comes to take us home to Himself, none of these afflictions, however great, many, and varied they may be, will be taken with us to our heavenly home—all, all, all will be left behind. And while we are yet in affliction, our heavenly Father is working, though behind a curtain, as it were, we see not how, but He is working, working, working, that all may come to an end, and that all may turn out for real blessing and profit. O what a blessed position is ours as children of God ! Having the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and apprehending what He is doing for us, we, by the grace of God, should aim at it, to live more and more an upright, holy, godly life.

THE CHURCH.

FROM whatever point of view this subject is considered, its paramount importance is beyond question. Within the limits of such a series of papers as the present it is only some of the simplest points which can be touched.

The Greek word *ecclesia* is rendered in our Authorised Version of the Scriptures as "Church," or "Assembly," and as no other word is used, to gather its meaning from its use is comparatively easy. This word is never used in Scripture to denote a material building or place of meeting, but it is invariably used to describe a company of persons. It is so used in connection with the riotous mob which filled the theatre at Ephesus; and also of an official company to be convened in due order by the town-clerk (Acts 19. 32, 39, 41).

In contrast to such a Church or Assembly, the subject for our consideration is dignified by such expressions as, "Church of the Living God" (1 Tim. 3. 15); "My Church" (Matt. 16. 18). The Lord, when upon earth, gave intimation of great changes that were impending. Amongst others, and elicited by the declaration of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matt 16. 16), Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16. 18). In so saying three things were announced concerning this Church—

1. It was a new thing, and was not then existing.
2. Its creation would be the work of His own hand.
3. It would be indestructible in its nature.

Turning to Acts 2. 47, we read, "The Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved." From this scripture it is evident that the Church had now taken commencement, and that it was composed of saved people. It follows that, between the announced purpose of the Lord to build a Church and the record by Luke, above referred to, of the Church existing, there was a time when it began; and when it is remembered that although the apostles were duly commissioned by the Lord before His ascension they were told to tarry at Jerusalem until endued with power from on high, it requires no stretch of imagination to believe that the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost saw the inauguration of this new creation of God.

It was not, however, until Paul was called that there was

revealed, in all its fulness, the calling, character, and destiny of the Church, referred to in the Epistle to the Ephesians as being hid in God, and not made known in other ages. The first three chapters of this epistle have this mystery as their principal theme. A few of the outstanding features may be here noted—

1. God's purpose in choosing a people in Christ.
2. The sacrifice of Christ to redeem this people.
3. The seal and earnest of the Holy Spirit to the purpose of God and the work of Christ.
4. That by nature the people were dead in trespasses and sins, and the first act in fulfilling God's purpose was to communicate life.
5. That the people were not belonging by natural birth to any particular nation, but were either Jew or Gentile, the middle wall of partition between these being broken down and abolished, of the twain a new man to be formed.
6. This new creation, called the "Mystery of the Church," in its formation being used of God as an object lesson to teach the principalities and powers in heavenly places His own manifold wisdom (Eph. 3. 10).
7. Its destiny being the vessel for the display of His glory by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end (Ephes. 3. 21).

The Church, then, is the whole company of the redeemed from the day of Pentecost until now. For how much longer this work of God will continue is known to Himself alone. The hope of the Church is that moment when the Lord Himself shall descend into the clouds to welcome His saints and personally conduct them in their resurrection bodies to the realms of eternal bliss.

Our condition by nature is described in the words, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3. 23). Our present standing in grace as saved and in the Church of God is "Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5. 2), and our destiny, in keeping with the Scripture already quoted (Eph. 3. 21), is seen fulfilled in the vision of John when called to view the "holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God"—saw something in which God had set His glory, and so beginning his description it is prefaced with the words, "Having the glory of God" (Rev. 21. 10, 11). The consideration of subsequent names will bring out other truths connected with this glorious subject.

HOW LONG WAS THE LORD JESUS ON EARTH?

READING *The Pathway* for January (No. 217, page 9), I was struck with a statement of Mr. Thos. Newberry's, viz., that Christ's "life on earth was thirty-seven years." While this synchronises with the sixty-nine weeks of years, it does not appear to harmonise with Luke 3. 23, if we take it that our Lord's public ministry only lasted three and a half years. Would you kindly ask him how this is to reconciled?

London.

W. R. B.

"ANNO DOMINI."

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

As stated in the margin of Matt. 2. 1 of our Authorised Version of the Bible, the period named *anno domini* does not begin with the BIRTH of Christ, but FOUR YEARS AFTER; this confusion is believed to have been the mistake of a monk named Dionysius, who lived about the fifth century, and who introduced the date of *anno domini*.

In Luke 2. 42 we find Jesus was twelve years of age—margin says A.D. 8. In Luke 3. 23, that He was about thirty years, A.D. 26; therefore when the crucifixion took place, A.D. 33, Christ must have been thirty-seven years of age.

If we refer to Luke 3. 23, in the margin of the Authorised Version, we see that it was in A.D. 26 or 27 that Jesus was baptised, He being then about thirty years of age, whilst the date of the crucifixion in Luke 23 is stated to be A.D. 33, which gives an interval of seven years between His baptism at the age of thirty and His death. This length of time corresponds with the LAST WEEK of Daniel's seventy weeks of years, which will be SEVEN YEARS.

From Rev. 11 we learn that the period of the ministry of God's two witnesses will be three and a half years, and the continuance and the acting of the usurper when the daily sacrifice will be taken away, three and a half years.

This also corresponds with the three and a half years of John the Baptist's prophetic ministry, and the three and a half years of the public testimony of Christ, together seven years; for, as we read in Mark i. 14, it was when John was cast into prison that Christ came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

In each of the editions of "The Englishman's Bible" four years have been added to A.D. throughout the New Testament, that it may correspond with the actual years of Christ's life on earth.

PRESENT STATE OF THINGS.

QHAT a rush of sad recollection as we remember the past twenty years! Friend after friend has crossed the swelling flood to suffer no more, to die no more. Leaders—tried and true—have fallen in the conflict, have fought their last battle, and have gone to rest and reward. The Church as a public profession lies broken and shivered, and no human hand can repair the wreck. The world is beginning to rock and reel, and governments—monarchical and republican—are trembling at the wild and tumultuous rush of the forces of anarchy and disorder. Europe, with its numerous incoherent states and conflicting political interests, has entered on its final phase of existence, till the strong, blaspheming, and infidel ruler of the West (Dan. 2. and Rev. 17) unites all in one vast kingdom. Were the past and present a thousand times worse than all this, the heart would be calm and confident as the eye rests on these holy words: “Jesus Christ, the *same* yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” God is at the helm and guides the world and the Church, while Jesus Christ ever abides the SAME. Here, then, faith takes her stand and neither weakness nor discouragement can rob the heart of its strength. “Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength” (Isa. 26. 4). W. SCOTT.

PEARLS PICKED UP AT A CONFERENCE.

DID you ever notice that wonderful shepherd Moses, how often, when Israel came into trouble, we read, “And Moses *fell on his face before* the Lord?”

The most happy picture of heaven upon earth is an assembly in happy fellowship one with another.

We often get wrong by *debating*, instead of *waiting* upon God.

The storm separates the chaff from the wheat; the fire tries the gold, but purifies it; wine emptied from pitcher to pitcher is disturbed, but purified; so times of tribulation, trial, and disturbance often purify and cleanse the Church.

The worst of all wars are internal wars. How many of these have we in our assemblies of to-day?

The devil often pats us on the back with our public confessions, but never with the times we are down on our faces before God in secret.

HYP.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING.

11th September.—**JESUS, THE TRUE FRIEND** (John 12 1-27).
Memory verse, Prov. 18. 24—"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly; and there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

Friendly name should have friendly deed—Friendship in exercise—Discipleship, fellowship, and worship—Defended against critics—Secrets revealed to friends, hidden from servants—Reproductive power of love.

JESUS meets man's need of a friend who shows himself, by action, friendly (John 15. 13), and a true and constant friend that "sticketh closer than a brother" (man). In need, a friend is indeed a friend—when trouble and distress come, false friends fly; "the rich hath many friends" (Prov. 14. 20), the poorest may have at least One worth them all. Even of "publicans and sinners" Jesus is friend (Luke 7. 34), and His friendship is no empty name we know by what He did, for He came to save such (1 Tim. 1. 15). Death and burial did not exhaust Jesus' friendship, for He is even now the exalted Friend at God's right hand, able to succour all who come to God by Him (Heb. 7. 25). Present help and salvation is not *all* His friendship, for He will yet come and take home His own believing ones, and show to all eternity His kindness in befriending poor sons of men (Eph. 2. 7).

Our present lesson gives a peep at Jesus when here on earth in the exercise of that friendship and fellowship now enjoyable by faith, and soon in fulness to be seen.

Jesus came to Bethany. He had befriended the family of Lazarus greatly, drawing them round Himself and revealing Himself to them in a special way; even raising dead Lazarus (Eph. 2. 1). This, then, was a spot where He was received as a friend and His love was appreciated.

They made Him a supper. All for Jesus—to honour Him to whom they owed so much. Wondrous picture of grace accepting the loving service and fellowship of that humble home; God's own Son, whom angels worshipped and served, sitting at poor man's table in friendship.

Martha served. Because it was her special way. In Luke 10, she serves and finds fault; she knows better now—is content in her service.

Lazarus sat at the table. The man who had been dead, whom Jesus had raised out of death's prison house to sit in His presence (Eph. 2. 5, 6).

Mary took of the ointment. Nothing too good for these dear feet; feet that went about doing good (Acts 10. 38); beautiful feet (Isa 52. 7) that came publishing peace; so soon to be pierced by cruel nails (Ps. 22. 16); which will yet tread out the wine-press of God's judgment (Isa. 63. 3), and have put under them all His enemies (1 Cor. 15. 27). At these feet Mary worshipped, pouring out her offering.

Let her alone. This second time is Mary's attitude to her Lord interfered with (see Luke 10. 40). First her place as a disciple is criticised, now it is her copious and seemingly extravagant worship. In both cases she is not required to answer; her Lord more than justifies her, He glorifies her.

Against the day of my burial. Close by the hour; did she know it? Had she caught the secret hid from so many? Friends only know secrets (John 15. 15); serving Martha did not know, but the one who

"sat at His feet" seemed to learn it. **She hath kept this.** Does that suggest the hoarding up of the requisites of an honoured burial?

So Jesus' friendship to man produces the fruit of love to Him, and worship flows out of full hearts. Secrets are unfolded and sympathies and hopes arise in that heavenly atmosphere. The theme is inexhaustible. Wherever we see Jesus we see the Perfect Friend—toiling, loving, dying, all for man; not His friends, but His enemies (Rom. 5. 10). Happy are they who can say, "This is my Friend" (Song of Sol. 5. 16).

18th September.—**JESUS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD** (John 8. 1-28). *Memory verse*, 12—"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying: I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life."

The Light comes to us—We cannot make light, only receive it—Coming to the Light—What it reveals—Convicted and condemned—Departing from the Light—Light and love—No condemnation.

"**T**HE people that walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isa. 9. 2). See also Matthew 4. 16. That Light was Jesus. "He was the True Light coming into the world" (John 1. 9). That Light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not—remained darkness still. Our lesson shows Jesus, the Light, shining in a dark place, revealing and convicting, even if not converting those on whom it shone.

Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives. Though He was Son of God He was dependent on the Father. Apart with God is the only way to have the light in us maintained.

Again in the Temple. From God to man, the message by Jesus Christ (John 8. 26, 28). His judgment is God's (John 5. 30), whether He forgives or condemns.

Scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman. A person clearly marked out, in Leviticus 20. 10, as death-doomed—a sinner. These men cared not for God's honour; their own hatred of Jesus raged in their breast; they only desired to ensnare the Lord. "What sayest Thou?" setting Moses' law and Jesus' grace in opposition.

Wrote on the ground. God before had stamped "curse" on the earth (Gen. 3. 17); Christ came and bore the curse (Gal. 3. 13) and has marked out a place of blessing, a ground of standing for poor, convicted sinners before Himself; a place of "no condemnation" (Rom. 8. 1) for condemned ones because of the redemptive work He wrought. Truly He has left His mark on the earth—it is His on account of redemption (Rom. 8. 21; Eph. 1. 14).

They continued asking Him. Likely they thought His silence meant perplexity. He was only allowing them to manifest themselves.

He that is without sin. There is none that "doeth good and sinneth not" (Ecc. 7. 20); "all have sinned" (Rom. 3. 23). A criminal can never be a judge.

Convicted by conscience. That inward monitor, awakened by the light of Jesus' word, paralysed their tongues and their arms—they slunk away one by one. A guilty conscience cannot endure the light of God's presence. It was this that made Adam hide (Gen. 3. 8), and this makes every sinner afraid of God. There is a cure for it (Heb. 10. 22; 9. 14). The blood of Jesus cleanseth from sin, and removes guilty fear.

Neither do I condemn thee. Not to condemn, but to save, Jesus came (John 3. 17), and, true to His mission, He in mercy did not do what He, the sinless One, might have done. She stood a convicted, trembling, confessed sinner before Him, and mercy flowed from Him. "Go, sin no more!"

So, amongst men shines out the search-light, searching out hearts to convict and convert. The Light which reveals the need, reveals also that which will meet it. In Jesus is the wondrous combination of light and love found nowhere else.

25th September.—**JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE** (John 11. 25-46). *Memory verse, John 11. 25*—"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Man's dead state is God's opportunity—Work of God leads to worship of God—Resurrection is because of life possessed—Jesus is the Life, present earnest of future—A weeping company for "a little while"—End a rejoicing and praising company.

RESURRECTION is God's answer to sin and death—it is death (sin's wages) that makes resurrection necessary and possible. Thus God's glory is displayed in a way that could not otherwise be seen.

Typical man is Lazarus of our lesson. Loved of the Lord Jesus, yet subject to sickness and death, and that for God's glory and the glory of God's Son (John 11. 4). Besides this glory there is the need of help to faith (verse 15), demonstration of Jesus' love and power being great ground of believing.

Lazarus is dead four days—hopelessly dead—and there remains only a vague, distant hope of a day in which that dead one will rise again; here our lesson begins.

I am the Resurrection and the Life. Not in a future last day, but in a present living Christ is true quickening and living. "He that believeth HATH" (John 5. 24); "you hath He quickened" (Eph. 2. 1). It is true that as to the body resurrection is not accomplished; but, as to the real man, the spirit, the soul, it is accomplished in the believer.

Shall never die. This shows at once that it is the spiritual man that is spoken of (2 Cor. 5. 6; Phil. 1. 23). Eternal life is the believer's portion (John 10. 28).

"Believest thou this?" A very plain and pointed question, which brings out a confession of Jesus as Christ, the Son of God.

Mary weeping, Jews weeping, Jesus weeping. What a scene of grief that space of time was! Sorrow and sympathy flowing together. A picture of the present time of groans (Rom. 8. 23; 2 Cor. 5. 2).

"Lazarus, come forth!" With loud voice, expressive of energy on Jesus' part and the condition of the ear of Lazarus—a whisper would have been as potent—yet such a great work is fitly suited. See 1 Thess. 4. 16. God spoke creation, but shouts redemption and resurrection. (Luke 23. 46).

Thus we hear the word of Jesus and see the work He did—that work being only a sample and earnest of the great things He is doing spiritually, and which He will yet do physically in the bodies of all believers.

2nd October.—**SAMUEL'S DEDICATION** (1 Sam. 2. 1-19). *Memory verse, Matt. 19. 14*—"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

A living sacrifice—Joy in God—Joy in God's salvation—Happy in holiness—The only and incomparable—End of controversy—Divine wisdom—God's doings with the lowly—Judgments to come.

THE vow that Hannah made to give the child back to the Lord she kept, and at the close of the preceding chapter is recorded the return to Shiloh of Elkanah, Samuel's father, with his wife and little boy, to leave him as a servant in the Lord's house. Not because Hannah did not love the child, but because she did love him did she choose this life-work for him, and in this way she also manifested her love to the Lord Himself. Our lesson is mainly occupied with the voice of Hannah's worship on that occasion, and the tone and matter of it greatly resemble the praise of Mary in Luke 1. 46-56.

My heart rejoiceth in the Lord. He is the Fountain-head of all blessing (James 1. 17), and the believer has not only received blessing, but has reached the Blessor (Rom. 5. 11). A subject of **heart** occupation.

I rejoice in Thy salvation. His saving power not only saves but blesses and leads to Himself; and that salvation, how complete it is! Purchased at such a price, and given gratis to "whosoever will" (Heb. 2. 3).

None holy as the Lord. This is important. All His acts are in harmony with His holy character. Even in the dark Cross scene that is the secret of Jesus' sufferings (Psalm 22. 3), and consequently the saved one's salvation rests on the very holiness of God, once the dread and doom of the sinner.

None beside Thee . . . neither any like. Only one Saviour-God (Acts 4. 12), the incomparable in His sufferings (Isa. 52. 14), and beyond all others in His glory (Phil. 2. 9).

Talk no more. All words of vain man's wisdom and pride are an offence to the admirer of Jesus; their speech seems as the ignorant babble of foolish children.

A God of knowledge. Superlative wisdom and understanding (1 Cor. 1. 18-24), and Christ is the highest expression of that wisdom.

The Lord killeth and maketh alive. Verses 6, 7, and 8 of the lesson are rich in suggestive statements of God's doings and the subjects of His action. Dead ones, poor ones, low ones in the dust, beggars on the dunghill—all these are within the range of God's grace, and the purpose and end of His work with them is to make them "inherit the throne of glory."

The adversaries. Hannah speaks of grace, but that does not blind her to the other truth, equally true, there is judgment in store for the adversary (2 Thess. 1. 9).

In the closing verse of our lesson we have a pretty picture of the child servant of God growing up, and year by year getting his coat from his mother's hand—larger every time, no doubt—till the child Samuel became the man Samuel, grown up to the full stature of a man (Eph. 4. 13; 2 Pet. 3. 18).

DAVID A PATTERN MAN.

(1 Sam. 18.)

The accepted man, -	-	verse	5
The persecuted man,	-	"	11
The wise man, -	-	"	14
The loved man,	-	"	16
The humble man,	-	"	18
The valiant man,	-	"	27
The precious man,	-	(mar.)	30
		A. L.	

WISDOM'S TABLE.

Furnished	Prov. 9. 2
Bread	- John 6. 35 to sustain
Water	- John 4. 15 " "
Milk	- 1 Pet. 2. 2 for growth
Meat	- Heb. 5. 14 for strength
Salt	- 2 Kin. 2. 21 no more death
Fruit	- S. of S. 2. 3 dessert
Wine	- Isa. 55. 1 joy
Eat, O friends! drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved (S. of S. 5. 1).	
	R. S.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

To bring men to a knowledge of God in Christ is the chief end of the Gospel, as it is the highest of all possible attainments. Acquaintance with God leads to:

1. Self-loathing, - - - - - Job 42. 5, 6
 2. Peace of conscience, - - - - - Job 22. 21
 3. Rest of heart, - - - - - Psalm 7. 10
 4. Strength and success in battle, - - - - - Dan. 11. 32
 5. Eternal life, - - - - - John 17. 3
 6. There may be a growth in the knowledge of Him, - - - - - Col. 1. 10
 7. To know Him better must be our chief aim, - - - - - Phil. 3. 10
 8. Only in Christ can He be fully known, - - - - - Matt. 11. 27
- J. N. C.

SOWING.

What to sow: Precious seed, Ps. 126. 6
 The Word, Mark 4. 14
How to sow: In tears, Psalm 126. 5
 Weepeth, " 126. 6
Where to sow: Beside all waters, - - - - - Isa. 32. 20
When to sow: In the morning Ec. 11. 6
 In the evening " "
Hindrance: He that observeth the wind, - Ec. 11. 4
Encouragements: Reap in joy; Come rejoicing; bringing sheaves, - - - - - Ps. 126. 5, 6
 In due season...reap if we faint not, - Gal. 6. 9
 And he that reapeth *receiveth* wages, and *gathereth* fruit unto life eternal, that both he that *soweth* and he that *reapeth* may rejoice together (John 4. 36).
 J. W. W.

THREE BRIEF BUT SOLEMN QUESTIONS.

1. Put by *God* to the sinner: "WHY will ye die?" - - - - - Ez. 33. 11
2. Put by *Jesus* to His *Father*: "WHY hast Thou forsaken Me?" - - - - - Matt. 27. 46
3. Put by *the Lord* to His *servants*: "WHY stand ye here all the day idle?" - Matt. 20. 6
 J. S. A.

MERCY AND TRUTH.

Mercy and truth are met together (Ps. 85. 10) - - - - - At the Cross.
 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged (Prov. 16. 6)
 He purged our sins (Heb. 1. 3).
 Mercy and truth preserve the king (Prov. 20. 28)
 Preserve God's righteous character.
 Mercy and truth go before Thy face (Ps. 89. 14) For the saving of the sinner.
 Mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good (Prov. 14. 22)
 The enjoyment of mercy and truth.

SEVEN BLESSINGS.

(Deut. 33.)

- Salvation, - - - - - verse 6
 - Sufficiency, - - - - - verses 7, 25
 - Separation, - - - - - verses 8-11
 - Security, - - - - - - - - - verse 12
 - Satisfaction, - - - - - verses 13-17, 23
 - Sacrifice, - - - - - verses 18, 19
 - Strength, - - - - - verses 20-22
- Ephesians 1. 3; 2 Corinthians 1. 20.

J. E. B.

ACQUAINTANCE.

(Job 22. 21, 22).

- 1 What to do—
Acquaint, - - - - - Matt. 11. 28. 29
 - 2 When to do it—
Now, - - - - - 2 Cor. 6. 2
 - 3 Who should do it—
Thyself, - - - - - John 3. 18
 - 4 Why do it—
Be at peace, - - - - - Isaiah 26. 3
- A. C. B.

FOUR THINGS JOHN SAW WHEN HE WAS IN THE SPIRIT.

- 1 The Lord Jesus in resurrection glory, - - - - - Rev. 1. 10-20
- 2 God on His glorious throne, - - - - - Rev. 4. 2, 3
- 3 The great whore, - - - - - - - - - Rev. 17. 3
- 4 The Lamb's wife, - - - - - - - - - Rev. 21. 9, 10

From these Scriptures it is evident that it is as necessary to be in the Spirit to see the false woman as it is to see the Lamb's wife. T. B.

THE MANNA—The Antitype as seen in the Type (John 6. 31-35).

I will rain bread from heaven,
Ex. 16. 4.
When the dew fell...the manna fell upon it, Num. 11. 9. Dew—a type of the Holy Ghost as communicator and embodiment of the blessing.

There lay a small, round thing, as small as hoar frost, and white,
Ex. 16. 14, 31.

It tasted like wafers made with honey, Ex. 16. 31.

Like fresh oil, Num. 11. 8.

It lay on the ground, Ex. 16. 14.

It fell round about the host, Ex. 16. 13.
It was ground, beaten in a mortar, and baked, Num. 11. 8.

All had sufficient—an omer for every man, Ex. 16. 17, 18.
This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat, Ex. 16. 15.
They did eat until they came to the borders of Canaan, Ex. 16. 35.
Some objected to it, Num. 11. 6.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven, John 6. 51.
The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God, Luke 1. 35.
Small—Humility. Laid in a manger; no room in the inn, Luke 2. 7; a carpenter's son, Matt. 13. 55.
Round—Consistency, evenness, 1 Peter 2. 22, 23. All the elements of lovely character in perfect balance. *White*—Purity, without spot, 1 Peter 1. 19.
Sweet—Good tidings of great joy, Luke 2. 10. They wondered at His gracious words, Luke 4. 22.
Peace on earth, Luke 2. 14. Full of grace, John 1. 14.
Lowliness—He made Himself of no reputation, Phil. 2. 7.
Within the reach of all, John 6. 37
He was wounded for our transgressions.. by His stripes we are healed, Isa. 53. 5
He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, Jno. 6. 35. None came short
My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven, Jno. 6. 32; Mk. 14. 22.
Eat this bread...till He come, 1 Cor. 11. 26.
His own received Him not, Jno. 1. 11.

PERSONAL PURITY.

By WM. SHAW, Maybole.

SPEAKING of a revival time which continued for years in a certain town, I may safely say that the "dominant tone" was the personal purity of those who professed to come under the power of the Gospel. There was a wonderful deliverance from the power of sin. Rejoicing as a strong man to run a race, the converts seemed to look upon service for Christ as a luxury. Both conviction and conversion had been real work in their experience. According to their own testimony they had seen sin in the light of God, and the bare thought of that which He had forbidden was set down as iniquity itself. Adopting the heavenly reckoning, they set themselves down as having *died* with Christ, and been *buried* and *raised* again with Him. They had beheld Him as the Sin-Purger, and the pure and spotless One. To be conformed to His image was the one great passion of their souls. Therefore the flesh was mortified, and the joy of a great deliverance permeated their whole being. They were strong, and did exploits. Their testimony was with power. Their light shone. Many saw it, and feared, and trusted in the Lord. Their preaching was nothing remarkable, perhaps far behind much of the studied eloquence that abounds to day; but their manifest simplicity and devotion had an eloquence that was irresistible. I believe personal purity was the secret of their power, and I believe, it will be found to be the secret of power in service for Christ to-day.

The Redeemer came not only to save from coming wrath, but to redeem from the power of sin. In the inauguration of His public ministry we hear Him say: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach *deliverance to the captives*, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4. 18).

All who have received Christ have received a Deliverer from the bondage of sin; and they boast in vain that they are His if they are not rejoicing in that deliverance. We hear the Lord saying to Pharaoh in Egypt: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me" (Ex. 7. 16). We see here that there must be *freedom* before there can be *service*. He that is bound cannot preach deliverance to the captives. The secret consciousness that he himself is in bondage will paralyse his arm and damp his zeal, and be simply "death in the pot," so far as faith in God is concerned; for it is written: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Psa. 66. 18). If God is to be served acceptably—if we are to rejoice in the Day of Christ

that we have not laboured in vain—we must give heed to that solemn word, “Be ye *clean* that bear the vessels of the Lord”

The mere fact that I was delivered from sin at a certain time in the past, is no guarantee that it is well with my soul to-day. What of my present experience? Have I been giving due heed to that word which says, “Keep thyself pure”? (1 Tim. 5. 22). He who would “go on with God” must keep the heart with all diligence, knowing that out of it are the issues of life (Prov. 4. 23). His prayer shall be, “Let not any iniquity have dominion over me” (Psa. 119. 133); and, strong in faith giving glory to God, he shall lay hold of the promise, “Sin shall not have dominion over you” (Rom. 6. 14). There must be a deliberate purpose—and if there be sincerity of heart there *shall* be a deliberate purpose—to keep the lower nature in subjection to the higher: All who thus seek to keep clean the temple of the body will be found saying, in the language of the apostle, “I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: but I *buffet my body, and bring it into bondage*: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected” (1 Cor. 9. 26, 27, R.V.). It is written that the elder shall serve the younger (Rom. 9. 12). The old man must be under the dominion of the new. If Christ be enthroned as Lord in the heart, there shall be victory over the power of sin. If He be permitted to reign “from sea to sea,” if we may so speak, over our ransomed being, iniquity shall be compelled to hide its head. We shall be led in triumph in Him—borne onwards on a great tide of pure and lasting joy, to the blessing of many and the glory of His Name.

LET GO!

A LITTLE child was one day playing with a very valuable vase, when he put his hand into it and could not withdraw it. His father, too, tried his best to get it out, but all in vain. They were talking of breaking the vase, when the father said: “Now, my son, make one more try; open your hand, and hold your fingers out straight, as you see me doing, and then pull.” To their astonishment the little fellow said: “Oh, no, pa, I couldn’t put out my fingers like that, for if I did, I would drop my penny.” He had been holding on to a penny all the time! No wonder he could not withdraw his hand. How many of us are like him! Drop the copper, surrender, let go, and God will give you gold. J. M’NEIL.

A VETERAN AND HIS BIBLE.

[Mr. George Muller, of the Bristol Orphan Houses, had engaged to address the yearly meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society at the Town Hall, Birmingham, on Oct. 26th, 1897, but being prevented by indisposition from fulfilling his engagement, Mr. Ashton Binns was requested to take his place. In consequence of this, Mr. Ashton Binns requested Mr. Muller to give in writing his testimony regarding the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and to state how many copies of the Word of God he had circulated. This Mr. Muller did in the following letter]:—

DEAR SIR,—Most reluctantly I came to the decision not to attend the Bible Society meeting at Birmingham, but the weak state of my heart, in my ninety-third year, obliged me to attend to the advice of my medical advisers. Will you, therefore, have the kindness to read to the meeting that I have been for sixty-eight years and three months, viz., since July, 1829, a lover of the Word of God, and that uninterruptedly? During this time I have read considerably more than one hundred times through the whole Bible with great delight. I have for many years read through the Old and New Testaments, with prayer and meditation, four times every year.

I also state, to the glory of God, as His witness, that in my inmost soul I believe that all the books of the Old Testament, and the Gospels, Epistles, and the Revelation of the New Testament, are written by inspiration. This I have to the full believed ever since my conversion in the beginning of November, 1825. Before that time, though brought up from my earliest days to be a clergyman, I cared nothing at all about the Bible, and from my fourteenth year to the twentieth never read a single chapter of it.

My great love for the Word of God, and my deep conviction of the need of its being spread far and wide, has led me to pray to God to use me as an instrument to do this, and to supply me with the means for it; and He has condescended to enable me to circulate, in all parts of the earth, and in various languages, 284,652 Bibles, 1,458,662 New Testaments, 21,350 copies of the Book of Psalms, and 223,500 other portions of the Holy Scriptures; and God has been pleased thus, simply through the reading of the Holy Scriptures, to bring thousands of persons to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

An especial blessing in this way has been granted in Spain, France, and Ireland, and in the spiritually dark villages of our own country, through Bible carriages, which I supplied with Testaments at half-price, and Bibles at three-quarters of cost.

May the Lord's richest blessing rest upon the meeting in Birmingham.—Yours very sincerely,
GEORGÉ MULLER.

THE RESTFUL HOPE.

MARK GUY PEARSE tell us of an incident which occurred in connection with an address of his on Christ's invitation to the weary and heavy laden.

"I had finished my discourse, when a good man came to me and said, 'I wish I had known what you were going to preach about—I could have told you something.'

"'Well, my friend,' I said, 'it is very good of you. May I not have it still?'

"'Do you know why His yoke is light, sir? If not, I think I can tell you.'

"'Well, because the Lord helps us to carry it, I suppose.'

"'No sir,' he explained, shaking his head; 'I think I know better than that. You see, when I was a boy at home, I used to drive the oxen in my father's yoke. And the yoke was never made to balance, sir, as you said.' (I had referred to the Greek word. But how much better it was to know the real thing.)

"He went on triumphantly: 'Father's yokes were always made *heavier on one side than the other*. Then, you see, we would put a weak bullock in alongside of a strong bullock, and the light end would come on the weak bullock, because the stronger one had the heavy part of it on his shoulder.'

"Then his face lit up as he said, 'That is why the yoke is easy and the burden is light—because the Lord's yoke is made after the same pattern, *and the heavy end is upon His shoulder*.'

"Take my yoke upon you . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11. 29).

I WILL NOT LET THEE GO.

My Lord and God, with Jacob I confess,
Worthy I am not of the least, the *least*
Of these Thy mercies; yet with him I add,
"I will not let Thee go, *except Thou bless!*"
O change my name, and change my nature too,
That, Israel-like, I power with Thee may have,
And power with men as I in prayer prevail.
O give me grace to *cling*, e'en when *my* strength
Shrinks and becomes most small, then let me know
Thy *strength* made perfect in my weakest hour.
Then, not to *me*, but Thee be all the praise;
Not unto *Israel*, but to Israel's GOD.

TEMPLE.

IT is of great importance to notice that those designated the Temple of God are the very same people we have already seen are called the Church of God.

Attempts have been made to prove that only a certain class of the saved are in the Church of God. In like manner it has been sought to show that it is only a limited class who go to make the Temple of God. We have already learned that the Church of God includes all the redeemed, commencing with the day of Pentecost. A few well-known Scriptures will prove conclusively that those spoken of as the Temple of God are none other than those spoken of as the Church of God.

Bearing in mind that the First Epistle to the Corinthians is addressed to the Church of God, they are reminded in chap. 3. 16, 17, that they are the Temple of God. Then we find that the Second Epistle to the Corinthians is also addressed to the Church of God (chap. 1. 1). In this epistle, those thus addressed are exhorted in these words—"What agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? for ye are the Temple of the Living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people"(2 Cor. 6. 16). The same word of grace that had added them to the Church of God made them also part of the holy temple.

Again, in Eph. 2. 19-22, speaking to those who were Gentiles by natural birth, but now born of God, the Apostle unfolds to them not only that they "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God," but, that they "are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." This building, which is still in progress, "groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

Having thus established that the names "Church" and "Temple" are synonymous, as far as embracing the whole company of the redeemed is concerned, it may now be asked, What special significance attaches to the name under consideration?

Of old, when David made known to the congregation of Israel that God had chosen Solomon to build the temple, he told them, "The work is great, for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God" (1 Chron. 29. 1).

One outstanding truth connected with this temple--reared at the bidding of God, according to His own pattern--was that, being for God, holiness should characterise it, and all

connected with it. "Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, for ever" (Psalm 93. 5). From the belly of the great fish, Jonah said, "I will look again toward Thy holy temple"; and the admonition of Habakkuk was, "The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him."

It is the thought of being a dwelling-place for God, and the consequent holiness, that should accentuate the lives of those who now compose His spiritual house, that comes out so clearly in the New Testament. Thy holy temple have they defiled (Psalm 79. 1), was the Psalmist's wail; and it is against defiling the temple of God the special warnings of 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17 are directed. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," remains in all its force to-day, and finds an answer in every heart filled with adoring awe at the wondrous grace which has chosen saved sinners as His special habitation in this dispensation.

One more Scripture remains to be noticed, and has a searching significance in reminding us that what is true of the whole is true of every several part, that what is true of the whole vast building is true of every individual saved sinner composing it. The words are intensely solemn, and reach into the inner lives of all. Quoting them in full will form a fitting close to this short paper. "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6. 15-20).

P. H.

AN esteemed brother in the Lord, speaking of the late George Muller as a man of prayer, says: "I only heard him pray once. So far as words were concerned it was a prayer of great simplicity, and with nothing remarkable about it. As to its length, it was a very short prayer. But there was this about it that made it grand and memorable to me: I felt, while that wonderful man prayed, that I had been brought into the very *presence of God.*"

MY LORD AND I.

(Sung on the rocks and in the caves of France during the fierce persecution of the Huguenots 300 years ago.)

THERE is a Friend so precious,
So very dear to me,
He loves me with such tender love,
He loves so faithfully.
I could not live apart from Him—
I love to feel Him nigh—
And so we live together,
My Lord and I.

Sometimes I am faint and weary—
He knows that I am weak—
And so He bids Me lean on Him :
His help I gladly seek.
He leads me in the paths of light
Beneath a summer sky,
And so we walk together,
My Lord and I.

He knows how much I love Him—
He knows I love Him well—
But with what love He loves me
My tongue can never tell.
It is an everlasting love,
In ever rich supply.
And so we love each other,
My Lord and I.

I tell Him all my sorrows,
I tell Him all my joys,
I tell Him all that pleases me,
I tell Him what annoys.
He tells me what I ought to do,
He tells me what to try,
And so we talk together,
My Lord and I.

He knows how I am longing
Some weary souls to win,
And so He bids me go and speak
The loving word for Him.

My Lord and I.

He bids me tell His wondrous love,
And why He came to die,
And so we work together,
My Lord and I.

I have His yoke upon me,
And easy 'tis to bear ;
In the burden which He carries
I gladly take a share,
For then it is my happiness
To have Him always nigh :
We bear the yoke together,
My Lord and I.

PEARLS PICKED UP.

WE should be as regular in the meals of the soul as in those of the body.

IT is not *you* that are to shine. Don't make that mistake ; it is your light.

IF the lamp of zeal be not fed by the oil of piety it will soon expire.

IF anything will make a soul sing it will be its deliverance, with the knowledge of a place of safety.

THE song of the redeemed is in the midst of the wail of judgment.

THE soul that has been brought to the Lord not only loathes the sin it once loved, but the very name of it.

HE that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself.

SELF-CONFIDENCE is the horse Satan rides on.

TIMES of peril should be times of prayer.

So deep is God's wisdom that Paul could not fathom its depths, so he sat down at the brink and adored its depths.

A LITTLE dead fly in the apothecaries' ointment will cause it to send forth a stinking savour. O may the Lord keep the little dead flies out of the assemblies !

GOD often tries His servants first with the rough, and ends with the smooth ; man commences with the smooth, and ends with the rough.

A DEAR brother once said at the cloſe of a series of happy and helpful meetings, "Only think of a hundred living tigers (by nature) three days together, and we have not heard so much as a growl."

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING.

9th October.—**SAMUEL'S CALL** (1 Sam. 3. 1-21). *Memory verse, Isa. 55. 3*—"Incline your ear and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

Safely preserved amidst danger—No intercourse with God—Dying out—God's gracious choice—The prophet's first message—The prophet's cross—Approval and acceptance—A contrast.

SAMUEL grew up in the midst of dark surroundings, like a tender plant in dry ground (Isa. 53. 2) ; but safe in the hand of the Lord, he was kept from the defilement.

No open vision. God had ceased to visit His people, and communication was suspended ; instead of light, and happiness, and communion, all was dead and dark (Ps. 28. 1).

The failing priest and expiring lamp. Contrasts these to our Lord Jesus Christ, the unchanging, unfailing, undying High Priest (Heb. 7. 23), who in the midst of the golden lampstand keeps the light burning (Rev. 1. 13).

Samuel's call. God takes up in the very midst of all the failure His own little, prepared and chosen one (1 Cor. 1. 28). Happy child, to be thus early favoured of God.

The first message. Every service is a test, and Samuel's first was a trying one. He behaved wisely ; there was no hurry—no rashness. With fear and trembling, yet with perfect candour, he received and conveyed the solemn truth committed to him. The prophet or preacher's office is not all pleasure, as some may think. See John 17. 14 ; Jer. 17. 15 ; Jonah, &c.

All the words. All the unpleasant words of coming judgment (Acts 20. 19, 20, 26).

Samuel grew, and all Israel knew. A natural development and recognition of God's presence. The work done declares the worker (2 Cor. 12. 12 ; 1 Cor. 9. 2).

Contrast the happy and honourable life of Samuel with the dark, sin-stained way of Eli's two sons ; they were born to highest honours and with best opportunities, but went down in deepest disgrace to a dreadful death. Press home the danger of abusing opportunities and despising God's favours. "What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel ?" (1 Peter 4. 17).

16th October.—**THE ARK IN ASHDOD** (1 Sam. 5. 1-12). *Memory verse, Rom. 14. 11*—"For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me and every tongue shall confess to God."

Unholy use of holy things—God, not the symbol, is the power—Casting down power—Crushing power—Disease and death—Jesus either life or death.

THE ark of God was the most sacred of all holy things—made so by the presence of God in connection with it. It was not the gold or the wood, though these were valuable; it was God that was its value. Godless men think religion will save—forms and ceremonies will save. They won't; God saves, and God only.

The Israelites, with their godless priests the sons of Eli, thought that they had only to set the ark against the Philistine army to prevail. Superstition and ignorance were here; superstition vests the symbol with the powers of the person symbolised; ignorance knows not that Omnipotence is Omnipresence, so our lesson shows the result: God's wondrous ark in Philistine hands.

In the house of Dagon. Face to face two symbols stand; they represent two powers—light and darkness, God and Satan. The inevitable results (see Luke 8. 35; Luke 11. 21, &c).

Set him in his place again. Man is slow to own the wrong, slow to see the right (Gal. 2. 18).

Only the stump of Dagon. What a useless thing (Isa. 46. 7). No hands, no feet; how foolish men are in their religion. You meet them constantly who say, "our Saviour," but they are not saved; "our religion," but it does them no good. Dagon's priests were out of work, like the swineherds of Gadara.

Smote them with emerods. God visited the men of Gath with painful and deadly disease, forcing them to know the great power of the God of the beaten Israelites.

"**Send away the ark!**" cried the poor, stricken Philistines, for the God of the ark had not forsaken it, nor His purpose to dwell among the children of Israel. See Psalm 114.

In its proper place, and treated in the proper way, the ark was a source of great blessing, and thus it is with all the things of God. In His ways of grace the presence of God is salvation; out of this way He is a consuming fire. Jesus is either a Saviour or a Judge—the Gospel a savour of life or death (1 Cor. 2. 15).

23rd October.—**MIZPEH AND EBENEZER** (1 Sam. 7. 1-12). *Memory verse, Prov. 28. 13*—"He that covereth His sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

A patient worker—Beginning of better things—Cleansing, contrition, confession—The enemy active and alert—A mediator—The offering for acceptance—The answer—Ebenezer.

TWENTY years have elapsed between the events of our last lesson and this. Long years of patient working and waiting for Samuel. How many messages he carried to the erring people we can only guess. He is now to be rewarded.

Israel lamented after God. This was a stirring of the dry bones—the prodigal come to think of his Father (Luke 15).

Put away strange gods. There can be no room for a divided house (Matt. 6. 24).

Mizpeh. Where Jacob and Laban had parted long before, and a memorial had been set up as a witness of their covenant (Gen. 31. 49). Here at this watch-tower heap Samuel would confirm the growing desire of his people, and pledge them anew to God.

Water—Fasting—Confessing. Poured-out water emblem of weakness and worthlessness (2 Sam. 14. 14). Fasting an indication of self-denying sincerity, and humbling and confession telling out with the words of the mouth all the sin and shame (Luke 15. 21).

Philistines heard. Satan ever opposes a work of grace, and would crush it in the bud.

Cease not to cry. Their need of a mediator felt—some one better than themselves to intercede for them (Job 16. 21 ; Isa. 53. 12).

A sucking lamb. Samuel knew that his prayer would find acceptance only through the lamb-offering. The sucking lamb is a picture of perfect innocence and perfect weakness combined. The prophet wanted God to look upon the poor people in the sacrifice he offered. Such is Jesus the Lamb of God (John 1. 29).

The Lord answered in the thunderbolt and the enemy fled, completely overthrown, and the **Ebenezer** stone was reared giving God the glory. So is it now, and so will it be by-and-by (1 Cor. 15. 54).

30th October.—**THE PEOPLE'S DESIRE** (1 Sam. 10. 17-27).

Memory verse, Isa. 55. 8—"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways. My ways, saith the Lord."

Rejecting God—Looking on appearances—Saul's body-guard—Grace to the enemy—Choosing and refusing—Jesus or Barabbas.

FAILURE and sin on the part of Samuel's sons was the occasion of Israel's discontent and desire for a king (1 Sam. 8. 4). On the part of the people there was the imitation of the nations around. Neither of these facts justified the demand; God was above all and had His place amongst them. It is irksome for man to depend on the Unseen God. So in our lesson we find Israel gathered again at Mizpeh for a purpose very different from our last visit there—this time to carry out their self-will.

I brought you up. Redemption work is the basis of God's appeal. In the day of their dark distress He wrought deliverance for them, work that no king could have done for them.

Ye have rejected. The desire for a king showed dissatisfaction with God, as the desire for leeks, &c., despised the manna (Num. 11. 5). In both cases God gave their desire, though it was not good for them.

Saul, the son of Kish. God seems to have let them have, even in the appearance of the man, taller than his fellows, the pattern of their heart wrought out (1 Sam. 16. 7). As if the arm of flesh could save—note, Philistine has an even larger man than Saul, as they soon learned (1 Sam. 17. 4).

A band of men. Even though He was rejected and Saul put in

His place, God provided a body-guard for the new king. Such the patience and grace of God (Matt. 5. 45).

Sons of Belial. Lawless men who will not submit to the ordinance of God (Rom. 13. 1). Surely if God can bear with the powers that be, it is ours to submit and pray for them (1 Tim. 2. 1, 2). The king was lenient to these men (see next chapter, verse 13).

We might teach from this lesson the responsibility of a right choice. We choose every day—must choose. Two roads lie before us; we must choose which we will travel on. At the trial of Jesus it was Jesus or Barabbas—they chose the thief, Jesus was rejected. Choose ye this day (Josh 24. 15), choose to have Jesus as your own Saviour and Lord, and in so doing, all other competitors will be rejected.

6th November.—**JESUS THE PROPHET** (John 7. 40-50). *Memory verse, Acts 3. 22*—"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you."

The Prophet or the Christ—Which?—The work of a prophet—A difficulty not properly met—The powerful word—Responsibility to hear—Result of refusal or neglect.

THE Feast of Tabernacles was drawing to a close; as its joys faded and its festivities passed away, Jesus, the antitype of it all, stood up and cried, "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Many of the hearers caught His meaning and said:

"**This is THE Prophet.**" There had been many prophets; one in particular is indicated by this expression (Deut. 18. 15). A prophet is one who brings the Word of God from God to the people. Jesus was that in the fullest sense (John 8. 26-28; Heb. 1. 2). Jesus has told out the mind of God by word and deed; all His actions were manifestations of God (John 14. 9).

Others said, "**This is the Christ.**" This is higher ground, and includes His office of prophet. See John 4, where the woman first detects a prophet, then speaks of Christ. It seems that the people put the one truth against the other when both should have gone together.

"**Shall Christ come out of Galilee?**" See also verse 52, and John 1. 46. This is scriptural knowledge, and correct so far. Bethlehem-Judah (Micah 5. 2) was well known as the place foretold. But a very little inquiry would have put that right. Had they asked Jesus, He would have made it plain, but they preferred to debate and divide about it—a common fault.

Some of them would have taken Him. Officers were present for the purpose. The power of His word and the dignity of His Person prevented this.

Never man spake like this Man. Divinity dwelt in His very words—as of old when "all things became by the word of His power." Wondrous word-speaker from eternity to eternity (John 1. 1, 14).

Jesus being the Divine Prophet, great benefit is gained by hearing Him (Mark 9. 7). Eternal life comes by hearing Him (John 5. 24; Isa. 55. 3), and knowledge of God and Heaven from the same source. Refusal (Heb. 12. 25) and neglect (Heb. 2. 3) of this Prophet and His work is sure to end in woful destruction (2 Thess. 1. 8).

SOME PRECEPTS FOR US TO DO.

Whatsoever He saith to you <i>do it</i>	- - - - -	John 2. 5
Whosoever shall <i>do</i> the will of God is my brother, sister, and mother	- - - - -	Mk. 3. 35
My mother and My brethren are these which hear the Word of God and <i>do it</i>	- - - - -	Luke 8. 21
Ye are My friends if ye <i>do</i> whatsoever I command you	- - - - -	John 15. 14
As ye would that men should <i>do</i> to you <i>do</i> ye also to them likewise	- - - - -	Luke 6. 31
If any man will <i>do</i> His will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God	- - - - -	John 7. 17
This <i>do</i> in remembrance of Me	- - - - - Luke 22. 19; 1 Cor. 11. 24	
If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye <i>do</i> them	- - - - -	John 13. 17
Whatsoever ye <i>do</i> , <i>do</i> all to the glory of God	- - - - -	1 Cor. 10. 31
Whatsoever ye <i>do</i> , <i>do</i> all in the name of the Lord Jesus	- - - - -	Col. 3. 17
Whatsoever ye <i>do</i> , <i>do</i> it heartily, as to the Lord	- - - - -	Col. 3. 23
He that giveth, let him <i>do</i> it with simplicity	- - - - -	Rom. 12. 8
Let us <i>do</i> good to all men	- - - - -	Gal 6. 10
Even as Christ forgave you, so also <i>do</i> ye	- - - - -	Col. 3. 13
For if ye <i>do</i> these things ye shall never fall	- - - - -	2 Pet. 1. 10
The apostle, writing to the Philippians, says, "I <i>can do</i> all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."		V. F.

SALVATION.

In Christ Jesus	- - - - -	2 Tim. 2. 10
Present, "Now"	- - - - -	2 Cor. 6. 2
Full	- - - - -	1 Tim. 1. 15
Free	- - - - -	Rom. 6. 23
Eternal	- - - - -	Heb. 5. 9
T. D. W. M.		

AN ACTIVE SAINT.

		(Jude 20, 21.)
Building	Col. 2. 7; Eph. 3. 17	
Praying	Eph. 6. 18; Phil. 4. 6	
Keeping	Jno. 17. 11; 15. 4; Pro. 4. 23	
Looking	Titus 2. 13; Heb. 9. 28	
M. E. S.		

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS (1 Tim. 2. 5).

This Man was the Son of God	- - - - -	Mark 15. 39
Mighty to save	- - - - -	Isa. 63. 1
I find no fault in this Man	- - - - -	Luke 23. 4
This Man has done nothing amiss	- - - - -	Luke 23. 41
The Lamb without blemish and without spot	- - - - -	1 Peter 1. 19
Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins	- - - - -	Acts 13. 38
Redemption through His blood	- - - - -	Eph. 1. 7
This Man receiveth sinners	- - - - -	Luke 15. 2
He died for the ungodly	- - - - -	Rom. 5. 6
This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God	- - - - -	Heb. 10. 12
The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin	- - - - -	1 John 1. 7
This Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood	- - - - -	Heb. 7. 24
Appears in the presence of God for us	- - - - -	Heb. 9. 24 J.M'A.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS (Hebrews 12. 2).

LET US LOOK TO HIM

As the object of our salvation	- - - - -	Isa. 45. 21
As the example of our life	- - - - -	Heb. 12. 2
As the subject of our theme	- - - - -	John 1. 36
As the consummation of our hopes	- - - - -	Heb. 9. 28; Phil. 3. 20
A. C. B.		

Outlines of Scripture Studies.

COALS.

Coals of sin	-	Pro. 6. 28
Coals of love and jealousy		Song of Sol. 8. 6
The Coal of cleansing	Isa. 6. 6	
The Coal of backsliding	Lam. 4. 8	
The Coal of hope	- 2 Sam. 14. 7	
The Coals of strife	- Pro. 26. 21	
The Coals of kindness	Rom. 12. 20	
	T. B.	

THE GREAT CHANGE (Ps. 40. 1-3).

Heard my cry	-	Awakening
Brought me up	-	Deliverance
Set my feet upon a rock		Security
Established my goings	-	Walk
The new song	- - -	Joy
Praise unto our God	-	Testimony
Many fearing,	}	Result or fruit
„ seeing,		
„ trusting,		
		J. M. H.

REDEMPTION.

<i>God is its Author</i> —Who of God is made unto us redemption	I Cor. 1. 30
<i>The blood of Christ is its purchase price</i> —In whom we have redemption through His blood	Eph. 1. 7
<i>Christ Himself is its Personification</i> —But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus . . . redemption	I Cor. 1. 30
<i>The Lord Jesus is its Depository</i> —The redemption that is in Christ Jesus	Rom. 3. 24; Col. 1. 14
<i>Deliverance is its Meaning</i> —The word “deliverance” in Hebrews 11. 35 is the same as rendered “redemption” in other scriptures	Heb. 11. 35
<i>Christ's coming is its Completion</i> —Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body	Rom. 8. 23
<i>The indwelling Spirit of God is its Security</i> —The Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption	Eph. 4. 30; I. 14 F. E. M.

CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE —and— CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY.

Born by the Word of God	I Pet. 1. 23	Hold forth the Word	- Phil. 2. 16
Received Christ	- Col. 2. 6	Walk in Him	- Col. 2. 6
Christ our life	- Col. 3. 4	Live Christ	- Phil. 1. 21
Complete in Christ	- Col. 2. 10	Stand complete	- Col. 4. 12
Live in the Spirit	- Gal. 5. 25	Walk in the Spirit	- Gal. 5. 25
Light in the Lord	- Eph. 5. 8	Walk as children of light	Eph. 5. 8
Well of water in us	- John 4. 14	Rivers of water shall flow	John 7. 38
Have the Light of Life	- John 8. 12	Let your light shine	- Matt. 5. 16
God worketh in us	- Phil. 2. 13	Work out salvation	- Phil. 2. 12
God abounds to us	- 2 Cor. 9. 8	Abound to every good work	2 Cor. 9. 8
Have the Bread of Life	John 6. 51	Feed my sheep and lambs	John 21. 16
Comforted of God	- 2 Cor. 1. 4	Comfort others	- 2 Cor. 1. 4
Freely ye have received	Matt. 10. 8	Freely give	- Matt. 10. 8
By their fruits ye shall know them	- Matt. 7. 20	He that saith I know Him and keepeth not His commandments is a liar	I John 2. 4

SEVEN “I WILLS” OF JEHOVAH.

I am the Lord (Ex. 6. 6)—Jehovah—the Faithful One, who cannot lie.		A. E. B.
I will take you for a people	- - - - -	Ex. 6. 7
I will redeem you	- - - - -	Ex. 6. 6
I will rid you . . . of . . . bondage	- - - - -	Ex. 6. 6
I will bring you out	- - - - -	Ex. 6. 6
I will bring you in	- - - - -	Ex. 6. 8
I will give . . . a . . . heritage	- - - - -	Ex. 6. 8
I will be to you a God—Elohim—He who shall bring it to pass —the Fulfiller	- - - - -	Ex. 6. 7 E. A. H.

A PRESENT-DAY PROOF

OF THE INSPIRATION OF GOD'S WORD,

By Dr. JAMES H. BROOKES, St. Louis.*

WHEN the Bible is studied carefully, a very remarkable fact is presented to the reader. He finds a Book of sixty-six separate books or treatises, one of which contains one hundred and fifty Psalms, and these books were prepared by about forty writers, appearing at various periods through some sixteen hundred years. The first lived a thousand years before Herodotus, and the last died nearly a hundred years after the birth of Christ. They embrace every class of society, every condition of life, every degree of culture—kings, legislators, priests, scholars, shepherds, fishermen, tax-gatherers, and treat every conceivable subject in heaven, earth, and hell.

The remarkable fact is, that, from beginning to end, they bear the most uniform testimony upon every doctrine and duty they discuss. Many illustrations of this statement might be given, if time permitted, but one will answer the purpose for the present. Let us take

THE METHOD OF APPROACHING GOD

acceptably, or the way of salvation. Surely no more important point can be raised to test the question of uniformity in the teachings of the Bible.

In the chapter immediately following the story of the Fall, we are told of two brothers, the first-born of the race, presenting their offerings to the Lord. The one brought the fruit of the sin-cursed ground: the other "the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering" (Gen. 4. 4). So the blood of slain victims is seen in the first recorded act of worship which received the favour of the Lord, as afterward "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelt a sweet savour" (Gen. 8. 20, 21).

It is clearly affirmed, again and again, that the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, drew near to God on the ground of sacrifices laid upon the altar, and thus it continued until the time of Moses, when the same mode of worship was required in the sacrifice of the burnt-offering, the peace-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering (Lev. 1. 5). On the day of atonement, also, the high priest went with blood into the most

*From his last great work—"GOD SPAKE ALL THESE WORDS; or, the Supernatural Origin and Inerrant Inspiration of God's Word." 2/6 post free.

holy place within the tabernacle, and was commanded to "sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat." It was upon the merit and value of this blood the sins of the people were put away (Lev. 16. 25). It is distinctly stated, "For it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17. 11).

But God could not be satisfied with outward forms of worship. Unless they were the expression of the inward offering of the soul, they were of no value. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. . . . THEN shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering; then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar" (Psalm 51. 16-19).

In view of the utter failure of Israel, as shown in their heartless ceremonies, God is represented in an attitude of earnest beseeching, immediately following this stern denunciation: "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1. 18). The only hope is in

THE SUBSTITUTIONARY SACRIFICE

of Christ. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53. 5, 6).

Precisely the same doctrine is found everywhere in the New Testament. The Lord Jesus Christ said at the Last Supper: "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26. 28). So Paul writes: "Being now justified by His blood" (Rom. 5. 9); "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3. 13); "In whom we have redemption through His blood. . . . Now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the precious blood of Christ" (Eph. 1. 7; 2. 13); "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9. 22). Peter writes: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and

without spot" (1 Peter 1. 18, 19). John tells us: "God is light" (1 John 1. 5); "God is love" (1 John 4. 8); and says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1. 7). At the opening of the last book of the Bible, we have an ascription of praise "unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1. 5, 6).

That this doctrine of the blood, which pervades the entire Bible, is not natural, nor agreeable to men, is shown by the fact that it is utterly rejected by vast numbers of professing Christians. There is no desire now to defend the doctrine, but only to refer to the multitudes, claiming to believe the Bible, who scoff at one of its most plainly revealed truths, as a proof that the Bible is not of or from men.

SEPARATION FROM EGYPT.

By WM SHAW, Maybole

IN ancient Israel, under the shelter of the blood of the Passover lamb, we have an undoubted type of those who in the present day are under the shelter of the blood of Christ. This being so, we shall assuredly find lessons of the highest value in considering some of the events following upon what has been called "The night of Egypt's doom." The door-posts and lintels have been duly sprinkled, and the sheltered ones within are feasting on the roasted lamb. Here we have beautifully set forth the perfect safety of those who have believed on Him whom God hath "set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom. 3. 25). They have been delivered from wrath to come (1 Thess. 1. 10). The blood has made atonement—yea, has given boldness to enter into the holiest (Heb. 10. 19). And not only has the question of sin been settled, and the burden of guilt been rolled away, but the believer is privileged to *feast upon God's Lamb*. He tastes and sees that the Lord is good (Ps. 34. 8). He has meat to eat which the world knows not of. To him the Christian experience is much more than the knowledge—blessed as that knowledge may be—that "there is no condemnation, there is no hell for me." He eats of bread from heaven—he draws water from heavenly springs—he holds communion with the risen Son of God.

"Well," you say, "what more could one have?" Let us glance at the type, and we shall see. Let it be carefully noted that in Israel's case *Redemption* embraced far more than shelter

Separation from Egypt.

by the blood, and the feast that took place within the blood-sprinkled doors. Israel must *leave Egypt*. The word had gone forth from Jehovah, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me." In vain had Pharaoh suggested that they could sacrifice to God "in the land." Nothing less than *separation from Egypt* would be in keeping with the divine purpose. No sooner were Israel sheltered by blood than they found that Egypt was no place for them. Therefore we find it written that "it came to pass, the selfsame day, that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies" (Ex. 12. 51).

All this is deeply instructive. Israel's separation from Egypt sets forth our separation from the world. We sometimes hear it said, "I am sheltered by the blood, and that is all I need concern myself about." Such a thought finds no countenance in Scripture. It is certainly one of the "strange things" to be found in the religious world to-day, that in many cases those who profess to be "saved by the blood" remain in worldly associations—yea, in religious fellowship with the enemies of Christ! This is all the more surprising for two reasons. Firstly, there is the distinct command to believers to come out from the ungodly (2 Cor. 6. 17), and have no fellowship with "the unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. 5. 11). In the face of such a plain "word" from the Lord, it is hard to see how believers can remain in communion with the ungodly, and be found "worshipping" with those who, if asked the question, would honestly answer, "We have never been converted to God." Then, secondly, it is surely surprising that one born of the Spirit should find himself at home among the enemies of God. Surely the heaven-begotten instinct, if there were no other consideration, might teach him, as it has taught many, that religious fellowship with the enemies of Christ cannot be of God. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3. 3). This is sufficient to settle the question of companionship. And as for the question of worship, we know that "the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Ps. 119. 17).

Yet, in spite of all that has been advanced, there are to be found those who *defend* the mixing up of the living with the dead—thus joining together those whom God hath put asunder. And sometimes there is the strange spectacle of children of God sitting under the ministry of one who has never been born again—yea, who preaches against the new birth with all his

Separation from Egypt.

might! The mystery deepens when we remember it is written of the Lord's true sheep, that they hear His voice, and follow Him; and "*a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers*" (Jno. 10. 27, 5). Why do they not flee? This is a question for all whom it may concern. Let us be clear as to this, that those who, with an honest and true heart, are seeking to know the will of God and do it, shall know it and be found setting themselves to do that which the Lord hath appointed. In these last days we have been privileged to witness

A WONDERFUL REVIVAL OF THIS GREAT TRUTH—

separation from the world, whether "the world" be found in the guise of ungodliness or in the guise of religiousness. There are many, and their number is increasing, who have heard the call of God to go forth outside the camp unto the Lord Jesus Christ, bearing His reproach; for we must remember that it is not a popular thing this going forth outside the camp. If it were suddenly to become popular, what an exodus, professedly "outside-the-camp," we should see to-morrow! But we need have no apprehension that the things of the Spirit of God shall commend themselves to the carnal mind (1 Cor. 2. 14). Let our prayer be that there may be many like Moses, and of like precious faith; for of him it is written, "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11. 27).

CHRIST EVERYTHING.

LET Christ be EVERYTHING to you and to me. He fills heaven with its blessedness; shall He not be quite able to fill and to overflow our poor little hearts! Let Him be to us our ALL. "None but Christ, nothing but Christ," let this be the cry of our hearts. Jesus is *something*, more or less, to almost everybody in these lands; nay, He is *much* to a goodly number; but to few is Jesus the ALL IN ALL—the one object of desire and of delight. Let Him be altogether so to you and to me. He is so to those who truly know Him and truly love Him. To those who believe, He is precious. Oh, how precious! I feel that the one grand lesson God has been keeping me at, all these years of suffering, has been the infinite preciousness of Christ, and that His aim has been to lead me to make Christ my all.

JOHN DICKIE.

CREATION'S HALLELUJAH.

(Psalm 148.)

HEAVENLY SAINTS.

HALLELUJAH in the heights!
To the Lamb once slain;
Praise, ye saints, ye heavenly lights,
Ye who were His first delights,
Whom the Father to Him gave,
Purposed by His blood to save,
And with Him to reign.

HEAVENLY HOSTS.

Angels, now your harps attune,
Sing, ye hosts above;
Praise the Lamb, ye sun and moon,
Midnight answering to noon;
Praise Him, all ye stars of light,
Sing, ye heaven of heavens bright,
Praise redeeming love.

EARTH.

CHRIST the throne of glory fills,
Crowned the righteous King;
Shout, 'O mountains, skip, ye hills,
Sing, ye fountains and ye rills;
Praise Him all, ye fruitful trees,
Swell the chorus, all ye seas—
Let creation sing.

THE NATIONS.

Kings and rulers, peoples all,
Come, your Lord adore;
Peace now reigns from pole to pole,
Sin and death no more enthral;
Joyfully your tribute bring,
Let the nations praise their King,
Now and evermore.

ISRAEL.

Israel, chosen of thy God,
Thy Redeemer praise;
Gathered now, redeemed by blood,
Saved through many a 'whelming flood;
Thou His witness still shalt be,
Now and through eternity,
His to endless days.

"THE HOUSE" AND "THE BODY."

"THE HOUSE OF GOD."

PUTTING aside the references in Scripture to the word house, where a material building is indicated, there are not many passages where it is used to describe a company of people. Our enquiry, therefore, as to the significance of this name when so used is brought within narrow limits.

The Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost delivered his message as for "all the house of Israel" (Acts 2. 36), and Stephen reminded his hearers how God had spoken by the mouth of the prophets to the house of Israel (Acts 7. 42). Again, the Apostle Paul, writing to the Hebrews in chapter 3, reminds those whom he addresses as "holy brethren," that the tribes of Israel of old made up God's house then, and that in that house Moses was faithful as the servant of God; a preacher of law—the law being the rule for the guidance of that house—but that in contrast they belonged to another house, of which God was also the builder, and over which Christ, as Son, was Head, admittance to this new house being not by natural but by spiritual birth.

A passage of the first importance in this connection is 1 Tim. 3. 15, where it is stated, "The House of God" is "the Church of the Living God." We have already seen that "the Church of God" is composed of all, without exception, who are saved; also, the same company called "the Temple of God." And now we find that what is true of the Church, and of the Temple, is also true of the House of God, in that all three include the whole number of those who have believed.

It has been suggested that to belong to "The House of God" is conditional, founding this contention on the use of the word "if" in Hebrews 3. 6. This matter has been touched upon in a former paper on "Believers"; we would add thereto a remark on Hebrews 10. 21, where it is stated that Christ is "an High Priest over the House of God." If it be true that some believers are not in "the House of God," then it follows that such have no High Priest, seeing that He is only High Priest over the House of God. Is it conceivable that anyone could be reckoned among the saved who has no High Priest? There could only be one answer to such a question, and so the conclusion is inevitable that all those who have believed form part of "the House of God," as if they did not belong to it they could have no High Priest, and consequently could not be reckoned among the saved.

"The House" and "The Body."

"The House of God" now is a spiritual house (1 Peter 2. 5), in contrast to His house of old, which included all Israel, and so many who knew not the Lord; and as any judgment on the spiritual must be now, that they might not be judged with the world, the same apostle adds, in chapter 4. 17: "The time is come that judgment must begin at 'the House of God,' in contrast to the doom of those 'that obey not the Gospel of God,'" whose final punishment is deferred until the setting of the great white throne.

The "great house" of 2 Tim. 2. 20 demands a passing reference. The apostle refers, by way of illustration, to the many vessels necessary to, and used in, a great house, some more valuable than others because of the material of which they are made, but all alike vessels for use, more or less honourable in the use to which they may be put, but that in any case the man who purges himself from the "profane and vain babblings" previously referred to in verse 16, he will always be a vessel "meet for the Master's use."

"THE BODY OF CHRIST."

There are at least two Scriptures which leave no shadow of doubt that those spoken of as "the Church of God" are also "the Body of Christ": "The Church which is His Body" (Ephes. 1. 23, 24), "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church" (Colos. 1. 18).

These, coupled with "The House of God which is the Church of the Living God" (1 Tim. 3. 15), establish conclusively that the names "the Church of God," "the House of God," "the Temple of God," and "the Body of Christ," are synonymous terms as far as they indicate that all who are in the one are in the other. We must not suppose, however, that the names are used indiscriminately; each of them has its own special teaching.

"The Church of God" tells us of the dignity of the great assembly on which God has indelibly stamped His name.

"The Temple of God" reminds us of the holiness becoming in the ways of those amongst whom God dwells.

"The House of God" reminds us that we are brought into a position which demands a whole-hearted allegiance to Christ, whom God has set over His house as Lord to rule supreme therein.

"The Body of Christ" is the Name above others that gives most comfort and stay to our hearts. It speaks of the com-

plete identification of the Head with every member of His Body, because “by one Spirit are we all baptised unto one Body” (1 Cor. 12, 13). A tie and link is thus formed that can never be broken. We are members of His Body (Eph. 5. 30), and this being so, we are assured of His unwearied care, and the nourishing and cherishing without which we must have perished in this evil world.

It follows that if we are members of Christ’s Body, “we are members one of another” (Rom. 12. 5). If we are assured of the unchanging love of our Lord by such words as that no man hate his own flesh, we in like manner should so love and care for each other as part and parcel of each other. To seek the comfort and happiness of a member of the Body of Christ is to seek my own highest good.

The broken and divided state of Christians does not abrogate the great truths so feebly touched upon. Circumstances change, but divine principles are unchangeable, and the infinite wisdom that unfolded them for us in the Scriptures knew all about the changed circumstances that have come. Any attempt, however feeble, on the part of any, be they few or many, to approve themselves to God must proceed on the lines indicated, or result in yet another failure and another faction. The platform we assume must be broad enough to include all whom God acknowledges in the names He has called over them, and for any to assume exclusively to themselves what is the portion of all who belong to Christ, they are but cultivating the noxious weeds of intolerance, bigotry, and cant.

A final paper will take up the term “Bride.”

P. H.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING.

13th November.—**JESUS, THE PRIEST** (Heb. 7. 14-28). *Memory verse, 7. 25*—“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

The Priestly office—Melchisedec order: eternal, unchanging, royal, great, and good—Levitical order: temporary, imperfect, unstable, earthly—The Priestly Person—His work.

A PRIEST (Scriptural) is one ordained of God to draw near to Him for men with gifts and sacrifices for sin (Heb. 5. 1), and convey to men God’s blessing (Num. 6. 23). The High Priest pre-eminently filled these functions, and in our lesson we view Jesus as

THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST as known by God, and appearing in the Divine Presence for the believer.

Melchisedec, the first named priest of the Bible, is an excellent type of Christ—a Royal Priest—(1) His eternal, and unending, and *unchanging Personality*, without "father," "mother," "descent" (Heb. 7. 3); (2) *Royalty*, as he was king of righteousness and peace (Zech. 6. 13; Isa. 9. 6); (3) His *greatness* in blessing and getting tithes from Abraham (John 8. 53, 58); (4) His *goodness* in supplying bread and wine—as Jesus does (John 6. 37), symbol of His own body and blood (Luke 22. 19, 20).

The **Levitical priesthood** affords many comparisons with and contrasts to our Lord as Priest. It was *temporary*—His for ever. It *perfected nothing*, was continually repeated—His was once for ever and completed. The Levitical priesthood had *no oath* or guarantee of stability—Jesus was by oath established (Ps. 110. 4). They were *on the earth*—Jesus is "higher than the heavens." They were *infirm men*—He is the perfected Son for evermore.

There need be no confusion about the theme of our lesson. *Note*—THE PERSON: God's eternal Son, ordained by God, established by an oath, ever-living to intercede, coming again (Heb. 9. 28). THE WORK: Offered Himself (Heb. 10. 12), perfected, as to standing, the objects of His work, passed into the heavens by His own blood, and sat down at the right hand of God, where He now waits "expecting till His enemies be made His footstool."

20th November.—**JESUS, THE RIGHTEOUS KING** (Matt. 25. 31-46). *Memory verse, Isaiah 32. 1*—"Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."

Subject or rebel, which?—Kingly surroundings—Glorious One on a throne of glory—Universal authority—Separating with Shepherd care and love and knowledge—Rewarding and punishing as a King—Sins of omission.

THE consideration of Jesus as King is comfortable or otherwise just as we stand related to Him. If His subjects (by grace) happy are we; if not, but rebels, it should wake disturbing thoughts. A king is one of power (*Saxon*: the man who can), authority, and dignity, round whom law and order should circle, and to whom all honest and true men yield submission and obedience. Jesus is King in every sense of the word.

Our reading lesson has to do with the **Son of Man** in glory, come with the holy angels to set up His everlasting kingdom (2 Thess. 1. 10).

The throne of His glory. On earth His glorious person on a throne befitting His majesty, "crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. 2. 9), no longer hidden but manifested (1 Tim 6. 15), "the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords."

All nations. His writ extending all over the earth, all must hear, all must obey and appear in answer to His summons (Zech. 14. 16).

He shall separate: In that day of the Lord persons will find their company as their nature is—**sheep** or **goat**. Sheep nature or goat nature decides the right hand and the left (John 3. 6). The actions of either party, spoken of after, are the outcome and fruit of their different natures.

As a Shepherd, to discern His own (John 10. 14), and to separate

with all a shepherd's knowledge and love: **as a King**, to reward and to punish.

Here follows the beautiful and solemn dialogue first with the SHEEP who in their simple Christ-like deeds had, out of the inwardly-wrought grace in them, ministered to Christ's for Christ's sake, and so the King repays (Luke 10. 35). Notice that the left hand GOATS are accused of no wicked deeds—it is all negative—that which men call sins of omission. "YE DID IT NOT." What we omit to do shows what we are as much as what we actually do (Matt. 21. 30).

How important, then, that the Gospel word be heard and obeyed (1 Pet. 4. 17), that we hear the voice of Jesus and pass out of death into life (John 5. 24), and become by new birth sheep of Jesus' flock and do the deeds of Jesus' disciples.

27th November.—**JESUS, THE APPOINTED JUDGE** (John 5. 1-23). *Memory verse, Acts 17. 31*—"Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

Bethesda work—The Father and the Son workers—Perfect unison—The Father's pleasure in the Son's work—Resurrection power—Appointed to the judgment-seat—Free from judgment.

THE theme of the present lesson rises out of the Bethesda incident of the healing of the impotent man. This man had been healed on the Sabbath. The Jews resented this, and sought to slay Jesus because of it.

"**My Father.**" Jesus takes simple yet high ground. Sabbaths came and went, yet God unceasingly wrought, or man had ceased to exist. "**I work.**" God's Sabbath of rest had been broken in on by sin, and Christ's rest could only be when the sin was abolished and rest restored (Heb. 4. 1).

"**The Son can do nothing.**" This is not the inability of impotence: that is, Jesus was so perfectly in unison with His Father's mind and will that what He did was synonymous with His Father's doings (John 14. 9). *Illus.*: A child may so get to know and love his father that in many things he acts in the same way.

So, "**the Father showeth.**" As the loved Son, the Father revealed to Jesus and by Jesus all His divine works. More than healing an impotent man; even to resurrection power. All power is given to Jesus (Matt. 28. 18). We see this power in exercise at Lazarus' grave (John 11.). See also verse 25 of John 5.

"**Committed all judgment.**" In connection with resurrection and in addition to it is judgment, and Jesus is the appointed Judge. The Judgment Day (see mem. verse) and the Judge are appointed—"after death, judgment." The Great White Throne is the place, and the subjects of judgment are THE DEAD, small and great (Rev. 20. 12).

The character of the judgment is "righteousness" (Acts 17. 31). Not man's ideal righteousness, but God's perfect standard.

Note carefully in view of this it is that John 5. 24 appears as a way of salvation: "Verily, verily," &c. Hearing the word of Jesus, believing, having everlasting life, shall not come into judgment, but is passed

out of death into life. "No condemnation" (Rom. 8. 1); why? because Jesus died (Rom. 8. 34).

4th December.—**SAMUEL'S RETIRING WORDS** (1 Sam. 12. 1-25).

Memory verse, 1 Sam. 12. 1-24—"Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things He hath done for you."

A good retrospect—A challenge—The response—The Lord's righteous deeds—The people's unrighteous response—The Word enforced—Repentance and Confession—Exhortation.

BEHOLD the upright: for the end of that man is peace" (Psalm 37. 37). These words apply to the subject of this lesson. At the end of a long and active life, Samuel could stand before his fellows and maintain his testimony for God.

"I am an old man and grey-headed." From that point he looks back over the years to childhood. A life all spent for God and His people. The perfect Man, Jesus, shows a life all devoted from cradle to Cross.

"Whose ox have I taken?" Samuel did not use his power to enrich himself. God's true servants seek not the fleece of the flock (Acts 20. 34, 35). Jesus Himself came not to take but give (2 Cor. 8. 9).

"Thou hast not defrauded us." So the people had to confess. "No fault in Him" (John 19. 4), yet they rejected Him and chose Barabbas.

"The righteous acts of the Lord." Samuel now proceeds to a higher theme and shows God's dealings with them and their ungrateful returns, seeking by that recital to bring them to repentance (Romans 2. 4).

Thunder and rain. The voice of God in the storm emphasised the word of the prophet and broke the people down in confession.

Fear not . . . only fear the Lord. Thus follows the practical healing and instructing and warning word. Thus wisely and effectually did Samuel speak and act for God, seeking the people's hearty repentance and faith in God, even in face of their many sins and backslidings.

Notice, first, the prophet was a man of unimpeachable character before the people, and had God's manifest power with his word, so nothing could withstand him. Again, Samuel's subject matter was very definite and to the point, viz., what God had done and what the people were. These points are valuable, and should be pondered by the teachers to their profit and help in the work.

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IMPOSSIBILITIES.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | For God to lie - - - - - | Heb. 6. 18 |
| 2 | For God to clear the guilty - - - - - | Num. 14. 18 |
| 3 | He cannot deny Himself - - - - - | 2 Tim. 2. 13 |
| 4 | To please God without faith - - - - - | Heb. 11. 6 |
| 5 | For Jesus to escape cup of wrath - - - - - | Matt. 26. 42 |
| 6 | For Him to be holden of death - - - - - | Acts 2. 24 |
| 7 | Apostates to be saved - - - - - | Heb. 6. 4 |
| 8 | For those in hell to escape - - - - - | Luke 16. 26 |
| 9 | For man trusting in riches to be saved - - - - - | 1 Tim. 6. 17 R. L. B. |

A CALL TO ARISE.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Arise of decision - Luke 15. 18 |
| 2 | Arise of life - Luke 7. 14 |
| 3 | Arise of light - Eph. 5. 14 |
| 4 | Arise of obedience - Acts 22. 16 |
| 5 | Arise of walk - Matt. 9. 5, 6 |
| 6 | Arise of testimony - Isa. 60. 1 |
| 7 | Arise of glory - Song 2, 10, 13 |
- J. M. H.

THE CHARTER OF GATHERING.

- MATTHEW 18. 20.
- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Divine Place - - - - - | Where |
| 2 | Divine Testimony - - - - - | two or three |
| 3 | Divine Gathering - - - - - | are gathered |
| 4 | Divine Fellowship - - - - - | together |
| 5 | Divine Authority - - - - - | in My name |
| 6 | Divine Presence - - - - - | there am I |
| 7 | Divine Centre - - - - - | in the midst of them |

"PUT ON."

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Put Him on as JESUS, to save from and to the uttermost.
"Jesus . . . able to save them to the uttermost" - | Heb. 7. 22-25 |
| 2 | Put Him on as LORD, to rule and regulate your actions.
"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" - - - - - | Rom. 13. 14 |
| 3 | Put Him on as CHRIST, to transform your life like His.
"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ,
have put on Christ" - - - - - | Gal. 3. 27 |
| 4 | Put Him on as HOLINESS, to manifest Himself. "Put on
the new man . . . created in righteousness and true
holiness" - - - - - | Eph. 4. 24; Col. 3. 10 |
| 5 | Put Him on as ARMOUR, to protect in all offensive and de-
fensive warfare. "Put on the whole armour of God" - | Eph. 6. 11 |
| 6 | Put Him on as POWER, to act through in service. "Until ye
be endued (same word as put on) with power from on high" - | Luke 24. 49 |
| 7 | Put Him on as LIGHT, that He may be seen. "Let us
put on the armour of Light" - - - - - | Rom. 13. 12 F. E. M. |

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BLESSED AILMENTS.

Enlargement of the heart Ps. 119. 32;
 1 Ki. 4. 29; 2 Cor. 6. 11-13
 Heartburn - - - Luke 24. 32
 Broken heart - Ps. 34. 18; 51. 17
 Sick of love - Cant. 2. 5; 5. 8
 May the Lord create in us deep
 and real longing to know much more
 of these blessed experiences as we
 journey through this wilderness
 world to the eternal glory. J. M.

**SEVEN THINGS TO BE DONE
 IN THE LORD.**

Believe in the Lord - Acts 9. 42
 Rejoice in the Lord - Phil. 4. 4
 Stand fast in the Lord Phil. 4. 1
 Labour in the Lord - 1 Cor. 15. 58
 Obey parents in the Lord Eph. 6. 1
 Marry in the Lord - 1 Cor. 7. 39
 Die in the Lord - - Rev. 14. 13
 . T. B.

SEVEN SAFEGUARDS FOR SAINTS.

The safeguards are connected with the word "lest" in Hebrews.

Hearing—Give heed to the things which we have heard, lest
 at any time we should let them slip - - - - - Heb. 2. 1
Heeding—Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you
 an evil heart of unbelief - - - - - Heb. 3. 12
Exhorting—Exhort one another daily . . . lest any of
 you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin - - - Heb. 3. 13
Labouring—Labour, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any
 man fall after the same example of disobedience (*mar.*) Heb. 4. 11
Considering—Consider Him . . . lest ye be wearied
 and faint - - - - - Heb. 12. 3
Making—Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which
 is lame be turned out of the way - - - - - Heb. 12. 13
Looking—Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace
 of God; lest any root of bitterness, springing up, trouble
 you, and thereby many be defiled - - - Heb. 12. 15 F. E. M.

GOOD WORKS.

GOOD.

None that doeth good Rom 3. 12
 None good but one - Matt. 19. 17
 Thy loving-kindness is good Ps. 69. 16
 Thy mercy is good - Ps. 109. 21
 Good is the word of
 the Lord - - - 2 Ki. 20. 19
 The Lord is good - Ps. 34. 8

GOOD WORKS.

Created unto good works Eph. 2. 10
 Full of good works - Acts 9. 36
 Adorned with good works 1 Ti. 2. 9, 10
 Rich in good works - 1 Ti. 6. 18
 Furnished unto all good
 works - - - 2 Ti. 3. 17
 Pattern of good works Titus 2. 7
 Zealous of good works Titus 2. 14
 Careful to maintain good works 11 3. 8
 Prepared unto good work 2 Ti. 2. 21
 Perfect in every good work He. 13. 21
 Provoke unto...good works He. 10. 24

J. C.

WHAT IS FAITH?

FAITH IS

The substance of things
 hoped for - - - Heb. 11. 1.
 The evidence of things
 not seen - - - Heb. 11. 1

WITHOUT FAITH

It is impossible to
 please God Heb. 11. 6; 10. 38

BY FAITH

We are saved - - - Rom. 1. 16
 We are justified Rom. 5. 1; Gal. 2. 16
 We live - Gal. 2. 20; Hab. 2. 4
 We are sanctified - 1 Cor. 1. 30
 We stand - - - 2 Cor. 1. 24
 We walk - - - 2 Cor. 5. 7
 Christ dwells in us - Eph. 3. 17
 We have confidence in
 drawing nigh to God
 Eph. 3. 12; Heb. 10. 22

E. A. H.

SHIMEI'S OPPORTUNITY.

By WM. SHAW, Maybole Author of *Selected Sayings*.*

WE never hear of Shimei until Absalom the usurper has ascended the throne. While David, the chosen of God, was reigning, Shimei's voice was silent. Indeed, at that time, we do not find that there was such a person. But no sooner does a change take place in the character of rule in Israel, than Shimei comes into prominence. As the exiled king makes his sorrowful retreat from Jerusalem, we read that there came out from Bahurim "a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera," and that he cursed David with a grievous cursing (2 Sam. 16. 5-8). The triumph of the scheming and unprincipled Absalom was the signal for Shimei—a true son of Belial—to stand forth and let his voice be heard in Israel. Surely there could not be a more striking illustration of that Scripture which says, "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted" (Psa. 12. 8). Absalom is exalted; and now is Shimei's hour and the power of darkness. While David was on the throne, Shimei was powerless. He did not dare to let his voice be heard. He was of no account whatever as a "force" in Israel. But there came "a change of government"—a change from that which was of God to that which was of man; and immediately Shimei felt that he was a person of far greater importance than he had been before. It has been said that when a great man falls, every "small" man feels himself a few inches taller. This, however, is the mere swelling of self-importance that ever marks out the man of grovelling spirit and narrow soul. Such was Shimei. David's forced rejection from the throne brought a positive joy to this son of Gera. He could now "deliver his soul" to the fugitive king, and give expression to all that was in his heart. His opportunity had come, and he was determined to use it to the utmost.

Now, we think no one can fail to see that the brief history of Shimei brings before us the working of a principle which is in undoubted operation among the people of God to-day. And the principle may be at work although none of the actors are of such an abandoned type of character as Shimei. Under a certain kind of rule in Israel there were certain men who were powerless and obscure. Under another kind of rule these same persons rise into prominence, and smite with the sword of the tongue the man whom God had anointed. We see

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Shimei's Opportunity.

here that under the rule of God iniquity has to hide its head, while under the rule of man iniquity comes out and flaunts itself in the face of day. If you change the scene to a company of God's people at the present time, you will find the same principle operating. It may vary in degree, but the principle is the same. If *God reigns* among a company of believers, the elements represented by the Shimei character are kept down. Yet they are not kept down by "the law of a carnal commandment," but by the power of God felt to be with His gathered people—a power which even the unlearned and those that "believe not" are made to acknowledge (1 Cor. 14. 25). When the Lord Himself is thus "the glory in the midst," there is a forbidding and restraining power on all that would "exalt itself against God." And evils which could not be dealt with by "rules and regulations" born of carnal wisdom, are compelled to hide themselves before the felt presence of God in the midst of His people. At the same time there is a *constraining* power upon those whom the Lord would have to lead the aspirations of His people—a leading out of that which will exalt Him, and show forth His praise.

It is at a particular juncture in Israel's history that Shimei comes upon the scene. A revolutionary change had just taken place. Under the dominating influence of one man, and by sheer weight of numbers, the people had deposed him whose right it was to reign. At this point Shimei appears. This has been repeated time after time in the history of the people of God. When, through the flatteries of an Absalom, or the demoralising influences of an evil day, a new order of rule, or rulers, is established in the Church, it is wonderful what unheard-of persons at once rise up and let their voices be heard. The downfall of the "David dynasty" is pointed to as a direct evidence of the judgment of Heaven. Absalom is welcomed, David is cursed, and Shimei walks at large, saying, like one of an earlier day, "the bitterness of death is past." Men who never aspired to rule are seen rushing into the place of power. Men who for long felt theirs was an obscure position are now upon the pinnacle of the temple. The tongue of the dumb has found speech at last; and yet that tongue would be silent enough if only David reigned again in Zion! Considerations such as these may well cause searchings of heart in all who seek, in however humble a way, to guide the people of God in this dark day. It is only as we acknowledge Him to be Lord in the midst that we can count upon His guiding hand

to restrain, as well as constrain, to the glory of His great Name. As the house of David waxes stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxes weaker and weaker—as Christ is enthroned and the flesh is mortified—so shall we prove the goodness of our God, and see the operation of His hand, in holding back that which is not of Him, and in drawing out that which shall show forth His praise. Let each one of us pray for the peace of that “Jerusalem” in which his lot is cast; for blessed is that assembly of which it can be said, “Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”

“BRINGING BACK THE KING.”

WHEN Jesus of Nazareth was born, this prophecy was spoken concerning Him by the angel: “And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever.” But His rebellious people rejected Him and drove Him away. Instead of a coronation they gave Him a crucifixion. And so far from being King of Israel, He has for nearly two thousand years been an exile from earth; seated on His Father’s throne, indeed, but utterly denied the throne of Israel. And what is the state of things in His absence? War, misrule, anarchy, and suffering—enough to make one swoon with heart-sickness who stops to think of it at all. And the world is full of expedients for bringing deliverance to the race. Moral reforms, social reforms, labour reforms, political reforms, church reforms—I do not disparage these in the least. They are significant symptoms of the world’s unrest and of its irrepressible yearning for deliverance. But amid this universal striving after human amelioration, I take up this ancient question, “Why, therefore, speak ye not a word of bringing back the King?” On the authority of all New Testament teaching, and in the light of nineteen centuries of history, I declare my conviction that the only hope for the world is in the return of Jesus Christ to reign over the earth, to establish universal peace, and to bring it into subjection to His authority; and the return of our Lord in glory is the only hope of the Church.

A. J. GORDON.

I SEEK no more but that Christ may be the gainer, and I the loser; that He may be raised and heightened, and I cried down, and my worth made dust before His glory. RUTHERFORD.

THE BRIDE.

“EVERYONE of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14. 12). This Scripture establishes a great foundation truth. The individuality of the believer is never lost. As individuals we have to do with the Saviour. As individuals we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and as individuals we shall be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ. The white stone, and the new name, given to the overcomer (Rev. 2. 17), tell of a personal knowledge of each individual by the Lord, in His coming kingdom and glory.

While this is beyond dispute, we have already seen that various names embracing the whole of the redeemed point to relationships with the Lord, and with each other, where individuality is so far merged in collectivity.

The essential difference between the name at the head of this paper and those already considered, is that whilst the individuality of each believer is carried into heaven, so also is our corporate character. The names church, temple, house, and body speak of different truths connected with our corporate character while yet on earth, but “The Bride” tells of the corporate character to be borne in heaven.

It has been argued that the truth taught in Ephesians 5. 22, 23, is that of the married relationship, and the reference to the love and care of Christ for the Church is the model or illustration of what this closest tie on earth should be.

It is exactly the other way about. “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church” (verse 32), proves conclusively that what is taught here is something concerning Christ and the Church of which the married relationship between husband and wife was the most fitting illustration.

At present we are members of His body. This symbol will yield to another when we take up our place in the courts of heaven. All present names teaching us relationships to the Lord and each other whilst in the body will cease to have any significance when glorified together with Him, and there will remain the last and most expressive of all.

Our present position is that indicated in 2 Cor. 11. 2. “I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ.”

The Church of God is betrothed to the Christ of God, and Revelation 19. 6. 9 shows us, the days of betrothal being over, the time for the marriage has fully come. Previous to this the Church had been caught up at the coming of the Lord Jesus

Christ, glorified and made like Him, confessed before the Father and holy angels, and passed the judgment-seat of Christ. She now appears as the bride, and the marriage is celebrated in heaven with great rejoicings, just previous to the Lord coming forth to earth as Son of Man to judge the world, His wife accompanying Him to share in His triumphs and the glories of His reign.

This is still further opened out by the invitation of the angel to the seer in the words, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife, and he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God" (Rev. 21. 9, 10, 11).

Earlier in the visions shown to John he had been invited to behold "the lion of the tribe of Judah," and when he looked, lo! he "beheld a lamb." So here he is asked to see the bride, the Lamb's wife, and when he looks his gaze is arrested by the sight of a city. The change of symbol is as instructive as it is interesting. As the full glory of the city bursts upon him, the first part of his description is, "Having the glory of God." In this we have one of the strongest proofs that what he did see was none other than the Church of God.

"Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen" (Eph. 3. 21), was revealed to the Apostle Paul as part of the mystery of the Church, this being its completed destiny to be the chosen vessel for the display of the glory of God to the ages of the ages.

Again, in one of the glimpses given of the eternal state the imagery is the same.

"And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God, as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21. 2).

We see here, after a period of at least 1000 years has elapsed since the marriage took place, that the dew of eternal youth is upon the bride, the wedding garment being still the clothing; truly there is then neither change nor decay.

Able ministers of the Word have tried hard to rob the Church of the fruition of her hopes, and laboured attempts have been made to prove the nation of Israel to be the bride of the Lamb. It might be asked where is the sentence that promised to Israel a place in heaven. Her calling, hopes, and promises are all earthly, whereas the bride is seen in heaven, the marriage takes place in heaven, *before* the millennium.

Again she is seen coming forth from heaven. If the nation of Israel is the bride, when is the nation taken to heaven?

In the pleadings and entreaties of God with His ancient people, they are all based on a married relationship existing between Jehovah and the nation. Over and over in the prophetic Scriptures is Israel charged with the sin of adultery. Notwithstanding which His love for this people was so great that we have such words as, "Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?" (Isaiah 50. 1). The sin of Israel was of such a nature as would have justified God in utterly cutting her off, but this He did not do. No one could produce the bill of divorcement. On the contrary we hear such words as follow :

"Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you" (Jeremiah 3. 14). And again: "But as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband" (Ezekiel 16. 32).

Jehovah has chosen Israel in the relationship of wife to Himself.

The Church is presently espoused to Christ, and will be His wife in the coming day of His glory.

In drawing this series of papers to a close, one great truth emerges from all that has been looked at. Whether past, present, or to come, all the names called over the children of God in this dispensation embrace without exception the whole company of the redeemed, whether looked at as individuals or collectively, and as rigidly exclude all who are not born of God. Our safety will be to be content with the God-given names, and to seek to approve ourselves to God in giving effect to their all-embracing and all-excluding character.

P. H.

ABUNDANT SUPPLY FOR EVERY TIME OF NEED.

WHEN the hour of *need* comes, the supply of needed grace shall come with it (2 Cor. 12. 9); when the suffering abounds, the consolation shall abound with it (2 Cor. 1. 5). The suffering child of God is being led with new experiences, in which he shall receive new proofs of his Redeemer's changeless love. His grace is such that, just as it takes a chief sinner to exhibit adequately the freeness and the fulness of His pardoning mercy, so it takes a *great grief* to furnish a suitable opportunity for the display of His abundant consolation.

JOHN DICKIE.

“IN HIS OWN TIME AND WAY.”

Extracts from an Address by the late GEORGE MULLER, on 2 Cor. 12.

“**F**OR this thing I besought the Lord thrice.” So we should spread our matters before God, speaking to Him about everything, not merely about great trials, but even about little trials, little difficulties. This Friend we have in heaven, whose delight it is to bless us, who takes pleasure in helping every one of His children. O the blessedness increasingly to become conscious of the friendship of our heavenly Friend, and of communing with Him every day, and more or less all the day long! Now we hear the answer,

“MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE.”

That means, “Thou art My child, and this implies that all My dealings with thee are the very best dealings that can be, and that thou hast in heaven a Friend who will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Thou hast Me as thy Helper at all times and under all difficulties, and if thou wilt make good use of what thou hast obtained through faith in the Lord Jesus, thou wilt continually have opportunities to glorify Me whatever thy difficulties and trials may be.”

If we enter into what it means to be a partaker of grace, we should at all times and under all circumstances be perfectly satisfied with God's dealings with us. Whether joy or sorrow, sickness or health, prosperity or adversity, *everything*, without one single exception, is under the ordering of God and the management of God. He thus gives us continual opportunities to glorify Him.

And that is the great object of our life being continued to us after our conversion, that *every hour* of the day we may glorify God in the position and circumstances in which He has been pleased to place us. And the result will be this: peace and joy all the day long, the cup will be running over, the joys of heaven in a goodly measure will be brought into the soul, even now while yet in the body. O that this were more present to our hearts, in order that the Church of God might yet more, while at the end of the nineteenth century, arouse to glorify God! And then the word,

“FOR WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN AM I STRONG.”

Our very weakness gives opportunity for the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to be manifested. That blessed One never leaves and never forsakes us; the greater our weakness, the nearer He is to manifest His strength; the greater our necessities, the more have we ground to rely on it, that His help is near, that

He is not far off, that He will prove Himself still as our Friend. O what peace, what comfort this gives to the heart!

And this has been my experience for more than 70 years: the greater the trial, the greater the difficulty, the nearer the help of the Lord. Again and again I have been in the greatest difficulty, but never forsaken of my precious Lord. Often the appearance was as if I must be overwhelmed, but it never came to it, and it never will come to it, because the precious Lord Jesus Christ never forsakes His people: the more they need help, the nearer is His help. More prayer, more faith, more exercise of patience, will bring the blessing.

And as to the future, if yet other trials must come, other difficulties, our business is to have the eye fixed on the Lord Jesus. He remains our Helper; He remains our Lord; He will never leave us, never forsake us. Therefore our business is just to pour out our hearts before Him, and

HELP IN HIS OWN TIME AND WAY IS SURE TO COME.

SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND HOME READING.

11th December.—**GOD'S CHOSEN KING** (1 Sam. 16. 1-13). *Memory verse.* 1 Sam. 16. 7—"But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him, for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

Man's man a failure—Mourning in vain—Call to action—Timid servant—Simplicity in service—Inward *v.* *versus* outward—Answering the call—Receiving the blessing.

KING SAUL had been man's choice, and he was so on account of outward appearance and height; now we have the choice of God brought before us, and the principles on which He chooses and appoints revealed. Man's choice, as such, has ever been a failure, and Saul in every trial failed to honour God and to meet the requirements of his high position.

"**How long wilt thou mourn?**" A rebuke this to Samuel, who felt keenly for Saul and the people in the ruin of their expectations. Mourning may be unduly indulged in, "as those who have no hope" (1 Thess. 4. 13), losing sight of God in the grief for the creature. See Lev. 10. 6 and Job 1. 21.

"**Fill thine horn with oil and go.**" God over all has His purposes, and calls His servants into fellowship with Himself. Vessels filled, messengers going, carrying out God's purposes (Luke 24. 39; Mark 16. 15).

"**How can I go?**" Samuel shows a common weakness here; Saul "will kill me," he said. The prophet came to hasty conclusions about his errand and its results (Matt. 10. 28. 29).

"**Take a heifer with thee.**" Make no extraordinary display; in

the quiet line of his priestly work, and under its cover the act of God could be carried out. In connection with the sacrifice are all the decrees of God established (Rev. 1. 5, 6).

Jesse's seven sons are now introduced one by one. Eliab seemed to the prophet's eyes a likely man; but, no! other qualities than stature or strength are God's requirements. Deep down into THE HEART God looks, and there is the true test (Jer. 17. 10).

There remaineth yet the youngest. Out in the pasture-land, perhaps thought too young to take part in the feast, was young David, tending the sheep. God's eye was upon him; God knew him; God had great purposes concerning him. David would be quite unconscious of these purposes and thoughts, yet they were there. God has great purposes of grace towards all. He calls for them; they should respond as David did. The young shepherd bowed his head to the anointing oil. Likely David did not understand then what it meant, but from that day forward he was a different person; "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him," and he was God's David. God's call in the Gospel is to "whosoever will," and the result of responding to that call is similar in many ways to the result in David's case; anointing now (1 John 2. 27) and crowning by-and-by.

18th December.—**DAVID AND GOLIATH** (1 Sam. 17. 32-51). *Mem. verse, 1 Cor. 15. 57*—"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The boasting enemy—God lost sight of by many, seen by David—David's training and fitness—The greater than David—A greater foe, a greater fight, a greater victory.

THE interval of time between David's anointing (our last lesson) and his appearing at the fight with the giant is not given. As a musician of skill the shepherd lad had been to court to entertain the unhappy king Saul by playing on the harp. The king being called to the front David returned home, and is sent by his father, Jesse, to carry food to his brethren, who were in the camp. Then follows the well-known story of Goliath's defiance and challenge, and David's courage, faith, and victory.

The enemy. About 12 feet high, armed and armoured, seemed unconquerable to those who only saw him. David saw the same giant, but he saw also the Great God.

David's fitness. In himself he had none; but he had learned "God is able" (Dan. 3. 16), and as Paul (Phil. 4. 13), David was God's anointed one, and clothed with God's Spirit.

David's training. The experience of the shepherd work and warfare had taught him God, and the anointing oil had been poured on his head, while the Spirit of the Lord "came upon him from that day" (1 Sam. 16. 30).

David a type of our Lord. Jesus was perfectly fitted to be the Captain of His people's salvation. By anointing (Luke 4. 18), by filling (Luke 4. 1), by experience (Heb. 2. 18), perfected for His work. Is it a trembling, unsaved one under Satan's tyrant sway? Jesus, Son of Man, Son of God, steps out to champion the cause of the oppressed, and deliver (by dying) from him who has the power of death (Heb. 2. 14, 15). If it is a child of God in the midst of terrible odds, crying, "Who shall deliver me?" (Rom. 7. 24) the reply is, "Jesus Christ our Lord."

The despised deliverer. David was despised by his brethren, and misunderstood by them, his action attributed to "pride and

naughtiness of heart." The king, Saul, also discouraged him. But he was stayed on God. "It was God and Goliath, not David and Goliath." So Jesus was "despised of men" (Isa. 53), and (as a man) had all His help from God (Psa. 18).

The great deliverance. It was a complete overthrow—and only *one*, God's Man, did it. One Saviour only for saint and sinner—and a great salvation (Heb. 2. 3).

The Deliverer honoured. David was loved by honest hearts (Jonathan and others) and hated by Saul. So is Jesus still, loved by those who know His saving *grace* and power, and hated by those who have ungrateful hearts and stubborn minds.

David *risked* his life: Jesus *laid down* His life, and hence has greatest claims on our praise and grateful, loving worship.

25th December.—**JONATHAN AND DAVID** (1 Samuel 18. 1-16).
Memory verse, Rom. 5. 8—"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

A true friend—Constancy of love—Depth of love—Work of love—Love stripping—Love clothing—Love caring for—Love preserving—Love beyond death—Love on the Throne.

THE friendship of Jonathan and David has become proverbial. It is a beautiful story of devoted love unchanging and far-reaching, even beyond death.

The great overthrow of Goliath had just taken place and David's praises were resounding over the land; it is then that Jonathan's character of unselfishness, without envy or jealousy, appears, in contrast to the spirit of his father, Saul.

Jonathan loved David as his own soul. The young prince was filled with admiration of the one who overthrew the giant and saved God's people from the enemy. He had eyes to see a lovable character in David, the shepherd lad, who had taken his life in his hand, and so fearlessly and modestly did the work alone. In this we should be like Jonathan: see grace and beauty in the Lord Jesus, who met our enemy alone in His love for us (1 John 3. 16; 1 John 4. 19).

Jonathan and David made a covenant. They entered into a union of love; love was the basis, the indissoluble bond (Rom. 8. 39). In chapter 20 we see this repeated and enlarged, and it was in virtue of this loving treaty that lame Mephibosheth came into blessing (2 Sam. 9). "A better covenant" (Heb. 8. 7) has been made and sealed by Jesus' blood on behalf of all who belong to Jesus. "Everlasting, ordered in all things, and sure" (2 Sam. 23. 5), is God's best covenant of blessing.

Jonathan stripped himself. In doing this he typically made over his royalty to David. Stripping himself to clothe David reminds us of our Lord, who became poor to enrich us (2 Cor. 8. 9).

David clothed in Jonathan's princely garments tells of the believer in the Lord Jesus clothed in His beautiful righteousness (Phil. 3. 9), the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5. 21), which comes by Christ being made sin for us.

We also see Jonathan, the prince, using his position for the help and preservation of the object of his love. The Lord Jesus on the throne above protects and helps His people here (John 10. 28; John 14. 19).

Jonathan loved David when rejected, and poor, and persecuted. This is constant love: and it was reciprocated. Jesus loves a poor, despised people—a poor, despised people love Jesus. But all loves fail

to picture Jesus' love. He not only stripped Himself (Phil. 2. 7), but came down into the dust of death in His mighty love for us who did no great work, no good work—who only had done evil, and continual evil.

21st January.—**BIRTH OF THE SAVIOUR** (Luke 2. 8-20). *Mem. verses, 10, 11*—"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

The place and the Presence—The stable palace—To men of low estate—Fear-di-pelling Gospel—All-embracing Gospel—A Saviour and a Lord—Believing and testifying.

THE Holy Spirit reveals a complete Saviour in Jesus, from eternity to eternity the object for faith to know, love to admire, and hope to rest on in expectancy. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1. 14); His advent on earth is our present theme.

In the same country. Bethlehem, the birthplace of David, the king, was that also of David's Greater Son (Micah 5. 2). There in the "khan" or yard of an inn the Saviour was born and laid in a manger. In the fields **shepherds** at their usual occupation watched the night-watch over their sheep. Shepherds were lowly men. It is a scene of great lowliness, quietness, peace.

The angel of the Lord and **the glory** of the Lord appeared to the men, filling them with fear. Fear of God is the result of sin and consciousness of unfitness for God's presence (Gen. 3. 10).

"Fear not." Not to add to men's terrors but to remove them is God's great purpose. Fear is removed by the Gospel tidings brought to us by God's messenger. **"I bring you"** and **"unto you"** are the words (Acts 13. 26).

"To all people." An evangel for every kindred, people, and nation, Jew and Gentile. "Every creature" (Mark 16. 15), "all nations" (Matt. 28. 19) are in the Gospel plan. At the birth of Jesus it was so declared, at His death and in His resurrection it is the same.

"A Saviour" who is "Christ" the "Lord." A Saviour to do saving work (Matt. 1. 21), even to dying on a cross. The Christ (anointed, Messiah), prophet and priest, God's sent One; Lord, the One having dominion, to whom every knee shall bow (Phil. 2. 10).

Suddenly . . . a multitude. The angel spoke a solo; the heavenly host a chorus. God's glory and man's good was their burden, and indicated the object of the life and death of Jesus. In Him these perfectly meet, and only in Him.

The shepherds' faith. "Let us *now* go"—this was prompt and active believing. They said, "*is* come to pass"—accepting as done what was spoken. They "*came with haste.*" So everyone should come to Jesus. They "*found.*" That is faith's reward.

The shepherds' testimony. "They made known abroad." So does every true believer, and the people wonder, and the Marys ponder the good news in their hearts.

Such the story of the advent of Jesus, wondrous in its lowliness; and the story of His death must be linked with His birth, for it was for this very purpose He was born, that He should die for "the sins of the world" (John 12. 27).

IMPREGNABLE.

- God's "safe" for preserving saints.
- 1 God BEFORE - - - Isa. 52. 12
 - 2 God BEHIND - - - Isa. 58. 8
 - 3 God UNDERNEATH Deut. 33. 27
 - 4 God ABOVE - - - Song 2. 4
 - 5 God ROUND ABOUT - Ps. 125. 2
 - 6 God IN THEM - - - I John 3. 24
 - 7 They IN GOD - - - Col. 3. 3
- Preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude 1) J.M.H.

THREE W'S.

- Winning, Watching, Warning
- 1 WINNING SOULS—
The work of the Evangelist Pro. 11 30
 - 2 WATCHING FOR SOULS—
The work of the Pastor Heb. 13. 17
 - 3 WARNING SOULS—
The work of the Teacher Ac. 20. 31
Col. 1. 28 T. B.

THE THREE R'S OF THE LORD'S COMING.

Most of us are familiar with the THREE R'S specially connected with the First Coming—to save from man's **Ruin** by **Redemption** through His Blood and **Regeneration** of the Holy Spirit.

Here are THREE R'S in connection with our Lord's Coming Again :

1. The **REALITY**. Is it a "fable" or a Scriptural truth? In proof, note—
 - I. The Saviour's own Declaration: "I will come again and receive you unto Myself."—John 14 1.
 - II. The Special Angelic Confirmation of the Saviour's "I will" by "This same Jesus shall so come."—Acts 1. 11.
 - III. The Special Apostolic Revelation: "Received" direct from glory. "The Lord Himself shall descend."—I Thess. 4. 13-18.
2. The **RAPIDITY**. Perhaps the most striking feature of the Coming is the undreamt-of brevity of the Rapture. This thought is enforced—
 - I. By the Three-fold Injunction of the last leaf of God's last message: *Behold; Behold; surely* I come quickly.—Rev. 22. 7, 12, 20.
 - II. By the Definite Statement in the chapter of fundamentals: "We shall all be changed *in a moment*."—I Cor. 15. 51. The devil offered Christ all the kingdoms "in a moment." God will give Him all the redeemed as quick'y—"in a moment." O what a moment!
 - III. By the Familiar Simile: "In the twinkling of an eye." You give your eye a twinkle. How rapid! Your "vile body" shall with equal rapidity be made like His "own glorious body."
3. The **RESULT**: Naturally we think of ourselves first. But what shall be the result of the appearing to Himself?
 - I. In the fullest sense, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and He shall be *satisfied*."—Isaiah 53. 11.
 - II. As to Ourselves: Guilty, hell-deserving sinners, whom He justified in time, shall be manifestly *glorified* in eternity."—Romans 1. 30.
 - III. The Church, now rent and split and divided, shall be *united*. The prayer of 1800 years ago, "That they all may be *one*" (John 17. 21), shall be manifestly and eternally answered.

The Central Glory of it all: "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" Hyp.

MY NEED

and

HIS SUPPLY.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Art thou Hungry - - - | Matt. 5. 6 ... | Christ is Bread - - - | John 6. 33 |
| Art thou Thirsty - - - | Psa. 42. 2 ... | Christ is Drink - - - | John 6. 55 |
| Art thou Poor - - - | Jas. 2. 5 ... | Christ is Riches - - - | Phil. 4. 19 |
| Art thou Ignorant - - - | I Cor. 2. 14 ... | Christ is Wisdom - - - | I Cor. 1. 30 |
| Art thou Defiled - - - | Isa. 6. 5 ... | Christ is Righteousness | Jer. 33. 16 |
| Art thou Nothing - - - | 2 Cor. 12. 11 ... | Christ is A'l - - - | Col. 3. 11 |
| Art thou Christ's - - - | John 10. 14 ... | Christ is Thine S.Sol. 6. 3 | J. E. W. |