

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

JANUARY, 1929

No. 1

The New Year

I know not what the opening year,
Upon whose threshold now I stand,
May bring to me; nor need I fear,
If Thou, my Saviour, hold my hand:
Guided by Thee, I onward go,
Content to trust, come weal or woe.

I would not strive to pierce the veil
That hides the future from my sight,
Whatever, Lord, Thou sendest me
Of joy or sorrow must be right:
What may befall I cannot tell,
Thou knowest, and dost "all things well."

And what sweet comfort and repose
The knowledge brings my trembling heart,
That Thou, O Lord, dost govern all,
And that no power from Thee can part:
Then wherefore should I doubt or fear,
With Thine own presence ever near?

And as I ever onward go,
May I learn more and more of Thee;
And in Thy lovely image grow,
Till others shall the likeness see;
And be it still my highest aim
To sound the praises of Thy name.

And may the light of Thine own love
Shine over all the path below,
Adding new brightness to each joy,
And gilding even pain and woe;
May it inspire, and help me still
To do or suffer all Thy will.

And so I ask Thee all the year,
Blest Master, still to hold my hand;
To counsel, guide, and lead me on
Towards that bright and better land,
Where earthly shadows fade away,
Lost in the light of endless day.

MOSES; THE HONORED AND REWARDED SERVANT

Deut. 34:5-6; Matt. 17:2-3; Heb. 11:26.

W. J. McCLURE

The Death of Moses. The passing away of one of earth's great ones, a soldier, a statesman or a sovereign, is something which interests millions. The bulletins, telling of the condition of the distinguished patient, are read by thousands, and when at last they tell of the passing away of the sufferer, a hush falls on the readers, and the nation is in mourning, flags are half-masted, and in other ways homage is rendered to the dead. The body lies in state, and then comes the funeral, with its pomp and pageantry, as the body is borne to a tomb among the great of earth.

Deut. 34:5-6 gives us something which is a contrast to all this, On Nebo's lonely height, one with a claim to greatness, far beyond the soldiers, statesmen and sovereigns of earth, is passing away. No blinds are drawn, no human attendants tread noiselessly across the death chamber. All that can appeal to us of earthly greatness is lacking there, it was a lonely death. In a very faint way it reminds us of the death of Moses' Lord and Master, of which we sing:

"Thy death of shame and sorrow, was like unto Thy birth,
Which would no glory borrow, no majesty from earth."

The Burial of Moses. We read, "God buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth Peor." As we have looked at the Mattoppo Hills in Southern Rhodesia, where the body of Cecil Rhodes lies, we have thought, what a fitting tomb for that great man,—one of Britain's empire builders. In view of his work in Africa, it suits him better than a grave in Westminster Abbey. So with Moses, to be buried by God, without the empty pomp and panegyrics which characterizes the laying away of the great ones of earth, and which reminds us in its unreality, of the military band, which on the way to the cemetery, to bury the soldier, plays the mournful dirge of the "Dead March," but returning may be playing, "The Girl I Left Behind Me," or some other lively air, because there is no desire to dwell on the subject of death,—for **that** men would forget.

It was fitting that the man who turned his back on the unreal glamor of Egypt, and learned God in the desert beside Horeb, should now lie under the shadow of Nebo, amid all that rugged grandeur,—God's work unspoiled by man's art. It was God's choice for His honored servant.

Moses as the Honored Servant. What we have just said may appear to some as hardly bearing out the title we give Moses here. On the human side, it looks sad, to see the dear man alone on Nebo, and laid away without Israel following him to the tomb. But what a distinction Moses had,—one that no man before or since has had.

“God buried him.” On a previous occasion we quoted part of Mrs. Alexander’s poem on “The Burial of Moses,” and as it expresses our thought, better than anything we could say, we repeat it:—

“And had he not high honor, the hillside for a pall,
To lie in state while angels wait, with stars for tapers tall,
And the rock pines, like tossing plumes, over his bier to wave,
And God’s own hand in that lone land, to lay him in his grave.”

The Pharaohs had their sepulchres built to last, as they thought, as long as time lasts. All that money and skill could do, to render the resting place of their dust inviolable, was done, for they were very aristocratic and exclusive in life, and they fancied they could be so in death. But that was a vain thought,—they did not reckon on the coming of men such as Clarendon and other Egyptologists, and so the tombs of Luxor have been opened after thousands of years, the dust of the proud Pharaohs disturbed, and rich ornaments, buried with them, carried off to enrich the collections of the museums. No hand has ever desecrated the tomb of Moses,—not Satan himself can do that (Jude 9).

The haughty Pharaohs thought that their names and the fame of their deeds would live forever, but now they are either forgotten altogether, or so hopelessly confounded with one another that we cannot tell which is which. Not so Moses, like the great giants of the Rockies, you only see them to advantage from a distance. As time goes on Moses will be better and better known. The man who threw away, as man would say, the chance of making a name for himself, when he left Egypt, has gained an imperishable name. God’s word,—“Them that honor Me I will honor,” has been true in the case of Moses.

Moses Honored on the Mount of Transfiguration. In Matt. 17:2-3 we get a picture of the coming kingdom and glory. The Lord is seen there, as He now appears in heaven, glorified, His countenance was like the sun and His raiment white as light. And with Him in that glory stand two men, Moses, who speaks of saints who die and will be raised at the coming of the Lord, and Elijah, of the living ones, who will then be caught up without dying. Moses had prayed, “Show me Thy glory” (Ex. 33:18), and that prayer had but a partial answer, but now it is fulfilled in a way which never could have entered into the mind of Moses to conceive. Not only does he see the glory, but is actually a sharer of it. He had prayed to get leave to go over Jordan, and God must have seemed harsh towards him, when He said: “Let it suffice thee; speak no more to me of this matter.” Little did Moses realize then that that prayer which he thought had been uttered in vain, was just in loving kindness delayed, that it might have a grander fulfillment. Fifteen hundred years roll around and the delayed prayer is answered, and in a way which surpasses Moses’

thoughts. He is in the land, and with his beloved Lord and Master! Could we have spoken to him that day, and asked him what he thought as to not getting what he requested in the wilderness, we are sure he would have said, that God had exceeded his desires and he would not have it differently. As for the long centuries, they had gone like a dream of the night. Doubtless God's people will find, by and bye, that many a prayer, which is mourned as denied, was only delayed, and that for their greater blessing.—(Continued, D. V.)

"WHILE MEN SLEPT"

F. W. SCHWARTZ

"While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way" (Matt. 13:25). We need not go far in these latter days to find a fulfilment of these words. Many situations at once come to mind in which the enemy's activity and cunning are clearly seen. But we have recently been impressed with one particular phase of his work, and this is found in the realm of literature.

The volume of vile propaganda being poured forth by satanic cults everywhere is ever on the increase. "Christian Science" (blasphemously misnamed), has its journals in various languages, newspapers, reading rooms, press agents and lecturers, conducting an aggressive and continuous campaign. "Millennial Dawn" has its hundreds of emissaries circulating its literature,—in every town they are to be met with. "Seventh-Dayism" has its pamphlets in various languages,—attractively arranged and presented. "Mormonism" has its hundreds of "missionaries," generally tract-distributors and visitors, each pledged to a lengthy service at his own expense. "Modernism" controls most of the current religious periodicals, and has captured a vast number of seminaries, colleges and pulpits. "Evolution" carries everything before it in books, magazines and newspapers, to say nothing of its introduction into even the elementary grades of our schools and the almost fanatical zeal of Associations of University Professors, and other influential organizations in pressing it upon the people's acceptance. "Roman Catholicism" shows ever increasing activity in its "Societies for the Propagation of the Faith" and its "Truth Societies," and avails itself of every opportunity to insinuate its propaganda into Radio programs. "Theosophy" and "Spiritism," we hear, even in such an almost inaccessible country as Iceland, are making fast inroads among the people. And in addition to all this, there is a veritable deluge of suggestive and half-criminal fiction displayed from thousands of news-stands all over the world. So apparent is its demoralizing effect that even the German government has seen a need for curbing it, and recently adopted, with the virtual support of all political parties, a "Literary Trash and Mud Bill," designed to check the flow of such vile stuff.

And in the face of this "MEN SLEEP." There is an appalling absence, comparatively speaking, of propaganda true to the Gospel and to the fundamentals of the Faith. The activity in tract distribution and similar efforts, which at one time obtained among the Lord's people, is no longer conspicuous. Are we altogether without exercise as to the world's need? Is the enemy to be allowed to continue his sowing unopposed?

It may be that some, while more or less exercised as to the need, have not realized the opportunity that awaits them here. God has so arranged matters that there is available for our use today a vast quantity of pure literature,—including Bibles, Testaments and portions, as well as tracts,—so varied that they can be had for every need, and so priced that even the poorest of the flock can make **some** use of them. We do not, of course, disparage other means of circulating the truth. We emphasize this one, however, because it is available to **all**, in a way that others perhaps are not to the same extent, and because we are sure it presents possibilities which none of us have sufficiently realized. May we not hope to see, during the coming year, a large increase in the systematic distribution of tracts and other literature such as we have mentioned,—personally, by mail, among children,—“publicly and from house to house,”—and in the many other ways that may suggest themselves?

This would in some degree tend to fulfil our obligation, (and it **is** an obligation that rests upon each “saint,” individually and particularly), to “contend earnestly for the faith;” it would help materially, if persisted in, to counteract the tide of infidelity surging around us; and last, but by no means least, it would bring the Word of Life within the reach of many who now sit in “the region and shadow of death.” “The night is far spent, the day is at hand.”

The Holy Spirit of God is God's Agent in the applying of every blessing to the believer, who is **born** of the Spirit,—made “a new creation” (John 3:5); **sealed** by the Spirit,—thus marked out as His “purchased possession” (Eph. 1:13-14); **baptized** in the Spirit, and made a member of the “one body” (1 Cor. 12:13, R. V.); **indwelt** by the Spirit, thus becoming, as to his body, the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19-20); **led** by the Spirit, being divinely guided as to his path (Rom. 8:13); **filled** with the Spirit, thus empowered for worship or service (Eph. 5:18-19); **transformed** by the Spirit, being made more and more like Christ (2 Cor. 3:18); and at the coming of the Lord the Spirit of God will quicken our mortal bodies, fashioning them like unto the body of His glory (Rom. 8:11; Phil. 3:20-21).

Those who have tasted the goodness of God can never speak good enough of God.

THE WOMAN IN THE CROWD

I have been lately comforted by a certain feature in the story of the poor woman in the crowd, as we may call her (see Mark 5). The crowd was around the Lord Jesus. It made Him its object. Carnally or naturally, and not spiritually, I grant; but still the crowd was making Him its object. It was a religious movement, though there might have been little of real life in it. Much people followed Jesus, thronging Him and pressing Him; and I ask myself, is it not so at this moment? What a stir about religion there is! The various actions of hand and foot, and pen and tongue, all about religion and the church. But this crowd operated rather as a hindrance to the poor woman; it made her approach to the Lord somewhat more difficult.

Comforting, however, is it not, to see that He was as much at the bidding of faith, though in the crowd, as when He was alone with the poor Samaritan at the well of Sychar? Solitude or bustle, retirement or the crowd, made no difference to Him, though it did in the approaches of His people. The Samaritan had a great natural advantage; but the Lord is independent of natural advantages and above hindrances, and this poor woman, and the son of Timeus, and Zaccheus of Jericho, shall, each one for himself, prove that the Lord Jesus heals in the midst of all this religious and worldly stir.

The crowd was made up of very different materials. Jairus, with a heart full of faith and expectation, was in it. Apostles too, and ordinary disciples, as well as the large assemblage attracted and borne on the spirit of the times, or by the occasion. Morally, it is all like the scene of action at this moment around ourselves! A Spirit-led sinner is there also, having the Lord Jesus and His healing power before the thoughts and desires of her soul. And the crowd could not hinder the Saviour from personally waiting on her, and in the midst of it all, precious communications pass between them.

Is not this a comfort now-a-days? What is surrounding the Lord Jesus this moment but a like religious stir? The crowd is again making Him its object. Meetings, lectures, journeyings, books, societies, conversation, activities of all kinds, are full of religion; and yet how well the heart knows that most of this is carnal and worldly. And how surely it also feels that all this is a hindrance to the soul.

Let such thoughts, however, be hushed. Let faith take up the Lord in the circumstances in which it finds Him, whatever they be, and assure itself that no natural hindrance can prevail. Crowds cannot stop the flow of His virtue, though they may perplex a little the way of approach to Him, and hinder, in their measure, our bringing our vessels to that fountain—our necessities to that fullness.—N. W.

THE CHICKEN-FARMER'S TALK

It was at a "Conference" in one of our cities, for the purpose of waiting on God and reading His Word. A goodly number of God's people from near and far had gathered, and there were also a liberal supply of those who gave their time to the ministry of the Word in the gospel and among the saints. At these meetings there had been variety as to the men on the platform, and their messages, and what pleased some, because it agreed with their preconceived ideas, was not always acceptable to others because they also had opinions of their own. And so, between meetings, there were some heated discussions in which the good that had been in each address, was overlooked and forgotten, because of these differences of judgment. It was noticeable, however, that in these heated arguments, there was but little resort to the Word of God,—which is surely the final court of appeal in all things pertaining to the things of the Lord. The objections of one side or another were rather as to whether this or that was according to what some respected brother of the past had preached, or whether it was "what we have always practiced," or not. Thus with Teachers, and tradition as the standard, instead of the Word of God, the enemy was succeeding in robbing the saints of God of the benefit and blessing that might have been theirs, had they but followed the godly example of the Bereans (Acts 17:11), who "searched the Scriptures daily" to see if the things preached by Paul, Silas and others was according thereto or not. Not that any of God's servants wished to be reckoned as "standards," for it has been well said that, "The best of men are but men at the best," and a good man, who is not partizan, would be the first to shake off from himself any who would place him or his teachings and practices in the stead of the Scriptures of truth. His motto would be—

"Not I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted,
Not I, but Christ, be seen, be known, be heard;
Not I, but Christ, in every look and action;
Not I, but Christ, in every thought and word."

But, alas, there is a tendency in us all to apply standards other than that found in the Word, whether it be to teachings or traditions,—men or their messages, and so unconsciously make to ourselves little creeds, by which we test everything and everyone. Like our friends at the "conference," we lose the good we might have gotten out of an address, because the enemy had so pre-occupied our minds with certain prejudices, that we could only see or hear that with which we did **not** agree, and so we missed that which would have done us good. Says the apostle Paul in 1 Thess. 5:21, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," and therein lies a secret of spiritual prosperity.

At the "conference" referred to, a brother who was a farmer, arose at the close of one of the meetings, with a word of apology for the seeming intrusion of stepping up on the platform to "speak a little word" which was on his mind. He remarked how he had overheard some of the after-meeting discussions, and it caused him to think we were not acting wisely in the matter. Said he:—

"I am a farmer,—a chicken farmer,—and much of the grain I grow I feed to the chickens. Now, under ordinary circumstances, a farmer, if he is selling his grain in the market, is careful to winnow it as well as thresh it. He brings his product to the market cleaned of all chaff and other foreign matter. But a chicken farmer does not do that. He feeds to his fowl that which he has, all together,—grain and chaff and other matter. The chickens do the separating. They pick up the grain, and they leave that on the barn floor which they do not want. They do not quarrel or fight over it,—they are wise birds, they eat and thrive on what is good, and leave the rest. Brethren," he added, feelingly, "from what I have noticed and heard, I am afraid some of us have not as much sense as my chickens!"

With that he sat down, and all sides admitted the wisdom of his words, and we doubt not many learned to apply them to their own benefit. There are "foundation truths," concerning which we are all at one, and regarding which there are no differences, according to the measure of our apprehension of them. Around us, among the many religious sects, these truths were at one time firmly held, but now have become "bones of contention," and in many cases given up altogether. Our God, however, has mercifully preserved the Assemblies gathered to the Name of the Lord from such, and in these truths they stand "four-square." Nevertheless, there are other things as to the details and the practices of the Assemblies, and such like, concerning which the godliest, because of the limitations of our knowledge and attainments, may not see eye to eye, and grace alone with a patient waiting on God, is the only remedy prescribed by the Word (Phil. 3:14-16) for that. As we realize our own ignorance of the truth, and how often we have had our minds enlightened as he "opened to us the Scripture," concerning things we had felt ourselves familiar, we might well humbly wait on and bear with one another. Thus would we preserve our Assemblies from being the arena where foolish and unlearned questions which only gender strife, are fought over, to the grief of the Holy Spirit of God, and distraction of God's people. Most of the misunderstandings among God's saints and servants, both as to principles and practices could, no doubt, be speedily adjusted if there were more prayer, and more patience in the fear of God. We need one another as the Head needs the foot and the hand the eye. We are "members one of another."—**Quartus.**

JUDGMENT IN AND OF AN ASSEMBLY

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him: let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault (trespass, R. V.), ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness: considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

"If one who claims to be a Christian becomes entangled in error, it is the duty of his fellow-believers to seek to deliver him from its coil, and labor for the restoration of his soul and the turning back of his feet to the Lord's ways." (Jas. 5:19-20.) And in principle the same is so with a church of saints or company of believers professedly assembling in the Lord's Name, and confessing His Word as their only rule and guide. A gracious, seasonable and faithful ministry of God's truth, is for the reproof and correction of those who err from the truth, as surely as for the teaching, instruction, and encouragement of those whose desire is to "walk in the truth." But this is often so sadly lacking, that individuals and churches alike are too often allowed to drift or wander, or come under the spell of those who surreptitiously teach them error, and of others who effectively mislead by practice, from the paths of the Lord. As in cases of dangerous diseases, prompt and decisive action may prevent aggravation of the case. But when such service is delayed or neglected, until the evil has fixed its talons so firmly on its victim that it is well nigh hopeless to deliver, the next, and by no means uncommon danger is, to use more extreme measures than the Word of God warrants or allows. All discipline should be **remedial** in its character; and only when all hope of humiliation, confession and restoration has been given up, is a sinning saint, as in 1 Cor. 5:4-13, to be "put away" from the fellowship of others; and even then, with a view to his restoration (see 2 Cor. 2:4-10). In these verses we have the scripture example of the erring sinner dealt with by the Assembly, and the repentant sinner restored. For this there is the command of the Lord to guide us.

But, we have no "Commandment of the Lord," nor Scriptural example for the excommunication of an Assembly. The Lord retains this form of discipline in His own power. And, when **He** so disowns any church of His, because of continued and aggravated dishonor of His Name, and disloyalty to His truth, it will be so manifest that "all the Churches shall know" what has been done, and bow to the divine judgment, or if they do not, will ultimately share it. (Rev. 2:5-20-23.)

"Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:5). Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which called herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols"—Vo. 20. "And I will kill her children with death; and all

the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works"—Verse 23. Thus does He manifest His prerogative.

But, no individual, or group of individuals,—no church or group of churches, has the work delegated to them by the Lord, to disown or cut off, or excommunicate entire companies of fellow-believers, even though they may reckon that they are not loyal to certain practices they find in the Word. If their consciences, governed by Scripture, do not permit them to go in and out with such, then let them refrain, but always distinguish between those who are **leaders** in wrong, and those who are **led**, and who, while not strong enough to protest against it, are yet reckoned by the Lord not to be participators in it. Such are the ones spoken of by the Lord as those who "**have not this doctrine,**" and are not charged by Him with having it, although reprov'd by Him for lack of faithfulness in suffering it in others. Surely in these things a prayerful and deep exercise of heart is called for among those who "watch for souls," and seek the godly welfare of their fellow-saints. "Taking the precious from the vile" (Jer. 15:19), by a ministry, which, as from the mouth of the Lord, divides, as with a sword what is of God from that opposed to Him. Refraining from going to any place or company, in which confidence is lacking, or things may not be as they should be, is a matter for the exercised individual to decide as before the Lord, but unless, and until the Lord Himself has made it so plain,—as in some cases He may have done,—that **He** has disowned an assembly who claimed to be His, and who has borne His Name, it is not for **us** to issue any decree that this or that is not to be regarded any longer as God's assembly. The way of the Lord ever is to company with all such as own His Name, in spite of much that is not as He would have it to be. The corrective teachings of the Epistles amply testify of that. Above all, let us remember that division among saints, and all schism, is condemned in Scripture, and saints are warned against those who subtly teach, and justify such practices. (Rom. 16:17) A. H.

God's present work.—God's object in giving commandment for the preaching of the gospel to every creature is that He might gather together from among all nations the Church, that bride of the Lamb, that body of Christ, which is called to reign with Him, when He shall have taken possession of His Kingdom. (See Acts 15:13-17.)

The Scriptures, the Standard.—The Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice; but the power that applies them to our minds is the Holy Spirit, and the instruments may be many. The Bible may be the means of communicating truth; but its great value is, that it is the standard as well as the depositary of all truth.

THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MOST HIGH

An Address by J. A. CLARKE, of Belgian Congo, C. A.
(From Unrevised Notes by Dr. H. A. Cameron)

Read Psalm 77.

Many years ago there lived in far away Scotland a great man whose name was Thomas Carlyle. One evening his wife found him in great distress of soul. He had been looking over the face of the whole world and had been trying to solve the unsolvable problem of human suffering. And as he thus meditated, he thought of God, and he looked up into the heavens, and the heavens seemed as brass; and his wife found him with his head buried in his hands, and as he was moaning with all his soul over human sufferings, he exclaimed, "Worst of all, God does nothing! God does nothing! God does nothing!" But while he was thus speaking, away across the mighty Atlantic, a movement had been set on foot, that resulted in the breaking of the shackles of slavery to millions. He was short-sighted; he could not see God's movements. He had not the key of the sanctuary of God, and so he buried his head in his hands and said, "God does nothing!"

It seems to me that in the first part of this 77th Psalm, we have in the Psalmist, a similar state of mind. The problem of suffering is robbing him of his sleep as he tries to trace God in all these things, and he is baffled. The things of life are too intricate for him,—he is down in the trough of desperation and despondency, and like all such he is intolerant of all other men. But there is a pivotal point in the Psalm, and instead of darkness he is standing in the light of God, and his groan becomes a song, and his sorrow is transmuted into gladness, as he remembers how God redeemed His people.

It may not be amiss for us to give our hearts to study these two moods of this great man,—what distressed him and what raised him up,—for it may help us in these dreadful and difficult days. For suffering, like the poor, we always have with us. And the problem is so baffling that we are often cast down and are asking, "Why?" It is ours to be baffled, but as our African says, "God is the unraveller of all life's mysteries." He is above all our pain and sorrow. He understands it all, and because He is above it all, it does not cause panic in His heart as it does in yours and mine.

Now please note first the personal pronouns and personal possessive adjectives in the first part of this Psalm. We often give ourselves away in our speech. That is how I know what is in your heart,—I know from the way you talk. When I hear a man using the personal pronoun all the time, I say he is self-centered, he is an egotist. Now, if you go over the first nine verses of this Psalm, you will find twenty-two references to himself. Do you wonder why he was distressed? I don't. Self-occupation had settled over his soul and he was in the grip of insomnia. When your eyes are fixed on yourself and your troubles and self-occupation results, you may have to suffer, but your suffering is not lessened by thinking of it. I remember an experience that Mulebushi, one of our Africans, had one day. He was a man much afflicted and was one that had suffered a great deal for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was smitten with leprosy, and as the result of the ravages of that disease we could see the members of his body gradually falling off. This day he was tormented with great pain. I remember saying to him, "Well, Mulebushi, what about it?" "Oh," he said, "these old members are dropping off, but the inner man is renewed day by day." Are not such words wonderful? And yet, ten years before that, he had been a savage. The vision of Jesus Christ is the only thing that will do it.

Twenty-two references to himself and eleven times he refers to God. He speaks of himself twice for every time he speaks of God once,—two to one! It might help us if we wrote this lesson down on the fleshy tablets

of our hearts, for thus God would deliver us from ourselves and this great despondency.

The second half of the Psalm gives us another picture. In the first half everything is out of focus, and the image is blurred, nothing has a clear line. But after the first ten verses we have only three personal references. Three times he refers to himself and twenty-four times he refers to God. Something is going to happen now. This man is being overwhelmed in God. What makes the difference? The answer is in the pivotal verse. There is a crisis in verse 10 that makes all the difference, taking him from self-occupation to occupation with God. Self looms up in the first part, in the second God is seen, and he forgets all about himself. It is God who has come into his life.

What does he say in this tenth verse? "And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." Please note that the words, "but I will remember" are in italics. That means these words are not in the original, but are supplied by the translators, in the attempt to interpret the thought and make it more plain, but, instead of making it clear, to my mind it mystifies it. I would rather read it as it is in the original. "This is my infirmity; the years of the right hand of the Most High." "The seasons" is the word in Hebrew, and as in Hebrew so is it in African. To see that will make all the difference. If you know that it is the right hand of the Most High that is dealing with you, it will make all the difference in your experience. "The years of the right hand." What does it mean? I surely have read about it before. What is said about the right hand of Jehovah? What does our African say about the right hand? He calls it "**Ludio**," and this name for the right hand comes from the verb "to be," "to live," "to exist." "I am, thou art, he is." He derives the word "hand" from the verb "to be," because you cannot do anything without it. The right hand does all the hoeing, and the eating is done with the right hand. We believe in well-washed hands in Africa. The African does not use the left hand in eating. It would insult your host if you were to use the left hand. It would spoil the meal. All life springs from the right hand, and it is the right hand that supports the life. The mother holds her baby with the right hand and never drops it. It is the right hand that supports, and holds it. I remember when I was "a new chum" in Africa, just out, and wanted to prove that I was not above eating with the natives. I would sit down with them, and soon found they were laughing at me, because the white man did not know how to eat, for very soon I was mixing up the foods with both hands. It is the right hand that nourishes us. You have to get the true meaning of the right hand from these eastern people, in order to understand this wonderful verse.

Jehovah's Right Hand.—Now I want to refer to a few times where we have this expression. It may help you who are sorrowing and suffering if you get the vision that the Psalmist got. Read first Exodus 15:6. "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power. Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." What a magnificent word is this! His right hand is the "**right hand of redemption**." (Exo. 15:6-12.) This is God's criterion all through the Old Testament. We have our standards of measurements and weights; God raises the standard of His right hand. This is the standard by which He is to be judged. You recollect how every time the children of Israel got into trouble He would say, "Remember how I redeemed you." Judge Me by that standard. His right hand is the right hand of redemption. Are we going to be occupied with ourselves or are we going to turn our eyes away to Him. Have we a standard? Yes, it is the Cross! Bring your troubles and sorrows before that Cross;—bring

them to Calvary, where, as we sing:

“He spared not His Son;
 ’Tis this that silences each rising fear,—
 ’Tis this that makes the hard thought disappear,—
 He spared not His Son.”

“He spared not His Son.” This silences the timidity of our hearts. When I see Him go down into death for sins not His own,—when I see Him bruised and wounded, I learn God’s great love to me and you, and even though I am called upon to pass through the “Valley of Baca,” and my hopes are dashed to death, I trust on, and believe on, because I have His standard of judgment. Judge Him by the Cross,—“He spared not His Son.” That quiets all the panics and alarms of my heart. “I have been to the altar and witnessed the Lamb burnt wholly to ashes for me.” And I say, “Lead on, Thou blessed Master of my heart; I will follow Thee, though Thy footsteps are in the deep. I have been to the Cross and I have seen Thy right hand of redemption.” Let me ask you, all here assembled, “Have you **been** there?” If so, then **rest** there. “Beneath the Cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand.” Yes, it is the right hand of redemption. That is where we must begin. Are there any here tonight who have not known it? What did it mean to those men who were down in Egypt? It meant coming out from slavery. It meant the power of God, and more than that; it meant companionship and fellowship with the God of heaven.

What does this standard that God has raised mean? It means more than death; it means resurrection and ascension. Just as those who came out of Egypt saw the end of their enemies, we have in the exodus of Christ been delivered, and in His rising from the dead I know I have power to conquer every foe, and moreover I am called to fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ. Just as those Israelites were called upon to walk in fellowship with God through the desert, we are called upon to walk in fellowship with Him here.

But David in another Psalm speaks of the right hand of God being “**full of righteousness**” (Ps. 48:10.) I love to link redemption with righteousness. The glory of every kingdom is that its laws are established in righteousness. We are brought into the Kingdom of the Son of His love, and all the laws of that Kingdom are righteous. That is why our Lord had to go to the Cross,—because God is righteous. Every demand has been met there, and, without fear, we can glory in the fact that His right hand is full of righteousness.

Then again the Psalmist says that God’s right hand is the **right hand of salvation**” (Ps. 20:6), and that is what we need. When we know His redemption we must go on to know His power to save us from our sins. We have been saved from the **penalty** of our sins, and our eyes shall never see the darkness. But let us remember that His right hand has brought salvation. It can save us day by day, moment by moment, from the **power** of sins that held us bound. Sin shall have no longer dominion over us (Rom. 6:9-14), and this salvation comes from God’s right hand.

David speaks moreover about the “**saving strength of God’s right hand**” (Ps. 20:6). As a young Christian I needed strength, and God’s right hand reveals the saving strength of Jehovah. It is put at our disposal. This thing you are now suffering from, may have come into your life to enable you to know the strength that is in God’s right hand. You remember one man that was helped mightily until **he** became strong. (2 Chr. 26:14-15-16.) He was in danger there, for it was then Uzziah failed. When we are tempted to rely on our own strength, then we need a vision of God’s right

hand. And so on through the Psalms. In the 118th Psalm, when his enemies were coming in like a flood, the Psalmist cried to God, and God delivered him. And then, referring to the fact afterwards, he said, "The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly." And that is the **right hand of action**. When in trouble from evil speaking, or some other trying thing, in the assembly, or

I would like to illustrate this with an experience I once had. There was a man in Africa who had had a wonderful conversion. After he had been with us for years, he then told us that he wanted to go into one of the other villages to live. We prayed much about it, and by and by he was commended to the work, to go back to his own village to labor for the Lord,—his "New Chief," as he put it. We went with him and helped him to build, and everything went along well for a time. He was getting nothing from me or from others, but we saw him often and encouraged him. One day he came to visit us, and I knew something was wrong, for I saw he was depressed. I said, "How are you getting on?" "I am not getting on at all," he replied, "everything has gone wrong with the meetings. I was having wonderful times with the young people with the mornings and evenings, and some of them were beginning to inquire, and I was hopeful, but just then an old diviner came upon the scene, and began to beat his drum when I would start a meeting, so that I could not hear myself speak. I told him to keep quiet, but he said, 'I have as much right to beat my drum as you have to preach.' I went to the chief, and complained and he answered, 'This is his village, too, and he has as much right to divine as you have to sign hymns.' Now I want you to come along and give him a good beating and send him away."

I looked at him, for I thought he was testing me. He said, "It would not do for me to beat him, because you have taught us not to do that, but **you** could do it, because you are his father and have the right." Of course, I told him I could not do that, but that we would pray about it. "Oh," he replied, "you don't know him. He is too hard for prayer. You will have to do more than pray." "Well," I said, "we will pray about it." And we prayed. He went away very doubtful, and when he came again he reported that things were worse than ever. "The diviner is coming now in the mornings as well as in the evening," he said,—and he felt like giving up entirely. This thing went on for a whole moon (month), but at last one day he came to me and I saw he was happy. "God has answered our prayers," he said. "The diviner is gone. The children used to follow him about singing the hymns and repeating the texts they had learned, and he could not stand that, and he has gone!" He never forgot that lesson. It was God's "right hand of action." I know nothing so difficult as this waiting upon God, to put right the things that are wrong. Our first inclination is to run and make them right ourselves. Better tell God about it. Try **that** way and you will prove His right hand of action.

And then we find, as the Psalmist says, that it is **the right hand that holds** (Ps. 63:8),—or as our African says, "It is the hand that upholds us." He sustains us with His right hand. Again you remember the word in Revelation. John, who was one of those who had seen the Lord go up into the glory, now sees Him in that glory, and he falls at His feet as dead. You remember what the Lord did. Putting His right hand upon John, he said, "Fear not, it is I." It was the same Jesus that he had known in the days of His flesh that put upon him **the right hand of tenderness** (Rev. 1:17). We glory in the fact that He sustains, but He sustains us in tenderness. Tenderness and gentleness are characteristics of the right hand of the Most High. Some times we try to do something to help others, but we do it so badly that we leave a mark. You remember that when Jeremiah was lifted

out of the pit the ropes were covered with old rags, and that prevented chafing. Sometimes when we seek to get a brother out of trouble, we make him bleed in the process: the ropes chafe him. Let us emulate the tenderness of the right hand of the Most High. If you will pardon a personal reference,—I remember one occasion in Africa, when away down in the deep valley, I felt the tenderness of that right hand, and I can say with the Psalmist, "Thy right hand hath holden me up, and Thy gentleness hath made me great" (Ps. 18:35). What is gentleness? Gentleness is strength held in reserve and put at the disposal of weakness. Look at the mighty waves that roll in from the ocean, and see that little child on the shore. The billow is controlled, and gently laps the chubby toes of the baby on the strand. Thus I learned in deep affliction, that the right hand of the Most High is a tender hand, a caressing hand. May He lead us along this path, that all the sorrow and suffering we have, may teach us that the hand of the Most High is the hand of tenderness.

Finally, we have that magnificent word, "**At Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.**" And please do not put that away into the future. It is **now** that we are children of the Most High. Oh, broken one, remember that **now** at that right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Because this man had a vision of the right hand,—the right hand of redemption,—the right hand that brought salvation,—that tender right hand, he was thus delivered out of his gloom, and no longer self-sustained, he was upheld by the right hand of the Most High.

The time of testing coming.—I remember on one occasion in Africa I was going through the forest, and I saw rising above the trees clouds of smoke. I wondered what it meant, and directing my men's attention to it I asked them what they thought it was. They said it might be the smoke from a camp in the forest. We went on, and soon we saw a group of women talking, and beyond them, in the distance, we saw a great fire burning, and in the flames we discerned a number of pots and other vessels that they had been making,—for they were potters. I asked them what it all meant, and they answered, "This is the great day of testing. We have been making these jars and pots and pitchers, and we are putting them through the fire, to see which ones of them are worthy, for us to take to our king, to do him service. You wait and you will see." The fire got hotter and hotter and the vessels became red in the flames; and soon I heard one go "pop," and fly into a hundred pieces, and then one after another went "pop," and flew into pieces. Only about fifty of the vessels stood the test, and after a while these were taken out of the fire, brought into a cool place, and then put into baskets. Next day I saw these women examine the pots and water pitchers, and then bring them to an old woman who was an expert in testing. She was a specialist in that matter, and she had in her hand a little bit of iron and with this she lightly struck each vessel and listened, and then said, "That one and this one is worthy to be taken into the king's presence," and next day they brought all such vessels to the king for his use.

And as I sat and meditated upon what I had seen, I remembered many precious things I had read in the Word of God, and it also brought before me an expression that Kapekele, one of our African brethren, used in my hearing, when he was passing through a fierce trial, "Oh, God," he said, "go on beating me, and testing me. I know Thou lovest me, for I have seen it in the Cross of Christ." All this I remembered, when I saw these potters bring in the vessels "meet for their master's use."

If we bring this great truth into all our troubles,—personal, business, or assembly troubles,—and, just as these women brought their pots to be

tested by putting them into the fire, remember that our blessed Lord is doing the same with us, then this will be our criterion. Let us judge all our sufferings in view of the Cross. And when we cannot understand Him we have the open sanctuary. (Vs. 13). May God enable us to follow His footsteps even in the deep. (Vs. 19). And just as the Psalmist, when tempted to doubt God's love, saw in the midst of his doubting and sorrow the right hand of the Most High redeeming and leading forth His people, so we, in like manner, shall come out of all our despondencies and despair, and we shall be filled with the vision of His right hand that redeemed and led us forth.

I do not know you, but looking to God today for a message, this word was impressed upon my heart, and I am sure, if we see these things concerning "the right hand of the Most High," it will help to keep us trusting during these dark and difficult days, and enable us to say, "Thou art the Potter, we are the clay. Have Thine own way, Lord; have Thine own way." Then shall we go forth to show to our fellow men the tenderness and greatness of our God!

The Leaven in the Meal (Matt. 13:33).—The popular, and generally accepted interpretation of this parable is, that the leaven hid in the "three measures" of meal by this woman, and allowed to work there, until the whole became leavened, is supposed to teach that the Gospel is to permeate the whole world until, by its "silent influence," it is to be so acted upon, that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord is to cover the earth, as the "waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14). But this exegesis of the parable, is contradicted by the fact that leaven, wherever elsewhere in the Word, is used symbolically, ~~is always emblematic of evil.~~ For we read there of "the leaven of Herod" (Mark 8:15) as corrupt politics; the leaven of the Pharisees ~~hypocrisy~~ (Luke 16:6); and the "leaven of malice and wickedness" (1 Cor. v. 8). It would surely be strangely incongruous, to use the same symbol to denote the spread of the Gospel, with its beatifying influences, to be the same as that which spreads corruption and evil. And even if this were allowed—as it is not—the teaching, that the whole world is to be permeated with the Gospel, so that it will "cover the whole earth with the knowledge of the Lord," is in direct conflict with the fact, so fully made known in the Word of God, namely, that something wholly different from a converted world, will be the final result of the universal spread of this leaven, ~~hid by a woman,~~ with a sinister purpose in view, so poisoning her own food—surely tells, that the final issue of the spread of this leaven, is NOT the regeneration, or even the profession of the whole world, but its apostasy from all religion, and its repossession of "sevenfold" powers of such evil, as will bring the "outward frame of Christendom so-called, to a fearful end," as Dean Alford solemnly declares.—~~Believer's Magazine.~~

"Scripture should not be simply a **check** upon our thoughts, but the **source** of them."

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

FEBRUARY, 1929

No. 2

MOSES, ONE OF THE "TWO WITNESSES"

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There is another honor which we believe God will in a coming day confer upon Moses, a greater honor than any which he had as leader of Israel in the past. Rev. 11 tells of two witnesses, whom God will send to strengthen and encourage His people, the "remnant" in a day of dreadful trial, such as they never passed through in all their history of suffering. Earth and hell will have then become leagued, to crush out the last vestige of the worship of Jehovah from the earth. The greater part of the nation will then have accepted the Anti-Christ as the Messiah, a remnant will not, they will stand true for God; but what tongue or pen can describe the sufferings that godly company shall endure? Only the mighty power of God will suffice to carry them through, and thus a special provision of God to meet the great need of that time, will be the sending of Moses and Elijah, as His two witnesses.

We shall look at some Scriptures which have led us to this conclusion. In Malachi 4:5-6, we read: "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet ~~before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord~~; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." This prophecy is very explicit; ~~Elijah is to come before Christ comes~~, to set up His kingdom by the execution of dreadful judgments. And when Elijah comes his mission will be successful. "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children," etc. No failure then, for his work **shall** be accomplished.

Now it is very clear that the coming of John the Baptist ~~did not fulfil this passage~~, although it is applied to him in the Word of God. It is well to see, that many prophecies have a **twofold fulfilment**, the first is what we may call an **initial fulfilment**, and the second, the larger or **complete fulfilment**. And John's coming was but the initial fulfilment of Mal. 4. Gabriel told the father of John that he was to do an Elijah-like work. "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of just; to make ready a people for the Lord." (Luke 1:16-17.) John was not Elijah, but he carried on his ministry "in the spirit and power of Elijah."

From Mark 9:11 we would gather that the scribes eased their consciences in rejecting the Lord Jesus as Messiah, by saying that Elijah had not come. We can imagine with what an air of superior knowledge they would dispose of the claims of Christ to be the Messiah. "Don't you see," they would say, "this man cannot be the Messiah, because Elijah, his messenger has not come." But our Lord says in verse 13: "~~Elias is indeed come~~, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him." Again, in Matt. 11:14, we read: "~~And if ye will receive it~~, this is Elias which was for to come." The unbelief which blinded the minds of the rulers, priests and people, so that they rejected Christ, that same unbelief had prevented them seeing in John, the one who had come "in the spirit and power of Elias." Indeed, it would not have been different, had it been the actual Elijah who had come among them. And the same unbelief will lead their children in a coming day to put the real Elijah to death. The blinding power of unbelief then or now is awful.

Let us put it in this way: John came to prepare the way for Christ, but, instead of being successful, his mission was rejected, and he was slain,—as his blessed Lord was soon after. But will that satisfy the prophecy of Malachi 4? Surely not. As we have said, it was but an **initial** fulfilment of that passage. Our Lord, speaking of the larger or complete fulfilment, says: "Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things" (Mark 9:12). Note the word "**cometh**," in this verse,—it is evident that it cannot refer to John, for he had already come, and had been put to death. Then again, John did not "**restore all things**," but by and by the work, which unbelief on the part of Israel frustrated, shall be accomplished, and that by ~~Elijah~~ **along with Moses**.

Some may think it rather strange that two men from heaven should be sent to earth to witness and to die, and regard it as in some way lowering the dignity of those two great men. On the contrary, we can understand that it would be an unmixed joy to them, to lay down their lives in the service of their Lord. This would increase their reward, and enhance their glory. These two witnesses of Revelation 11 are slain, but are raised just before the Lord comes forth in glory,—and ~~thus they are linked with Him and with the Church~~ (though not part of it), in the higher department of His kingdom, **in the heavenly Jerusalem**.

This may help us to understand some things which may not have been clear to us, in connection with these men. Moses died and God buried him, and we read, "No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." (Deut. 34:6.) Surely God's reason for hiding it was not, as

some say, lest Israel would go there to worship Moses. We do not for a moment believe that was God's reason for keeping the place of the sepulchre secret. In Jude 9 we read that Satan contended with Michael, the archangel, about the body of Moses. We conclude that Satan had an idea of God's purpose in regard to Moses' body, and he would like to frustrate that purpose.

~~Elijah did not die~~; he was caught up without dying, caught up, flesh and blood. From 1 Cor. 15:50 we know he could be in the glory thus. But God, for His own purposes, can easily preserve ~~Elijah in his body, till that day~~, when he will come and earn the martyr's crown. But the case of Moses may present more of a difficulty, for he died, and if he is resurrected to come on earth, how could he die again? **If he were resurrected he could not die.** But it will not be resurrection when Moses is raised to be sent back to the earth, but **re-animation**. Take the case of Lazarus; he was raised from the dead, but it was not resurrection, or he could not have died again. It was re-animation, just as in the case of the other two whom the Lord restored to life, or in the cases we have in the Old Testament (1 Kings 17:21-23; 2 Kings 13:21).

Now it will be just as easy for the Lord to re-animate the body of Moses, after ~~four thousand years~~, as it was to re-animate the body of Lazarus after ~~four days~~. Most of us have seen an Egyptian mummy, which, perhaps, was embalmed three thousand years ago, and yet after the lapse of all those centuries, how wonderfully the form has been preserved. Surely it will not be hard for God to do better than the Egyptian embalmers, preserve the form and re-animate it, sending these honored servants back for the occasion, to serve His people. Both men had been identified with Israel in the past,—in days that foreshadowed the times of which we speak. Moses delivered Israel from the haughty imperious Pharaoh, who disdained to bow to God, and Elijah stood for God in a day of apostasy, and it seems fitting that they should be linked together in the final deliverance of that people, whom in the past they loved and served! Again, there is a remarkable similarity between the work of these two men in the past, and that of the two witnesses in Rev. 11:5-6. Compare Elijah shutting heaven that it rained not (1 Kings 17:1); Calling down fire from heaven upon the soldiers sent to take him (2 Kings 1:9-12); and Moses smiting Egypt with plagues so similar to what we have in this passage.

Encouraged and strengthened by the ministry of these two witnesses, the feeble remnant will wax "strong and do exploits" (Dan. 11:32), and yet the enemy shall appear to triumph. The two witnesses shall be slain, for they have finished their testimony,—their

work is done; their dead bodies shall lie in the streets of Jerusalem unburied, while the people rejoice and make merry; sending gifts to one another, because they have got rid of these two men. But the triumph of the enemy is short-lived, the two witnesses are resurrected and caught up to heaven, to find ~~their place in the heavenly city, reigning with Christ.~~ As the people see them go up, it may well alarm them, but such will be the blinding power of the "strong delusion," that Satan will be able to give them some explanation that will sooth their consciences.

Moses Honored as the Leader of Song. We turn to Rev. 15:2-3, and we see there the **victors**, whom earth thought were the **vanquished**,—but they are "more than conquerors," for they blanched not before the rage of the enemy; they loved not their lives to the death. Now they are standing on the sea of glass, and with harps of God in their hands, they celebrate their victory over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name!

Mark the song they sing: "The song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." **The song of Moses!** Our minds go back to another deliverance and to another song by another sea,—~~which is typical of this scene.~~ In Exodus 15:1 we read, "**Then sang Moses**, and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord." They were celebrating a great victory that day, by the shores of the Red Sea, but they will be celebrating a far grander victory, and over a far more powerful enemy, as they stand on the Glassy Sea; it is their final triumph over all their foes. It is thus fitting that Moses so identified with Israel in the past should now be identified with them in this glorious consummation.

Prejudice distorts innocent and even praiseworthy acts: beware of taking even a fact from a prejudiced person. From other lips matters might appear very different. Charity puts the best, the want of it the worst, construction on what is told us. "Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips" (Prov. 20:19).

"Search the Scriptures"—(John 5:39). Oh! that our one great ambition, and our absorbing occupation, may be to search that which is written, that we may bring into conformity thereto our hopes and our actions, remembering that "there is no wisdom nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord (Prov. 21:30).

"No service by itself is small
Or great, though earth it fill;
But that is small that seeks its own,
And great,—that seeks God's will."

FAITH,—WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). What simplicity, and yet what reality and power are here! "Faith coming by hearing;" whether it be faith in the gospel, or of the news of some temporal calamity or good. There are no two ways of believing anything. And hearing comes—the true hearing—by the Word of God: not by reasonings founded on it; not by "enticing words of man's wisdom" (1 Cor. 2:4), but by the Word of God. And here is where the difference lies; not in the **character** of the faith, but in the **object** of it. The sinner is brought into the presence of God;—he hears **God**, he believes **God**, and he is blest with believing Abraham,—and just on the same ground; for "Abraham believed **God**, and it was counted to him for righteousness." (Rom. 4:3.)

In its first and simplest phase in Scripture, faith is the belief of a record, or testimony. It is secondly, belief in a person; it has, lastly, the character of trust, which always points to what is future. To speak of trust as the only true plan of gospel faith, is wholly false and wrong. In fact, the word commonly rendered "trust" is never used in this connection once in Scripture. It is etymologically "hope," and the element of hope invariably enters into it. In what is pre-eminently the gospel book of the Bible, it occurs but once (John 5:45), and in the sermons of the Acts we shall seek for it in vain. "We are saved by trust," would be a statement at once true and scriptural, if only we understand salvation in its fullest sense, as yet to be made good to us in glory (Rom. 8:24); but the salvation of our souls is not a matter of trust or hope, but of faith in its simplest form. The redemption of our souls is a fact to us, because we believe the record God has given of His Son (1 John 5:10-13); no less so is the redemption of our bodies, but it is because of our trust in God. As the Apostle writes to Timothy, "We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe" (1 Tim. 4:10). Trust springs from confidence in the person trusted; and that again depends on knowledge of the person confided in. In **this** sense, faith may be great or little, weak or strong. "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake" (1 John 2:12). Here is a testimony and a fact. Upon our state of soul may depend the realization,—the enjoyment of it; but our faith can admit of no degrees. But trust in God has as many degrees as there are saints on earth. Some believers could not trust Him for a single meal; others can look to Him, without misgivings, to feed a thousand hungry mouths, or to convert a thousand godless sinners. Our faith in **this** sense depends entirely on our

knowledge of God, and on our communion with Him; the faith of the gospel comes by **hearing** Him. (John 5:24-25.)

He who truly **hears** the good news of Christ **believes** it, just as a little child believes a mother's word. And none but such shall ever enter the kingdom (Luke 18:17). There is neither mystery nor virtue in the faith, in the one case any more than in the other; the only difference is in the testimony itself. He who believes the gospel receives a word that is nothing less than "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). If, in fact, none can believe apart from the Holy Spirit, the difficulty depends on no peculiarity in the faith itself. It is not a question of metaphysics, but of moral depravity and spiritual death! As far as the act of faith is concerned, the gospel is believed the same way as the passing news of the passing hour. The hindrance lies in the apostasy of the natural heart of man. And doubtless, the reason faith is made the turning-point of the sinner's return to God, is just because distrust was the turning-point of his departure from Him. Disobedience was not the first step in Adam's fall: it was the last, and it followed upon disbelief.

We are saved through faith, but faith is not our saviour. If faith had intrinsic virtue, and could bring blessing with it, hell would be impossible; for there are no unbelievers, save on earth, and that, too, in the days of Christ's humiliation and His absence. The day is coming when all shall believe and confess His name. And if that faith and confession bring blessing now, it is not because of any merit they possess, but because God is saving men in sovereign grace. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace" (Rom. 4:16), as it is written, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). The salvation which is in Christ Jesus is a free gift from God,—given on the principle of grace and received on the principle of faith.—Extracts from "The Gospel and Its Ministry," by Sir Robert Anderson.

Our Warfare.—To Israel the Canaanites were enemies of flesh and blood, but they are types of the still deadlier foes **we** have to fight,—foes whose effort it is to hinder the Christian from taking possession, in present enjoyment, of his heavenly inheritance in Christ. (Eph. 6:10-18.)

"I cannot tell what may befall;
I know not, but God knoweth all;
His love will give me what is best;
He lives, He loves, ah! that is rest!"

"HE THAT IS SPIRITUAL"

J. M. DAVIES, India.

When iniquity shall abound the love of the many shall wax cold (Mat. 24:11),—the majority will become lukewarm,—spirituality will be on the decrease. It will not be estimated at its proper value. So much was this so in the darkening days of Israel's history, that Isaiah says, "Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey (or, is accounted mad); and the Lord saw it and it displeased Him that there was no judgment. And He saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor" (Isa. 59:15-16). Hosea says: "The prophet is a fool and the spiritual man is mad" (Hos. 9:7). To seek to walk with God in Israel's apostate days, was to inherit the ridicule of those who were the professed people of God. The spiritual had to suffer. They were made a prey, and regarded as fools. Even in Paul's day this spirit was prevalent. He speaks of himself as being "a fool for Christ's sake." Let it be remembered that there is a price to be paid for spirituality, but it has its recompense of reward. I desire, however, to draw the attention of the reader to four scriptures in the New Testament, which give us the earmarks of true spirituality.

"To be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). The first part of the 8th chapter of Romans is a fit conclusion to the experience so tersely described in the 7th. The youngest believer in Christ will, according to the advantages he has had in his unsaved days, possibly know a good many things, but there is one thing he will not know, and that is the deceitfulness of his own heart,—the subtlety of the flesh,—the utter futility of trying to improve it, and its absolute enmity against everything that is of God. He will be able to rejoice in the forgiveness of sins and live in the enjoyment of it, only to realize shortly afterwards, that by obtaining the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, he did not lose his old nature, neither did this old nature experience any change. He will learn by bitter experience the truth of the words, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and "the flesh profiteth nothing," for in it "there dwelleth no good thing." This experience, which the apostle himself had to learn, is described in Rom. 7:13-25. It corresponds to the wilderness experience of Israel, where God desired to teach them the perversity and possibilities for sin that lay in their own hearts. Had they learned this as they should have done, doubtless they would have sought to cleave more tenaciously to the Lord and His Word. To be deceived as to the true nature of the flesh is calamitous. In the 7th of Romans, Paul learns the lesson taught in Gen. 6. "The end of all flesh is come before me." He learned it by seeking to walk with God in carnal

energy. From v. 14-24 the personal pronouns I, Me and My appear some 35 times,—but not one reference to the Spirit of God, for the simple reason that God is through with the “old man,” and will not waste energy upon it. The Spirit of God will never lead the believer to be occupied with the flesh, and as long as the believer is trying to live the Christian life in the energy of the flesh, there will be nothing but discouragement. No song,—but groans,—no shout of triumph, no joy, until he turns away from the corrupt and incorrigibly wicked flesh, to occupation with Christ as the Man on the Throne,—the Man in the glory. Once his eye gets fixed on Him, he begins to sing, for he is enjoying peace. He has learned the secret of spirituality, which is to allow the Spirit to occupy his mind and heart with what Christ is in all His fulness at God’s right hand for him,—not with his own flesh, and what he is in himself.

This experience is illustrated in that of Abraham as recorded in Genesis, Chaps. 21 and 22. The sending away of Ishmael and Hagar, confessed that henceforth Isaac was to be his all in all. With Ishmael in the tent, there could not be the enjoyment of peace, as he “mocked” Isaac. It was a disturbed family until Ishmael was sent away. To be done with legality, and submit to the Spirit is the secret of life and peace.

What is learned in Rom. 7 is what Jacob learned at Penuel,—the futility of struggling,—the smitten thigh,—death to the carnal energy that he had been so guilty of while with Laban. The clinging soul and the leaning pilgrim now walked in the light and warmth of the Sun that rose upon him as he left Penuel. When a fugitive, running from his brother’s anger, we are told that the sun “set” as he laid his head to rest on his stony pillow in Bethel. From then to Penuel he seems to have walked in spiritual darkness, for the first recorded sunrise in his experience after the sunset at Bethel, is after he was left alone at Penuel. While with Laban he had walked in his own strength, but after Penuel he limps, and therefore leans on his pilgrim staff. Eventually, as he leaned he worshipped, and blessed both the sons of Joseph. This is “life and peace,” for the Spirit would have us “lean upon our Beloved” as we pass out of this wilderness, realizing that we can only do all things by the strength which He puts into us. (Song of Sol. 8:5).

In the days of Hezekiah God granted a gracious reviving to His people. Hezekiah rose above all the divisions of Israel, and issued a proclamation inviting Israelites to come to the Passover at the appointed time. But the climax was reached when they offered the Burnt-Offering, for “when the Burnt-Offering began

the song of the Lord began also." There is nothing that will cause spontaneous songs of praise like the people of God finding their all in the Man in the Glory, having apprehended in Him there seated, the completeness of the salvation that is theirs. To be able to say from the heart, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, there is none on earth that I desire beside Thee," is the secret of "life and peace," the secret of song. It is the first earmark of true spirituality. Earlier in Israel's history (2 Chron. 20:22), we read that when Israel sang the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon and Mount Seir. The path to deliverance is occupation with Christ. To mind the flesh will mean death and defeat,—it cannot be or do anything else, but "the mind of the Spirit is life and peace." (Rom. 8.)

Nature cannot help in God's things. Witness it in Abraham,—his father,—his nephew,—his wife,—each in turn hindering. Progress could only be made as he turned away from that which was of the flesh as manifested in them. The flesh will only do what Amalek sought to do against Israel. In the wilderness they sought to **delay** progress; at Ai they would **defer** their possession; while after Israel got into the land they sought to **destroy** their produce. (Jud. 6.) When Israel was faint and weary Amalek appeared, and smote the hindmost of them! The Psalmist speaks of them as one of the confederate nations who had consulted together with one consent against God's "hidden ones" to cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel be no more in remembrance. (Ps. 83.)

Be it remembered that the man "in the flesh" in Romans, is not necessarily the libertine or the drunkard, but the man who seeks to make a "fair show in the flesh,"—the one who stands before God on his own merits—what he is as a man in Adam. The mind of the Spirit is that we should set the Lord always before us. May the Lord in grace deliver us from making provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts, and enable us to say in truth, the conscience bearing witness in the Holy Ghost,

"Thou O Christ art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find."—(Continued, D. V.)

MY PLACE IN CHRIST

The opened veil reveals the throne of mercy stained with blood,
Which tells me that my sins are gone,—"forgotten" by my God.
The opened veil reveals to me the dwelling place of love,
The home of all the matchless grace which reached me from above.

A SHADOW OF CALVARY

"SO SHALL THE SEA BE CALM UNTO YOU." Jonah 1:12.

A strange fact, the outcome of a necessity, for one to be thrown into the then raging sea, in order to bring a calm, and thereby deliverance to the otherwise shipwrecked mariners, who finally would have perished. But so had a faithful unfailing God ordered, not only for a disobedient servant and the imperilled sufferers, but above all, to shadow forth the Antitype: the perfect contrast, as shown in the marvelous ways of Him, Who ever had His Son before Him.

Jonah had knowingly departed from doing the will of Jehovah, and was thus the moral cause of the storm; moreover he was fast asleep when roused to face the reality of the position. It was when the helpless captain and crew felt the danger they were in, and called upon the only gods they knew, which were no gods, that Jonah disclosed the facts of the case,—how God had sent the storm on his account, and declared the only remedy. "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you."

It is often remarked, that "a calm precedes a storm." This will truly be the case in a coming hour; when men are saying, "Peace and safety," then comes upon them sudden destruction. In this case, the storm **precedes** the calm, in character both with type and Antitype, where the raging waters must be gone into, to bring the calm of peaceful deliverance. Such are the ways of wisdom, love and holiness, combined with grace in righteousness, as set forth in Jonah, made good fully and perfectly in the Lord Jesus, and (blessed be God) now made known to and enjoyed by faith in Him by Whom alone the answer can be found and the lesson seen and learned. Jonah's case solemnly illustrates, that the poor perishing mariners could not be saved except by throwing the disobedient servant into the sea, that thereby the innocent should not suffer for the guilty. This the runaway prophet insisted upon, accepting Jehovah's dealing, and his ultimate purposes of blessing assured to him.

How far otherwise was it with Jesus, the Antitype, Who as the Eternal Son came from the holy calm of the divine glory into a world of sin and woe; becoming a bondman to do the will of God by obedience unto death, even death of the cross. In living obedience through every circumstance, He found it His meat and drink; yet only consummated it at the Cross, which He knew must be, not only because of the hatred and wickedness of man, whom He came to save, but there He was to meet God alone, and settle the question of sin, exhausting the judgment due to it, and thereby bringing about peace with God for all that believe,—an eternal calm for guilty ruined man.

Jonah the disobedient servant said, "Take me up and cast me

into the sea;" Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with:" "The Son of man must be lifted up," crowned with the mysterious solemn words, uttered in holy communion with His Father, "Now is my soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12:27.)

All this eternity will never fully unfold, and much more of the depths of all the suffering, when the innocent stood for the guilty, the Holy for the sinful.

The waves of wrath of a sin-hating God passed over Him, when He Who knew no sin was for us made sin, uttering the unfathomable cry,

"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Disciples, even chosen witnesses, could sleep in the hour of His anticipated sorrow, where wrath and judgment were pending, but devotion to God's glory, and His people's need, led Him onward to the Cross, until He could say,

"IT IS FINISHED!"

For He went down into the sea of death, not only paying the full wages of sin, but by dying to sin He closed its state forever, and no less made everlasting peace by the blood of His Cross.

As always, so here, the Antitype more than covers the type. The storm greater than every other in its every element is now past forever. The abiding proof is, that the once suffering Jesus has exchanged the Cross, with all its agony, divine judgment, and death, for a perpetual seat at the right hand of God. Not this only; He is the exalted Head of the Church over all things, Chief of the new creation, where all is of God.

Accordingly the Holy Spirit has been sent to testify to Him, that everlasting peace is made, that eternal redemption is secured. By Him the gospel is preached, whoever will may proclaim it,—the calm which succeeds that storm is perfect peace with God, through Him Who died and rose again; and every believer is privileged to have henceforth this peace unruffled at all times. Fault and failure may disturb communion, but never can undo the soul's peace with God.

The grace of Jehovah used the appointed means of Jonah's sin and remedy to bear witness of the true God to the sailors ready to perish. How vast the company of perishing sinners, who have been brought to God, and saved from the wrath to come by believing in Jesus, whom He raised from the dead, Jonah's Antitype!—Jesus Who suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust!

What will not God do for the Holy One, Who alone glorified Him in being made sin? Surely the believer as to his sins and failures, whether in Jonah's form or otherwise, can say that all his

blessing is based on Christ's wondrous death, where sin in all extent was judged as it could be nowhere else. As this is the truth, what must their portion be who are content to live and die, without the true confession of their sins, without faith in the One Whose death alone met God's judgment there? May the person and death of Christ be growingly real and precious, begetting devotion of heart, in holy consistency and obedience to His word, till He come.—G. G.

THE DESERT AND THE GARDEN

GOSPEL ADDRESS BY J. A. CLARKE, OF BELGIAN CONGO.

(Notes taken by DR. H. A. CAMERON)

Read Isaiah 55.

Verse seven of this well-known passage is a pivotal verse: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

This great appeal, made by the prophet, divides the chapter into two. There is a striking difference between the first part and the second. In the first we have a desert; in the second a garden. And as we study this passage we find that it follows the 53rd in Isaiah in logical sequence. There could never have been a 55th unless there had been first a 53rd.

In making a garden there must be a nursery where they plant the seed and take care of the plants. If there were not a nursery there would be no garden; and so when I think of Isaiah 55, with "the trees singing and clapping their hands," I have to go back to chapter 53 to find God's nursery, and then I would have you put over that passage, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). We have the grain of wheat "falling into the ground" in Isaiah 53. That is the seed plot of chapter 55. In Isaiah 53 we have the great story of the Man of Calvary,—the Man Who was "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." There we have the Servant of Jehovah bruised, wounded, put to shame, and that is the soil from whence spring all the wonderful things that grow in chapter 55. In one of his poems Horatius Bonar says, "Ashes are the soil from which spring the colors of the goodly trees of the earth." And so I see the seed going down into the ashy soil, saturated with blood, and out of that soil I see a garden spring forth.

After the war when some of the peasants went back to their farms they found flowers growing that they had never seen there before. Scientists hearing of it, went to study this strange phenomenon. They discovered that, after all the slaughter and the tearing up of the ground by shot and shell, there had sprung up out of the soil wonderful flowers hitherto unknown in these parts; and they came to the conclusion that all over that land there were seeds waiting, waiting, for a deluge and a storm, and when that soil was torn by the shells and watered with blood, these new flowers had come up. The seed was there all the time, but it was waiting for that wonderful baptism of blood. When I read the 53rd of Isaiah I know why the trees in the 55th are clapping their hands. The land has been saturated with the blood of the Son of God. That was the "ashing of the soil." "But if it die it bringeth forth much fruit," and the "much fruit" is found in the second portion of this passage, the garden that grew in the desert!

Let us look first at the condition of the desert. Very significant are the words, read them carefully, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not. Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Here we have a picture of restlessness; a hot, feverish people, that are toiling, laboring, spending money; thirsty but without water, hungry but without bread, toiling but with no satisfaction. It is not that they haven't money, because He tells us that they spend their money for that which is not bread. They are spending it on things that never satisfy. But when I read, "He that hath no money," I realize that it means that the money which they have is not the proper currency,—the currency of heaven. No material ability will purchase the things of heaven. All material things, on which we set our hearts, will never purchase the Bread of Life.

"Hungry," and yet finding no food from heaven, because they have not the currency of heaven. They have a capacity for heavenly things, for God has put eternity

in every heart. They have volitional and emotional powers, but all their powers are in the desert. These people see mountains, but what are mountains to a man in the desert? All he thinks of is how he can exploit them. He looks at the forest and only sees lumber. Vainly he tries to satisfy the higher things of life with dust. It was not always so. There may be some here who were not always of this mind, but now you are held in the grip of materialism. You are self-centered. Your eyes are filled with the dust of this life. How long is it since you looked up at the sun, or looked for five minutes at the stars? You are like the man with the muck-rake that John Bunyan tells of, vainly trying to transmute everything of God into material gain. But it was not always so. There was a time in your life when these material things first clung to you. You were about to hear the music of the spheres. The impressions of the heart, the mysteries of the soul, remain the same, for there is something in your heart that cannot be satisfied by material things even though they get a strong hold upon you. The throb of the auto, the roar of the plane, deafen your ears to the music of heaven. These things are only to be used to live by, they are stepping stones to things higher. But if you let these things into the soul they will bring death, for they will demand more and more of your strength, and "what shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

It was not always so with some of you here. Some of you might have been professing Christians, but you have wandered far away. Perhaps you can sing with the poet:

"I remember, I remember, the house where I was born,
The little window where the sun came peeping in at morn.
He never came a wink too soon, nor brought too long a day,
But now I often wish that night had borne my breath away."

I remember, I remember, the fir trees dark and high,
I used to think their slender tops were close against the sky,—
It was a childish ignorance, but now 'tis little joy,
To know I'm farther off from heaven than when I was a boy."

You have been grasping, and grasping, and hugging it to your breast, and the sob of your soul is, "I know I'm farther off from heaven than when I was a boy." Yes, when the fir trees touched the sky and you said, "Mamma, these trees go up to heaven," but you have changed all this into dollars, and you are starving,—because God has "put eternity in your breast," and these material things can never satisfy. "Yes," you say, "it is true, and I want to get out of the desert and come again to the fir trees. I want to see the mountains. Is there any way back?" Yes, there is a way back.—

"Let the wicked forsake his way and the uprighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord." This is a great appeal from a great prophet, and it is backed by the sacrificial work of Christ. He stands upon redemption ground and sings the music of heaven to you. "Let the wicked forsake his way." That is the way back to the garden, back to God, back to the "singing" and the "clapping of the hands,"—out of the desert into the garden,—out of the misery and darkness and hot fever,—back into the calm retreat of the life of God.

This is one of the supreme moments in the prophet's message. He is borne aloft and carried away into the distant future,—and he says things that he himself does not quite understand. The coming of the Prince of Peace, when He will reign in righteousness is what he looks forward to, and he sees the people of his country have been carried away into the arid desert, and so he makes this appeal to them. But the Word of God has an application, an appeal, to all times, and we take this from its setting and make it apply to this day and generation, and I say in the name of my Master, it is a word to your heart tonight. "Let the wicked forsake his way!"

Here again the verse falls into two parts, the manward and the Godward side. This is always so with the gospel. There is a co-operation. God will not coerce your will. You have to bend that will to the will of Jesus Christ. Would you know the way back into the garden? The manward side is, "Let the wicked forsake his way." That is what God is saying. "Man's way" is the well beaten path. It is the path over which millions have passed; it is the path of our African. It was once the forest, but millions have trodden over it until it is a well beaten path. No specific sin is mentioned. You know your own heart. God is telling you about that well beaten path of yours. You say, "I seem to have heard this before." Yes: it is in Isaiah 53: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way,"—his own beaten out path! God is dealing with the trend of the life you live, not one sin but the whole bias of your life, and he says it is wrong. "Let him forsake his way,"—not some specific sin. You have been born wrong. You were born on the wrong way, and you have gone on beating out that way. That is the history of the human race. Every man goes his own way,—pleasing himself and shutting God out. Your life is governed by material things, and seeing the bent

of your life God says it is wrong. It may be refined, educated, scientific, but it is not God's path, and that is what makes it wrong. It may be a vulgar path or a path refined, but it is not God's path. God says, "Forsake it!" Why? Because he says, "My ways are not your ways." Is it a question of distance? Oh, no. His way for us is a way beyond this sphere. We are kept in the grip of things material, but God says, "My way for you is a way of peace,—the highway of the king, with your manhood and womanhood in My complete control. That is My way for you, and that is why I say, "Forsake your way, if you would get back into the garden. Your thoughts are far too small. I have great high thoughts about you and so I say "Forsake your thoughts."

The word "thought" means the "weaving of the plan of life." We all make plans. I do not know what plan you have, but God knows, and He says that plan of yours is wrong. The center is wrong, and so everything else must be wrong, and therefore God says forsake it. "The ways" refer to the outside or external things, and "the thoughts" refer to the center, the heart. If the heart is wrong, we are all wrong. As Burns puts it, "The heart's aye the part aye that make us right or wrang." Unrighteous man, forsake that plan you have made, because Jesus Christ is not in that plan. Your conceptions of heaven and earth and hell are all wrong. Forsake your conceptions and weaving of plans if you would come into God's garden.

"But how am I to forsake this well beaten way? I have been on it so long and there is a fascination about it. Old things have a great fascination, and the old path grips and holds. These thoughts! Have I to give them all up? How is the forsaking of my ways and thoughts to be done?"

"Let him return unto the Lord." No effort is needed on your part. To "return to the Lord" is "to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." "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 man who believes that, receives the power, the right, the authority, to become a child of God. "To believe"—"to receive"—is "to return." How are you going to return? How did the prodigal return? Did he wait till he got a new suit of clothes, or shaved, and cleaned himself up? He said "I will arise," and there was a welcome for him at the other end of the road. The father was waiting and looking for the son, and the son was coming back, he was returning, but before he got there the father saw him, and with arms of love and mercy he embraced him, saying, "Welcome!"

What about the old way? That will be straightened out. The well beaten paths will be forsaken, for you have given them up, and you have presented your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. You say, "Take my life and let it be, ever, only, Lord for Thee." You have come not to "a church," not to "a Gospel Hall," not to a "Salvation Army barracks," but to a Person,—the Lord Jesus Christ. You have returned to Him, you are received by Him, and He has become the Center of your being;—the driving force of your life is in Him. But all that is the manward aspect.

What about the Godward side? Listen to "the bells of heaven." Listen to the music celestial. I cannot put it in such a way as I would like. Some one here is in "the desert,"—is hungry and thirsty. Here you will find an open gate to life, into the garden of God. Listen, "I will have mercy upon him." Do not faint, or falter. Come with your sins,—come with your thirst, and hunger, and dissatisfaction. Come toiling one. "Come unto Me and I will give you rest." "There is rest for the weary, where the tree of life is blooming, there is rest for you." "He will have mercy upon him." O, what a God is our God! Out of the desert He will bring you into the garden. All the wasted years will be blotted out, and you will come into God's garden. "Are you sure of it, preacher?" Yes, "I have been to the altar and witnessed the Lamb burnt wholly to ashes for me," and that banished all my unbelief. I have been to the Cross, and tasted His sweetness there. What makes that love so sweet? Because it is the proof of this great appeal: "I will have mercy upon him." Our God is a God of mercies, and He is full of compassion. Look how He has lavished mercy upon you, and He is now bending toward you as that father did to the prodigal with outstretched arms. No one will ever know the joy of that father's heart, as he embraced his returning son!

The Cross is proof positive that he will have mercy upon you, because there God hath found the ground where He, a Holy God, can show mercy. "It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemneth? He is on righteous ground and He says, "I will have mercy upon you." "But, preacher, what about the past? I have left the old path, and I have a new Center, and all is new, but, O God! the past! How it holds me! What about the dark deeds done in the dark nights? What about those sins that, like angry leopards, spring out on me and maul me? Preacher, tell me, will He do anything about the past?" Listen to our God. "He will abundantly pardon." I wish I could say that with the music of heaven in every accent. You have sinned and sinned, even as one man said, "My sins reach to the high mountains and to the heavens," but higher than these sins is His mercy, and He will

abundantly pardon and cleanse and redeem. You will pass into the "garden!" But you say, "Is it so easy?" Yes, it is easy, thank God. The other day I went into the Woolworth building in New York. When I first looked at that building I said, "Is it possible for anyone to get up there?" But it was all so simple. I went in and a man touched a button and I was soon away up in the building. All for nothing, but at immense cost. "Who is a pardoning God like Thee?" It is all so simple. But turn your eyes to that center Cross on Calvary, and you see Jesus. "See from His head, His hands, His feet," flows the blood of atonement. Why was He there? So that God could have mercy upon you, and because of a righteous ground He could abundantly pardon. At infinite cost to the Son of God, but to you absolutely for nothing. Only trust Him, He will save you. This is the only way back to the garden, back to the singing and music, back to all the wonderful things that we have in God. Does it work? You will know if you take it into your heart.

But let me illustrate it with an experience. Once I was traveling through Central Africa, on a long eighteen-months' trip, and we were in Northern Rhodesia, but that was before it was called Rhodesia. We were camping as usual at night, and around the fire I was telling my men about God's great pardoning grace, when suddenly we were startled by the sight of a strange man coming out of the darkness into the light of the camp-fire. This stranger was armed with bow and arrows, but as he came toward us he put down his weapons, and clapping his hands he said, "Pardon me for thus intruding myself, but be pleased to save me. Do not cast me away. We have had famine here and death has taken away my people and I am weak and hungry." I was suspicious and thought it might be a ruse, and that he was only coming to spy out our position and condition, so that his people might attack us later, but my men said: "It is all right; he is really hungry." For they knew about the great famine. Well, he was brought into our family, and there for the first time he heard God's wonderful evangel. Of course, I gave him food, and next day he begged that he might remain with us, and when we marched, with us went our new recruit. He was very suspicious of us all at first, but he accompanied us over the whole journey till we came down near to civilization. And then we returned, and one night on the homeward march, as we always did, we were sitting around the camp-fire telling out the gospel, and my text was: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," and I told them that we were God's creatures and meet Him we must, to give an account of the deeds done in the body. That thought gripped this man, although I did not know it then. After our meeting was over, I went to my tent, and was soon asleep in the darkness of the night. The lions were roaring in the distance, and leopards and hyenas were prowling around, and I slept through it all, but suddenly I was awakened by the sound of someone creeping into my tent. I reached for my gun, thinking it was a wild beast, and I shouted, "Who is there?" And a voice answered, "Do not be angry with me, but I cannot stay away any longer. I have listened to what you told us and I know I have to meet God. God is here." And then he gave me a very graphic illustration, taken from the battlefield. When in battle one man is victor over another he puts his foot over his prostrate enemy and offers him life, if he will swear to be the victor's slave. If the conquered one agrees his life is spared; if not, a blow ends it. And this is what he said to me: "God is here, and He has got me down, and His foot is upon me, and He is pressing my heart. He has conquered me, but will He receive me? Oh, my sins! These hands of mine are red with blood! and I have come here to ask you, will He receive me?" And I said to him, "Listen! Let me tell you, the very foot that is pressing you, is the foot that was pierced on the Cross, and at that Cross was opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness." And as I spoke to him he wept, and I wept, and the African soil in my tent was wet with the tears of a penitent sinner. And I told him, "God says He will have mercy upon you," and, as I rehearsed the old, old story of Jesus and His love, I saw that man pass out of darkness into light.

You say, "Explain it." These things cannot be explained; they have to be experienced. That man's soul was operated upon by the Spirit of God, and he proved God to be able to pardon. He loved me, and he said he could not explain why. It was because he was in the "garden." The trees were clapping their hands; everything had a different hue,—heaven a deeper blue and the earth a fairer green. We are back into the "garden," for we have found God to be a merciful God. Back into the "garden," with no chance of losing that place now, because it is assured to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, and, in the evening time of life there He walks with me, and He talks with me, and everywhere the flowers are blooming and the birds are singing. I am back into "God's garden," and by and by He will lead into that larger place, where there is a river and trees, and the leaves are for the healing of the nations. I will be there—will you?—to wander in that garden with God. This is the reason you were born—to be lifted up and back from the material things of earth. You were made for God. Satan is an interloper. God made you for Himself, and He wants you. He wants you tonight, to take you from all your sins into His "garden." May God have mercy upon you and bring you back.

THE REDEEMED

"O, give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy, and gathered them." (Psa. 107:1-3.)

'Tis the redeemed can sing and praise the Lamb once slain;
They know the power of His blood to cleanse from every stain.
'Tis the redeemed can say, "Give thanks to God the Lord,"
Whose mercy ever doth endure; be Thou alone adored!

'Tis the redeemed can live to Him who died and rose;
They overcome for He o'ercame, and all their conflict knows.
'Tis the redeemed can tread the path of holiness,
Where the unclean ne'er passeth, nor ravenous beast oppress.

'Tis the redeemed can pray,—nor faint, tho' long they wait;
God hears, and will the answer send, it cannot come too late.
'Tis the redeemed can work,—the lost and ruined win
For Christ, who suffered on the Cross, and bore their load of sin.

'Tis the redeemed may feed His tender lambs and sheep,
And bid them hear their Shepherd's voice, who both can save and keep.
'Tis the redeemed can bear the trials and the cross;
For the knowledge of their Lord, they count all things but loss.

'Tis the redeemed can joy in God thro' Christ their Lord;
Rivers of pleasure, peace, and bliss His presence doth afford.
'Tis the redeemed can cheer the lonely sick and sad;
For they God's comfort know, and thus the sorrowing make glad.

'Tis the redeemed can look and long for Christ's return;
That theme so blest, doth ever cause their heart within to burn.
'Tis the redeemed shall come to Zion on that day;
Eternal joy shall crown their heads, and sorrow flee away.

'Tis the redeemed can cry, "Make haste, Beloved, come!"
Be like a roe upon the mount, and take Thy people home!
The "new song" then we'll sing, as with delight we gaze
Upon Thy face, Redeemer, Lord, thro' countless, endless days.

—E. B. S.

The believer's **salvation** rests upon the fact of the **finished Work** of Christ (John 19:30), his **assurance** is based on the **never failing Word of God** (1 John 5:13), and his **security** is unchallengeable because of the **sealing of the Holy Spirit of God** (2 Cor. 2:22).

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

MARCH, 1929

No. 3

THE GOD WHO IS FOR US AND WITH US.

THOS. D. W. MUIR

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—(Rom. 15:4.)

Among the things that were "written," are those that speak of the purposes of God, and His consequent activities on behalf of His own. For instance, in the book of Exodus there are three manifestations of God's presence for and with His people, to which we would especially draw attention. In these we find Jehovah to be

The God of the Burning Bush.

The God of the Guiding Pillar.

The God of the Sanctuary.

In the closing verses of Exodus 2, we have presented to us the dire extremity to which Israel had been brought by the oppression of Pharaoh and his people. The contentment of earlier days, when they were the favorites of the throne, had given place to a condition where sighs and groans and cries went up from them, by reason of hard bondage. Of this time God had spoken to Abraham (Gen. 15: 13-16), and concerning it had made promises, but to all appearance God was unmindful now of their sorrows,—the Heavens were silent. In point of fact, it was not so, as Exodus 2:24-25 testifies, for "God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel and had respect unto them."

God's covenant of Grace.—Israel, occupied with their misery, did not know that God was for them, and that in His own way had purposed their deliverance. Yet, we are told He "had respect unto them," and, as their groans of helplessness came into His ears, He remembered the covenant of grace He had made with their fathers, at the beginning. For, be it known that the passage of time, with its earthly changes, does not alter or frustrate the purposes of God. His purposes stand fast, and His covenant remains secure. "He faileth not."—(Zeph 3:5.)

And, beloved Christian reader, let us remind ourselves that before our cry of helplessness and need reached His ear,—yea back in the council chambers of eternity,—before time began, and man became a sinner, the Covenant of Grace had been ratified betwixt the Father and the Son, concerning "all whom the Father giveth Him."

God's purpose, therefore, ante-dated our need, even as eternity past ante-dated our little day.

To us, as to Israel, it might seem in the midst of our soul-distress, as though God were indifferent to us and our wretchedness. But not so. Let John 3:16 rebuke such a thought,—“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.” And He who “so loved” can never be unmindful of the cry and groans of the poor slaves of Satan and of sin! He must ever “remember His Covenant!”

God's chosen Instrument.—In Exodus 3, we are introduced to God's appointed servant and instrument in the deliverance of His people,—Moses, who was engaged in his lawful avocation, for he “kept the sheep of Jethro.” He was no recluse, hiding himself away from the world with its responsibilities. He had, at one time, sought the welfare of Israel, for he believed God had called him to that work, but they had spurned his services. It would have been but natural had he retired, and left them to their fate. He did not so. Moses was a man of faith, and faith then as now “cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). The promises of God made to “the fathers,” Moses still believed, and hence could afford to await with God, His time!

Now, however, the time of God's deliverance, for which Moses had waited, arrived, and God found His servant at his post, amid the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law. Thus, the man who was entrusted with that which was “least,” and found faithful, God will entrust with that which is “much” (Luke 16). To this end God makes known His purposes to him.

Times of quiet meditation upon the Word of God are absolutely necessary to the man who would go on with God. But that is not incompatible with attention to the duties of this life. To be **separate** from the world does not mean to be an **ascetic**. Our blessed Lord was no ascetic, nor did He choose His disciples from the ranks of such. They were men found pursuing their lawful calling, and left it only at the direct command of the Lord. For, be it remembered, that if men cannot serve and please God in the legitimate place they occupy, be it ever so lowly, it is not likely He will call them into a more prominent sphere of service. If I am not an evangelist or missionary to those around me, while attending to the duties of daily life, then going forth “in the Lord's work,” as it is called, whether to home or foreign fields, will not make me an evangelist or missionary! A man once said to the writer,—“I do not seem to succeed in business, and am exercised as to whether the Lord is not pushing me into His work; indeed I am being urged by some friends to go

out as an evangelist." We fear this is no solitary case, as assemblies and mission stations can testify, and oftentimes over-zealous but unwise urging as to the need of workers is responsible for such men taking such a step, to the grief of all.

God's purpose Revealed.—As Moses attended to his duties one day, his eye was attracted to a strange sight. He saw a bush,—a thorny bush of the desert,—burst into a flame. As he watched it, he noticed it did not consume, and he drew near to examine it. His footsteps, however, were arrested by a voice from the midst of the bush, which bade him "draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exo. 3:4). It was none other than God Himself, who was about to reveal His purpose on behalf of Israel, who thus admonished His servant, for the presence of God anywhere makes that place "holy ground." O, that we who profess to believe that He is "in the midst," when we are gathered together in His Name, would remember this!

The "bush,"—symbolic of Israel, in all their weakness and exposure to the persecution of their enemy,—is found "unconsumed." Why? Because God preserved them! What so easily consumed as a thorn-bush? What could be so easily destroyed as that helpless and enslaved people in Egypt? And yet they both remained intact, for while the fire burned fiercely, yet God was in the fire, and by it,—symbol of His own character as holy,—Israel was preserved, and in due time brought forth from the furnace of affliction, triumphantly, while Egypt learned that "our God is a consuming fire," through His judgments upon them. Here, then, "the God of the Burning Bush" reveals Himself and His purposes,—Who He was,—What He had seen and heard,—What He would do,—and by whom He would do it. Who and what He was would settle every doubt as to His ability to carry out His purpose to deliver His own.

God must be true to Himself.—Four centuries prior to this, God had, as we have seen told Abraham of this, and now it was coming to pass. He had now seen and heard the evidence of Israel's affliction, and had come to deliver. Others had "seen" and "heard," but were impotent, reminding one of Psa. 49:7. Not so with God, for the purpose of His heart was about to be fulfilled. His hand could and would accomplish all His heart had planned.

But, God has ever been pleased to use instruments in the carrying out of His purposes, and here he found His instrument in the man who had deliberately refused the world, chosen for God, and identified himself with His despised people, as against the throne of the greatest

world-kingdom of the day (Heb. 11:24-27). And that same man—Moses—was one who, though conscious of the call of God, could wait forty years for God's time to come, when He would consider him ready for this service. Hence, the Word in Exo. 3:10, "Come now, therefore, and I will send thee to Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt." And, as if to assure the heart of Moses, He adds: "Certainly I will be with thee." What an honor to be as Moses! He was in the line of the purposes of God, and God could and did use him in their accomplishment!

A divine principle.—Surely this principle holds good yet. If, like Moses, I have "chosen the way of truth" (Psa. 119:30), and am turning my back on the world's ambitions, which are without God, and against Him. If I am, while attending to legitimate duties, keeping in fellowship with God regarding the condition and need of souls who are under the oppressing hand of the Devil—the Pharaoh of hell;—if thus seeking to go on with God, may I not expect that He will use me as a link in the chain of His gracious activities on behalf of perishing men and women?

On the other hand, is it not a noticeable and lamentable fact, that many of those who are undoubtedly the children of God, are barren, and unused of Him as regards being a blessing to anyone? And probably the reason in most cases is not far to seek. If I choose the world,—its fashions and ways, its pleasures and ambitious pursuits as my present portion, instead of fellowship with God regarding that which is on His heart, I need not be surprised if He turns to some other instrument, more suited to His purpose, when needing a messenger in the deliverance of souls! Hence, while God may say to us, as to Moses, "I have seen their affliction,"—"I have heard their cry,"—"I know their sorrows,"—"I am come down to deliver,"—yet He cannot add,—because, perchance, of our worldly conformity,—**"Come now, and I will send thee!"**

Beloved, this is no light matter. The judgment seat of Christ is before each child of God, and in view of it we might well ponder these words: "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn to death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou sayest, behold we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? And He that keepeth thy soul, doth He not know it? And shall He not render to every man according to his works?" (Prov. 24:11-12.) In view of this, may it be ours to seek the face of God, that He may bring us into the current of His own thoughts, and be pleased to separate and sanctify us to His own service, to the glory of His name, and the blessing of souls.—Continued, D. V.

THE THREEFOLD TEMPTATION OF THE LORD; OR, THE SUBTILTY OF SATAN

(LUKE 4:1-13)

W. J. McCLURE

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil" (Matt. 4:1). To many a child of God these words have sounded strangely, and some have asked the question: "If our Lord could not sin, how could He be tempted?" It is well to start with this assured fact, that He could not sin, and that His circumstances made no difference to Him at all, in heaven in the bosom of the Father, or on earth in the wilderness, tempted by Satan, He was ever the Holy One of God. "Holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." He alone could say, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30). The holiest servant of God could not say that, for there is that in them, upon which Satan can work, a fallen nature, ever needing the power of the Holy Spirit to restrain.

The temptation of our Lord was not to see if He could sin, but to show us **a perfect Man who could not sin**, and One who was, therefore, fit to meet the holy claims of God on our behalf. Take as an illustration, the lamb of Exodus 12. On the **tenth** day it was taken out from the rest of the flock and penned up by itself until the **fourteenth** day, when it was killed. Now, those four days gave the Hebrew household ample opportunity to satisfy themselves, that it was a perfect lamb, for that was absolutely necessary, if the first-born is to be saved by its blood. After thirty years spent in the city of Nazareth, about which God has been pleased to say so little, our Lord comes forth, and that time, between His baptism and the cross, answers to the four days that the lamb was kept up for inspection. Just as that lamb was scrutinized by every member of that household, so our blessed Lord was under the observation of men and Satan. Just as those four days did not **make** the lamb perfect, but showed that **it was perfect**, so the result of those years, between the baptism in Jordan and the cross, gives us unshakable confidence in Jesus as a real and sinless man.

Immediately on being baptized by John, He is led into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan, and there, amid all the depressing surroundings of that dreary place, Satan met and plied Him with the three self-same temptations by which he had overcome the first man in a garden, where everything abounded which could minister to his creature comfort. But in that garden the first man fell, while the second man, the Lord from heaven, triumphed in a wilderness, where there was nothing to satisfy human need. And that victory was just the earnest of the greater victory of Calvary.

What infinite issues hung on the result of that conflict, but the outcome was never for a moment in doubt; the stability of the throne of God and the blessing of creation was never for an instant in jeopardy; heaven did not need to look on with anxious suspense to see how it would end. No, the Father had perfect confidence in the Son, and He did not wait until the conflict was over, to break the silence of centuries, in expressing His joy in that Holy One, in those words: "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22).

Before we take up the Threefold Temptation, there are one or two things which should not be passed over, which may be a help to notice. First: This conflict took place right after the Lord's baptism and the Father's confession of Him as His beloved Son. Indeed, that was the signal for the assault of Satan. And may we not reverently say, that in the case of the believer, it is when in the consciousness of sonship, the path of obedience is entered, that Satan's rage will be felt, and that he will use all his arts to turn the believer out of the path of obedience. And if they continue in it, it is only by the infinite grace and mighty keeping power of God. But, alas, how many go down in defeat before the wiles of Satan, instead of triumphing!

Again, we read that Jesus "was **led** by the Spirit into the wilderness." Mark puts it more strongly: "And straightway the Spirit driveth Him forth into the wilderness." (Mark 1:12, R. V.) The word "driveth" and the small "s" have led some to conclude that Satan is meant in that verse. But the R. V. helps to guard against that mistake. It is doubtless the word **driveth** that has misled some. It is true that some of the meanings of the word rendered driveth, are, "To eject by force; to expel, or force away." But it is also rendered by the words "send forth," as in Matt. 9:38, where we are told to pray the Lord of the harvest, that He would "**send forth**" **laborers** into His harvest.

The use of this word by Mark is characteristic of his gospel, which gives us the perfect Servant, the One Who could say, "the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." (Psa. 69:9.) Mark brings out the eagerness of our Lord to obey the Spirit's leading. It was with no laggard footsteps, that He went forth to meet the foe, whether in the wilderness or on the cross. In Him was realized perfectly the type of David meeting Goliath in the Valley of Elah. Of David in that fight we read that "he **hasted** and **ran** toward the army to meet the Philistine." (1 Sam. 17:48.)

"Led by the Spirit into the wilderness." To Him, as the dependent Man in those days of trial, the thought that it was His Father's will that He should be there in that place of trial would be

very sweet and full of joy and strength. Now, He is our pattern, we too are called into conflict with Satan, and have the same weapon put into our hands with which He met and defeated the enemy. But, alas, unlike Him, we sometimes find ourselves in circumstances of trial into which we are not "led by the Spirit," and this takes away the calm confidence that comes from knowing that we are in the very place God wants us to be, and He will sustain us there.

The serene atmosphere of Abraham's life on the Plains of Mamre and the consciousness of Divine protection were just the result of his being led of God. On the other hand, the noisy clamour, the weakness and the shame, that Lot knew in Sodom, were the direct result of what we read in Gen. 13:10-11. "**Lot lifted up his eyes,**" and, "**Lot chose** him all the plain of Jordan." The greatest element of weakness that poor Lot, a real child of God, had in Sodom, was the fact that God had not led him there. Many children of God in these days are not satisfied with where God has put them, and they lift up their eyes and choose, thinking they will improve their circumstances and have fewer trials in the place of their choosing, only to find that there are trials there they never knew, but worst of all, they lack the joy that would have been theirs in following the leading of the Holy Spirit.

But even more than in earthly business, it is necessary that those who go forth professedly to minister Christ to saved and unsaved, should be led of the Spirit, and nothing but the consciousness of this will do when the testing comes, as it will surely come. When the Cheriths dry up and the pockets are empty and there is nothing in the larder, then the one who has in his soul the conviction, God has led me here, can trust Him for deliverance, and will prove Him faithful. If there is the breakdown, and the tale of need poured into human ears, may it not result from having ran unsest, and not waiting to be **led by the Spirit?**

Next Paper, "The First Temptation; Or, Command This Stone That It May Be Made Bread."

Praying in public.—When we pray in the prayer-meeting, we should consider others, and not pray too long. Beware of praying the saints into a good frame of mind, and then by undue continuance praying them out of it again. "I will pray in the Spirit and with the understanding also."

"My life is but a-weaving, between my God and me;
I may not choose the colors He worketh steadily.
Full oft He weaveth sorrow, and I, in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the **upper**, and I the **under** side."

"HE THAT IS SPIRITUAL"

J. M. DAVIES (India)

"He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."—
(1 Cor. 2:15.)

Spirituality in relation to sectarianism and division.—In Romans we have the "Gospel of His Son." In Corinthians we have the "Fellowship of His Son." The one leads to the other, the acceptance of the one puts the believer into the other. The latter Epistle is occupied mainly with four things regarding this "fellowship."—

Its Unity,—Ch. 1:2.

Its Purity,—Ch. 5:8-9.

Its Ministry—Godward, Ch. 10:11; Churchward, Ch. 12:14-16; World-ward, Ch. 15:1-3.

Its Destiny—Ch. 15:51-58.

The assembly at Corinth, like many another since, suffered from internal strife. This led to carnality, for where envy and strife is there is every evil work." (Jas. 3:16.)

The history of the nation of Israel is prophetic of the history of the Church of God. The book of Judges gives us the record of the doings of the nations, that were "thorns" in Israel's sides. One of the first was Midian, who, in company with Amalek, so impoverished Israel that they left nothing for sheep, or ox, or ass. Midian means strife, and Amalek represents the flesh,—and if these two ghastly figures find entrance into an assembly they will so effectually impoverish it that there will be nothing left for the sinner, the saint, or the servant. This is exactly what resulted in Corinth. In chapter 1:10, the Apostle beseeches them to be of one mind, "perfectly joined together," and in doing so he uses the word used in Math. 4:21 and Mark 1:19, rendered "mending." James and John had been out fishing and the meshes of their net had got torn. To try to fish without mending them would only mean wasted time and energy,—they would catch no fish. As the "fishers of men" we need to learn that **the power of gospel testimony is lost by division.** Strife and division will impoverish the land, so that there will be nothing left for the unsaved. Brethren, let us mend our nets, or our Gospel effort will become increasingly fruitless and barren.

In the 2nd and 3rd chapters the Apostle shows how the spirit of division was robbing the sheep of their portion. Whereas they should have grown, they were only babes, and could only take in the milk of the Word. In the Epistle there is no reference to the High Priestly work of Christ, or to Him as the Man on the Throne. It is occupied almost entirely with setting right the things that were wrong in their

midst. There is nothing that so impoverishes Christians, individually or collectively, as sectarianism and party strife. When a hundred years ago the Lord exercised the hearts of some of His people regarding this, and when, in response to the guidance of the Word, they turned their backs upon that which divides the people of God, He so taught them His truth, that from that day to this their ministry has been made a blessing to thousands.

In chapter 4, the Apostle shows the effect of Midian's devastating work upon the **fodder** of the ox. "To this day we both hunger and thirst, and are counted as the offscouring of all things, naked and buffeted and having no certain dwelling place." The assembly that was torn by dissensions and schisms, had no heart for the progress of the gospel. Those who sought to make Peter the head of a party, naturally did not care to remember Paul, and vice versa. These servants of God were not party leaders, but the carnal Christians would seek to make them so.

The origin and course of division is given in chapter 3:3. Envy—Strife—Division. Envy gives birth to strife, and strife to division. That which existed merely in germ form in Corinth, is fully developed today in the multiplied sects. These schisms in the assembly were formed by making the servants of God "Party Leaders," instead of regarding them as the "Ministers of Christ and Stewards of the Mysteries of God," and recognizing that whether it were Paul or Apollos, —**all** were theirs. No group had any exclusive right to the one, nor should they refuse the message of the other. The condition in the assembly had exercised the hearts of the household of Chloe, who were evidently "spiritually minded," and gave evidence of it by refusing to be associated with either section or party, for "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged by no man." He will judge the error of sectarianism and refuse to be a member of any, for sectarianism is a denial of the one-ness of the body of Christ. Many there are who recognize the error of belonging to a sect,—that which cuts them off from the fellowship of other believers, and cuts others off from them, but in seeking to escape from the confusing labyrinth, become "inter-denominational,"—prepared to patronize every sect and each denomination,—thus helping that which builds "mud walls," between God's people. The spiritual will be judged of no man, he will not be open to the accusation of being involved in sectarianism and building up sectarian places. That which divides the people of God is dishonoring to the Head, and must be turned away from. The "spiritual" will have the mind of Christ, which in this connection is that given in John 17. "I will that they whom Thou hast given Me may be one."

Not only will spirituality evidence itself by the individual seeking to be separate from that which is openly and avowedly sectarian,—even in principle and ground of gathering, he will also guard against being involved in “division.” The root of all division is the flesh. Hence, the “spiritually minded” will neither perpetrate nor perpetuate division, but seek to recognize as far as possible the one-ness of God’s people. Thus, it is important in this connection to note the catholicity of the Epistles of Paul.

Romans—“To **all** that be in Rome, beloved of God—.”

1 Cor.—“With **all** that call upon the name—.”

2 Cor.—“With **all** the saints that are in **all** Achaia—.”

Phil.—“With **all** the saints in Philippi—.”

How these bear out the words of our Lord. “There shall be **one** flock, **one** shepherd.” The Spirit of God never contemplates anything less than the whole body of Christ, and when the Head gave gifts they were for the edifying of “the body.” In Colossians it is made clear that all ministry from the Head will knit together the people of God, so that anything that does not knit them together has not come from the Head. The “spiritual” man will refuse all “labels,” “appellations” or “designations” that are not common to all the children of God. He will not accept any names except those that are God-given.

Oftentimes, in an assembly, a brother who is dissatisfied with someone or something, will lead a faction, and gather a group around him, and this with the pretense of spirituality. How easy it is to be self-deceived! May the Lord deliver us from that carnality which evidences itself in building up sectarianism or division,—in preachers being so broad-minded that they can preach anywhere and everywhere. May He enable us to pattern the assemblies of His saints after that given in His Word. The Saints at Corinth are addressed as the “Church of God,” so that in it we might well expect to find the earmarks of a scripturally gathered assembly. They are spoken of as—1. Body of Christ (Ch. 12:27); 2. Temple of the Holy Ghost (Ch. 3:16,—3 Bride of Christ, or a chaste Virgin to be presented to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2). No definite article in front of either, so that none can claim the right to say they are “the” body, temple or bride. But it will be that which will be the expression of the Church which is His Body, His Bride-Elect, and God’s House. It will own the truth regarding the one-ness of the body, and bow to the Scriptures regarding the Headship of Christ and ministry. It will seek to enforce discipline, in keeping with God’s House, and seek to walk in separation from the world.—Continued, D. V.

THE DEVIL'S CRADLE

"Lord, rock us in Thy Cradle."—So spake a little child, the leader in prayer of a group of little ones who were overheard praying. It is a beautiful thought; and may the desire which it childishly expresses be the continual desire of every Christian heart. Yes, God has a "cradle" for His wearied children, and they are happiest who know by experience the perfect peace of those who in it sleep the calm sleep of faith which He giveth His beloved. "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety" (Psal. 4:8).

But every "cradle" is not God's Cradle; neither is every sleep the sleep which God sendeth. Satan, too, has his "Cradle," in which with cruel craft he lulls to sleep the ruined victims of his wiles. Alas, for the myriads that are sound asleep in the "Devil's Cradle!" "The whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 Jno. 5:19, R. V.). It lieth sound asleep (1 Thess. 5:6). Despite all the appearance of progress in the world,—its steam and electrical advancements,—despite the feverish change and restless bustle, man everywhere is locked in deepest slumber, and all these seeming activities are only the idle night-dreams with which he is diverted during his brief hour of guilty sloth. The wily destroyer spares no pains to keep the sleep unbroken, that thus he may hold his goods in peace (Luke 11:21).

Ah, brethren, let us not sleep as do others around about us, but let us "watch and be sober." If we be kept awake, it is neither for want of a sluggard's couch beside us, nor of a cunning Tempter coaxing us to try its softness. He spreads his downiest pillows for believers, and smiles his sweetest smile as he persuades us to rest a little from our watching and our toil. Full well he knows that no earthly weapon serves his frightful purpose half so effectively as does a sleeping saint, and, therefore, no effort is left untried, to get us into his "cradle" and fast asleep! Alas for those who listen to his "sugared lies!" He soon makes mournful work of them, and many have found it **far harder** to get out of his **cradle** when once they were in it, than they found it, in the days of his ragings, to get out of his **prison** at first.

Now, no past experience of the need and the blessedness of watching will preserve us. Look at **Noah**, trained by bitter discipline through centuries to watch, yet tempted at last into the Devil's Cradle; and he, who while awake had stood unswayed by the world's crime, is seen, after a little rocking, a spectacle of shame within his tent! Look, too, at **Lot**. In filthy Sodom his righteous soul was daily vexed (2 Peter 2:8), but a little while in the Devil's Cradle brought that righteous soul to dwell with a measure of content among the atrocities he had once bewailed.

No urgency of danger will keep us awake! When once **Jonah** lay down in the Devil's Cradle, the tempest that could startle even heathen sailors, could not disturb his callous slumbers. Neither will any measure of **past** fellowship with God preserve us now. Look at **David**,—the man after God's heart,—even he was seduced into the Cradle, and looking half asleep, over its edge, he saw what drew him on to awful crimes, and might have drawn him any length, had not God in mercy sent his prophet to awaken the demented sleeper. And again, no degree of natural wisdom will suffice to keep us. **Solomon** was the wisest of mere men, yet was he tempted to lay down his head on Satan's pillow; and the wisest of men has left us the lesson of his last years, as a beacon to all ages of stupendous folly! Ah, who amongst us has strength to stand, when these men of might have been so shamefully befooled?

What will not Satan attempt? So daring is he that he tried to get even **the Model Servant**, the Lord Himself, to lie down for a little, in his Cradle. Aye, and to tempt Him to it, he succeeded in getting the use of an apostle's tongue as we read,—“Then Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, Pity Thyself, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee” (Matt. 16:22—margin). The snare, which was Satan's, of course, was in a moment detected, and He who alone could say: “The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me,” cast aside this lure of the enemy, although coming through one of His favored disciples, saying, “Get thee behind Me, Satan.” Who of us, then, can hope to escape his wiles or assaults? Oh, who of us, if he assails us, can, in our own strength, hope to stand? No one of us can imagine how eagerly Satan's efforts are expended in trying to quench our poor little spark of light which we have from God, and which, feeble as it is, if allowed to shine, is yet his constant torment.

We err if we think that Satan's great work is among the myriads of godless souls who revel in the midst of shameless lust and passions. These he surely leads “captive at his will.” He deceiveth the whole world, and that world “lieth in wickedness.” Man, alas, can act the part of the Devil to his fellow-man, and does it. But the great skill of the enemy himself is seen in his ways with the children of God, and on them the most persistent efforts of his un-numbered agents is expended. And his great aim in our day and in our land is to get them asleep in his Cradle!

In past ages he has sought to terrify the heavenly pilgrims by his wanton cruelties and lion-like roarings. These having failed, he now, in so-called Christian lands at least, changes his policy and tactics,—while his nature is unchanged—and seeks to seduce by flatteries and sweet words what he has failed in getting by his utmost force. For the present, among us, he has locked up his dungeons,

quenched his fires, and flung aside his racks and his gibbets; but with a malignity as malicious as ever, and with a craft more perilous to us, he uses as his instrument of mischief, a harmless-looking, well-cushioned Cradle! To tempt us into it, he can change himself into an Angel of Light; and pretending love, he can even speak to us holy words out of the Book of God. But, all the time his aim is to dishonor God, and to destroy His children. He always was, always is, a murderer and a liar; and he is never more murderous, or more false, than when he seems most fair . . . He will try to use even our spiritual comforts to seduce us, and make a lullaby song out of the believers' blessings and privileges in grace. Beloved, this is not our time to slumber. We must never ungird our armor till our Lord comes. Let us **watch** in the fear of God, while we **wait** for Him who has said, "Surely I come quickly."—J. D.

WE HAVE A COMMON ENEMY.

Is it not often true, brethren, that we brand ourselves with the disgrace of withdrawal from the ranks of the militant few because of our unwillingness to forego our prejudices and dislikes? The enemy is all around us; he is marshalling his foes for a final onslaught, and preparing, by all means, to weaken the resistance of the saints, and we are oftentimes more concerned about our petty jealousies than about the unbroken front. Defection in the ranks plays worse havoc than the ingenuity of our opponent. How much wiser men are in their own generation than are the children of light! It is recorded of Admiral Nelson, on the morning of Trafalgar, that he was exceedingly concerned about every man doing his duty. Calling for Hardy, his captain on board the Victory, he made certain enquiries about Admiral Collingwood, and, to his astonishment, learned that the Admiral and the Captain were not on speaking terms. He bade both appear before him. He took them to the deck. Pointing to the combined fleets of the French and the Spanish, ready at any moment to commence battle, he placed the hand of the one in the hand of the other and said, "**There** is the enemy." The moral is evident.—A. Borland.

The heavenly calling and mind.—Our **necessities** link us with the world. Man has to labor "in the sweat of his brow" for daily bread. Hence it is **godly** to be linked by my **necessities** to the world, but **ungodly** to be linked to it by my **affections**. My necessities ought to be waited upon, but while the world is the scene of my labor in providing for those necessities, yet is heaven my home, my inheritance, my hope, and His word to me is, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are **above**, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."—(Col. 3.)

CLEANSING

When confession of sin has been made by a child of God, our Father, God, is faithful and just to **forgive**, and **to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**. This is a most important element in forgiveness. Indeed, it is **the** important element; for just as confession goes deeper than the prayer to be forgiven, so does cleansing go deeper than forgiveness. Forgiveness has to do with the sin; cleansing deals with the **state of heart** which led to the sin,—and which would **lead to it again** if nothing were done to reach the **root** of the disease. But our gracious God has made ample provision to meet **all** our need. Forgiveness apart from cleansing may satisfy the man who merely wants to have his conscience soothed for the time being. But it will not satisfy Him whose desire is that we should be **holy** in our whole manner of life. Therefore, we have cleansing in connection with forgiveness. In this we see God's wisdom as well as His grace displayed; for what would it profit us to have a certain sin forgiven in its **outward** manifestation, if the **inner tendency** to that sin remains untouched? What would it avail to have a certain sin forgiven, if the Lord did not deal with the **state of heart** which made that sin possible, and perhaps easy to be committed?

God's righteousness demands that the cause of the sin be sought out and purged. Very often the cause, or root, is the last thing we search for. We look at sin in its manifestation, and are willing to admit that it is heinous. And if we can be assured that it is blotted out, and that we have made "a new start" in the path of Communion, we are prone to be satisfied. But our God is not so easily satisfied; and neither shall we ourselves, if we have been truly brought low on account of what we have done. Superficial confession cannot be followed by the forgiveness which is according to God. There must be heart work. And when the Lord has had a dealing with the heart we may then expect not only the peace of forgiveness, but the healthy and vigorous "tone" which follows upon **cleansing**. Mark the words, "And to cleanse us from **all unrighteousness.**" Nothing is to be left that would give a foothold to Satan. The sword of judgment must be laid not only to the sin that has come to the surface, but to **all unrighteousness**; for unrighteousness tolerated in reference to **one** thing will simply blind us to unrighteousness in **other things**; so that we cannot see in the light of God. We thus learn that **thoroughness** is the great characteristic of God's dealings with the soul.—W. S.

Christian! use the world as a servant, and you may go to prayer, as Abraham went to the mountain to worship—leaving the servants and their cares behind him,—for you will either use the world as not using it, or else you will pray as not praying.

"HE'S NO' FAILED ME NOO"

Up on a lone hillside in the Highlands of Scotland, far removed from any other dwelling, there lived, about the middle of the past century, a poor widow, who for many a long year had learned to rest, in every difficulty and in all her need, upon Him who has said: "Let thy widows trust in Me." It was the depth of winter and the poor woman's stock, never very abundant, was reduced to its lowest by the difficulty of finding any employment at that season of the year. Unlike the widow in the Hebrew story, she actually found her barrel of meal to fail, and when she had finished the last handful she went to bed, with the hope, no doubt, that she might be more fortunate in earning a few pence on the morrow.

But when the morrow came, a terrible snowstorm swept over the land, and the lane leading to her little cot was almost blocked with snow. It was quite beyond her slender powers to battle with the raging storm, and make her way to some neighbor's house, where at least she would be made welcome to a dish of porridge. There was one Friend only to Whom she could apply, and in Him she had the most perfect confidence.

Accordingly, she filled her pan with water, and put it on the fire, and put the salt in the water. "Noo," she said to herself, "I'll just gang ben, and ask the Lord for the meal." So she retired into her inner chamber, and there "With praise and thanksgiving she made her wants known unto the Lord." She had not been long on her knees when there came a loud knock at the door. "Na, na, Lord!" she exclaimed, "Thou cans' na hae sent the answer sae soon!"

But the knocking continued, and, on her opening the door, a buxom farmer's lass, who lived some little distance off, flung down a sack of meal on the floor, exclaiming: "Father sent ye that; and I think ye may be very grateful to me for bringing it here through all this terrible storm. Whatever possessed my father I don't know, but all the morning he has been dinning into me about that sack of meal, and, snow or no snow, I must be sure and fetch it up to you."

So she was rattling on, when a glance at the old woman fairly overawed and silenced her. There she stood with uplifted hands and eyes bedimmed with tears of grateful praise, as she exclaimed: "He's aye the same, Jeanie! He's aye the same! Mony a lang year hae I trusted Him, and I never found Him fail; and He's nae failed me noo. Look at yon pot on the fire, Jeanie. I put on the water, and I put in the salt, and ne'er a grain o' meal had I in the hoose. Sae I was jist asking the Lord to send me the meal, when I heard ye knock at the door, and noo here comes the meal, jist while I was asking for it." —Selected.

THE OBSCURE PATH

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (Isiah 50:10.)

The way is dark, my Saviour,
 I cannot see Thy face;
 Is it earthly joys that have dimmed for me
 The glories of Thy grace?
 I know beyond the earth-cloud
 Shines warm Thy tender smile;
 Thou hast not turned Thy face from me—
 'Tis hidden for a while.

The way is dark, my Saviour,
 I do not know Thy choice;
 Is it earthly sounds that have dulled my ear
 To the music of Thy voice?
 I know, could I but hear it,
 'Twould whisper, "Do not fear,"
 Thou hast not ceased to speak to me,
 But, oh! I cannot hear!

The way is lone, my Saviour;
 I cannot touch Thy hand;
 Is it earthly things that have pressed between
 My soul and Calvary's Man?
 I know, could I but see it,
 'Tis still outstretched to guide,
 Thou hast not ceased to walk with me,
 I've wandered from Thy side.

Must I wait, then, in the darkness,
 For the joy-thrill of Thy smile?
 Wait for the tender music
 Of Thy voice stilled for a while?
 Wait for that fair sweet moment
 Of feeling the touch of Thy hand?
 Then help, Lord, e'en in the darkness
 To trust where I can't understand!—E. M. G.

Christ is all.—God's thought of completeness is Christ. Not only have I all I **want** in Christ, but I have all I **need to** be in Him. You cannot add to His fulness; all the majesty of God is there.

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

APRIL, 1929

No. 4

GOD FOR AND WITH HIS PEOPLE.

THOS. D. W. MUIR.

The God of the Guiding Pillar.—In our last we were considering God's revelation of Himself to Moses in the "Burning Bush." We saw Him there as the God who, in His covenant with the fathers,—in counsels and purposes,—and in His providential workings, had proved Himself to be "**for**" His people, Israel. In all His judgments on the land of Egypt, God had made a difference between His people and the Egyptians. One might tabulate those occurrences somewhat as follows: For instance, God made a difference between them,—

In the plague of flies,—Exod. 8:22-23.

In the plague of murrain,—Exod. 9:4.

In the plague of hail,—Exod. 9:26.

In the plague of darkness,—Exod. 10:23.

In the death of the first-born,—Exod. 11:7.

In the pillar of the cloud,—Exod. 14:20.

In the passage of the sea.—Exod. 14:27-31.

Mr. Newberry, in the marginal reading of the first Scripture quoted, reminds us that that "**difference**" signified a "**redemption**" that God put between His people and Egypt!

But, Israel's peculiar testimony was not only that Jehovah was **for** them, but that He was **with them**,—overshadowing them from the burning heat by day,—giving them light by night, that they need not walk in darkness,—guiding them, and dwelling in their midst, for, as Psalm 114 tells, "Judah was His Sanctuary, and Israel His dominion." As His "Sanctuary," they were His sanctified abode,—as His "dominion," they were the sphere of His rule and care. No other nation on the face of the earth could claim His presence, and none other were called by His Name. As Moses said in a day when God's patience was tried by the murmurings and backslidings of His people: "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence; for, wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? **Is it not that Thou goest with us?** So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." (Exod. 33:15-16.)

Here, then, was something indeed peculiar to those who were the Lord's redeemed ones,—it distinguishes them from the world around

them. The other nations might boast themselves of many things,—their numerical strength, besides their wealth and power. But none of them had the presence of God, as a living reality in their midst,—Israel alone had that! Well might Moses, at another time, while exhorting Israel to obey God's commands, exclaim:—"What nation is there so great who **hath God so nigh unto them**, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great that **hath statutes and judgments so righteous** as all this law, which I set before you this day?" (Deut. 4:7-8.) God's presence with them, and God's Word to guide them,—what a heritage! Thus, the "God of the Burning Bush" became to them also,

"The God of the Cloudy Pillar," as it is written:—"And the Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light; to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

We find the presence of the Angel of Jehovah in that cloud which was light for Israel, but darkness to their enemies, as they crossed the Red Sea. "And the Angel of God which went before the camp of Israel removed and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them; and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel: and it was a cloud and darkness unto them, but it gave light by night to these; so that the one came not near the other all the night"(Exod. 14:19-20).

Thus did He bring them into the place of deliverance from the power of their enemies. And through the wilderness upon which they entered, His presence in the cloudy pillar by day, and the pillar of fire by night, never failed them. That cloud was a protection,—for "He spread a cloud for a covering." It was also a light by night, so that they were never in darkness! An untrodden path lay before them, they had not gone that way before, but **God** knew the way, and He was with them as their Guide,—as we read:

"And on that day that the Tabernacle was reared up, the cloud covered the Tabernacle, namely, the Tent of Testimony, and at even there was upon the Tabernacle as the appearance of fire, until the morning. So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the Tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed, and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. At the commandment of the Lord, the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the Lord they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the Tabernacle, they rested in their tents . . . whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the Tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode

in their tents, and journeyed not; but when it was taken up they journeyed" (Num. 9:15-23).

Emmanuel,—God with us. The two-fold revelation, given by the Angel to Joseph, concerning the Lord Jesus, is in conformity with this (Matt. 1:21-23), "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus (meaning Jehovah the Saviour), for He shall save His people from their sins." And again, "They shall call His Name Emanuel, which being interpreted, is **God with us.** Thus we have

Jesus.—Jehovah our Saviour,—**for us.**

Emmanuel,—God, our God, **with us.**

While the first speaks to us of redemption, wrought out for us on Calvary, and of which, by grace, all who are saved are partakers; the second links our thoughts, rather, with the wilderness, through which we are passing, and His presence with us in it. Here, in this school of God He is teaching and training us. Here it is He is causing us to know our own hearts. Here it is we learn to know God in a sense we could not know Him otherwise, for here it is that He is known as the "God of all grace," meeting our every necessity, providing for every emergency, and delivering us from all that is against us,—
"Emmanuel, God with us!"

By His Spirit, through the Word, we are enlightened and overshadowed,—we are led and fed. He is our Instructor, Protector and Guide, and our Deliverer out of all our troubles! Just as Jehovah, in the cloudy pillar, accompanied Israel in that day, so, by His Spirit, is He now with His people, as they pass through this wilderness scene. Thus, much helpful instruction regarding the wilderness and its manifold trials, and the manifold grace to meet them, is found in the first epistle of Peter, and other parts of the New Testament. May we be kept, dear child of God, from grieving or hindering the Holy Spirit, in His activities on our behalf!—(Concluded, D. V., next month.)

The satisfaction of the heart in the personal nearness of the Lord, the being in His company for the simple joy of it, is true communion; thus it is we have common mind with Him, which is the meaning of communion. When this is the case, we know the mind of our Lord and Master, and this it is which qualifies us for every service as Christ's confidential servants: it is well to bear in mind that the amount of our service or the laboriousness of our work do not of themselves constitute us confidential servants.

"Like all true love, the love of God cannot be encompassed by a definition. Experience, and not words, makes it intelligible."—Dr. Howard A. Kelley.

THE THREEFOLD TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

SECOND ARTICLE: "COMMAND THIS STONE THAT IT BE MADE BREAD."

(Luke 4:2-4.)

W. J. McCLURE.

"If thou art the Son of God command this stone that it be made bread." This is the first of the three temptations, all of which fall outside those forty days of the Lord's temptation in the wilderness. The subtilty of Satan, the tempter, is seen in the **time** chosen for it. Forty days have come and gone since He entered that wilderness, and we read that in that time "He did eat nothing." If Satan had come at any moment up till that time, and sought to lead the Lord to question the love and care of His Father, by reminding Him that He did not have any bread, He could have replied, That is true, Satan, but if My Father has withheld the bread, He has also kept Me from feeling the need for it.

But Satan waited till the pangs of hunger are felt by our Lord Jesus (verse 2), and now he thinks his chance has come, and he tries to insinuate into the mind of the Lord, as he did into the minds of our first parents, the thought that God has withholden something that was good and necessary. Alas **they** entertained the suggestion, and took what God in His wisdom had withheld, only to open the flood-gates to all the sin, sorrow, suffering and death that followed.

Underneath the apparent solicitude of Satan for the welfare of our Lord, lie his undying hatred of God and his unbridled ambition to hold the place he has usurped, as "prince" and "god" of the world. How innocent looking he sought to make it appear. Christ was hungry and He had power to transmute that stone into a loaf; why not do so? Besides it would prove Him to be the Son of God; so the tempter said. But Satan has another Man than the first Adam to deal with now, One who sees through his artifice, One whose confidence in His Father's love can not be shaken, no matter how tested, or in what circumstances He may be, even One who can say, when in the wilderness, with the wild beasts, and suffering hunger: "The lines are fallen unto Me in pleasant places, yea I have a goodly heritage." (Psa. 16:6.) He was ever satisfied with the Father's will.

"Command this stone that it be made bread." Why not? He has the power and He is hungry. It looked very reasonable; but to have done so would have implied doubt of His Father's love and care, and would have taken Him out of the path of the dependent One,—and neither of these things can He do. It was of Him that Psa. 22:10, spoke: "I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art My God from My mother's belly." And again in Psa. 131:2: "Surely I have behaved and quieted Myself as a child that is weaned of his mother; My soul is even as a weaned child." The perfect trust and

absolute resignation to the Father's will, which these verses bring before us, were ever seen in Christ, in His walk down here. In vain the tempter sought to get Him to act for Himself,—the wiles by which he conquered the first Adam, are plied in vain.

Our Lord meets Satan with a word from Deut. 8:3: "It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." In this we have an illustration of what we get in Psa. 17:4: "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." And Psa. 119:11: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." As man He lived by the Word,—in it He meditated day and night,—He esteemed it more than His necessary food. It was "the man of His counsel," and in all this He was our example.

Now, while in conflict with the enemy, the Scripture is His armory, whence He will take the "Sword of the Spirit" to defeat him. What a rebuke this is to all who look upon the Bible as a very "third rate" book,—a "compilation of Jewish folklore," as our modern theologians regard it. For Him it was God's Word, and **He knew!** Yea the Devil also knew that, for he does not counter our Lord's quoting it,—by saying: "That is not inspired; Moses did not write Deuteronomy;" or, "The Bible's account of creation is all wrong, Adam did not come a perfect man from the hands of God, but was evolved from cosmic dust, through interminable aeons, up through the fish and monkey stages, until he has reached his present state." No, Satan knew better, but that is the wretched stuff that some, who take the place of ministers of Christ, deal out from the pulpit, and this to be considered "up to date," scientific preaching. But they only afford an illustration of the truth of Rom. 1:22: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

Each time that Satan presents a temptation, Christ meets him with, "It is written." What supreme confidence He had in the Word of God. Just one passage each time, without any comment as to its being the Word of God. Surely here we have an illustration of Isa. 42:21. "He will magnify the law (the Word) and make it honorable." He loved it, lived by it, and now in conflict with the devil, it alone shall be His defence.

A story is told of Ceasar Malan, that once he was traveling in a stage coach with a Christian, who was a military officer. An infidel got into the coach, and Mr. Malan began to speak to him about eternal things. As he quoted God's Word the infidel wished to dispute its inspiration, but Mr. Malan paid no attention to this, but continued to quote it. By and by the infidel left the coach, and the Christian remarked to Mr. Malan, "I think you should have proven to that man that the Bible is inspired." Mr. Malan replied, "Colonel, if you were

in action, and one of the enemy came and wanted to parley with you, as to whether or not that was a real sword you carried, what would you do? The Colonel replied: "I would use it." The believer should do the same with the Word of God, for when they descend to argue about its inspiration they accomplish little.

The believer is in the world to follow Christ, to tread the path He trod,—the path of dependence upon God, and unquestioning obedience to His Word. However, they may have failed in this, the responsibility ever remains to seek to imitate Him. As Christ was tempted, so surely will the child of God be, and along the same lines. He will suggest to some, that God has failed in His care, and that there are good things which He has withheld from them, which would have been for their good. Then, if the believer is kept satisfied with God's will, he too can say to Satan, "That is true, but if my Father has withheld those things, He also has graciously withheld the need for them," and thus the temptation falls flat. But the time may, and doubtless will come, when the pressure of a real need will be felt, and then is the believer's danger, lest the suggestion of Satan is acted on, and the path of dependence on God is forsaken.

The temptation to go into debt.—Many a child of God knows from bitter experience what we mean, and will be able to apply what we have been saying to circumstances through which they have passed, perhaps known only to themselves and God. But there is an application we would make, which is so commonplace, that but for the fact that so many of God's people dishonor the Lord, and rob themselves of seeing His hand guiding and providing, we could not speak of it here. A brother lives in a house with which he was content until his family began to grow up,—till then he cared not who had better. But now he feels the need of a larger and better one. As he has not the means to buy or build, it is a case for waiting till God opens the way. But the suggestion is made, that he borrow the money. It looks good; others do so; and so on borrowed money he gets his new home. But somehow it yields him no joy, a weight of debt is about his neck which hampers him, and the feeling that he has, as it were, put forth his hand to "make the stone bread," takes away his enjoyment in his new home. Or it may be the case of a sister, who looks at her threadbare carpets and worn-out furniture. The time was that these things never interfered with her joy, and she felt no envy of those who had better. But now the daughters are getting to the age that they notice these things, and for their sake she feels that she should have better. She cannot go and pay cash for these, but there is no need to wait till she can, for there are stores which do a credit business. The suggestion is acted on, she gets the goods "on time," but her joy has gone, as she realizes that it is a case of "making the stone bread."

Had these dear ones but waited God's time, He would have acted, but they did not give Him the chance to do so. Far different was it with Christ. He was content to suffer hunger till the Father supplied His need. Did He wait in vain? No, we read in Matt. 4:11: "**Then the Devil leaveth him, and behold angels came and ministered unto him.**" How sweet the food provided by those angel hands,—how much better than turning the stones into bread. To Him it was another proof of the love which He never doubted, but to which He could point Satan. "That the Father loveth the Son" (John 3:35). He who watched over the Son, watches over all who are in Him, but they rob themselves of the richer fare which He loves to provide for those who wait for Him! (Continued, D. V.)

TRUE GLORY (Jer. 9:23-24).

"THUS SAITH THE LORD,

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,

Neither let the mighty man glory in his might,

Let not the rich man glory in his riches:

But let him that glorieth, glory in this,

That he undertsandeth and knoweth Me,

That I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness,

Judgment, and righteousness, in the earth:

For in these things I delight,

SAITH THE LORD!"

A Doer of the Word.—A poor woman in the country went to hear a sermon, wherein, among other evil practices, the use of dishonest weights and measures was exposed. With this discourse, she was much affected. The next day, when the preacher went among his hearers, and called upon the woman, he took occasion to ask her what she recollected of the sermon. She complained much of her bad memory, and said she had forgotten almost all that he had delivered. "But one thing," said she, "I remembered to burn my bushel." A doer of the Word cannot be a forgetful hearer.

Spiritual gifts are for the common benefit of Christians. It is as unreasonable for a believer to envy, or grieve at the gifts or graces which a brother possesses for his **good**, as it would be for a working smith, with a weak arm, to fall out with his shop-mate who strikes the iron for him.

"HE THAT IS SPIRITUAL."

J. M. DAVIES (India).

"He that thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. 14:37.)

Spirituality and the Lordship of Christ in regard to collective testimony.—The difficulties that confronted the Assembly at Corinth are dealt with, each in turn in this first epistle. After stating the principles regarding its unity and purity, the Apostle is occupied in the 3rd section with the "ministry" of the Church,—first Godward in worship in connection with the Lord's Table, then Church-ward in 12:14,—the edification of the saints, and lastly world-ward, in Ch. 15,—the Gospel for the unsaved. Hence there is in the third section several references to the Church "coming together" (Ch. 11:17, 18, 20; and 14:19, 26.)

The Saints at Corinth came behind in no gift; indeed they were zealous of possessing these spiritual gifts, and especially the more spectacular kind. These were exercised more for personal display rather than godly edifying, resulting in much confusion in their gatherings. One had a Psalm, another a doctrine, another a tongue, another a revelation, and another an interpretation. The women also seem to have been quite prominent. Altogether the confusion was great, sometimes more than one taking part together. Such confusion was dishonoring to the Lord, for God is not the author of confusion in the assemblies of His Saints. In order to correct this condition of things that existed when the "whole church came together into one place," there are given in 1 Cor. 14:26-40 some 13 commandments which are spoken of as the "commandments of the Lord." Each one commences with the little word "Let."

No man-made arrangements are introduced in order to correct the confusion that existed. There is nothing in the section to warrant any salaried, or stated ministry. That is the way denominationalism solves the problem, but their solution is a denial of the Lordship of Christ and the prerogative of the Spirit of God to use any to the profit of all. These "commandments of the Lord" cut at the foundation of that which exists in denominational circles,—the **one man ministry**. Scripture gives no warrant for such a system.

In the beginning of Ch. 12, two very important principles are given regarding all ministry which is Spirit-given. It will glorify Christ (12:3), and consequently it will be to the profit of all (12:7). These two earmarks need to be kept well before us, when considering the subject of ministry. Of the 13 commandments above referred to, the first is—

"Let all things be done unto edifying."—A cursory glance through the chapter will reveal the importance placed upon "edi-

fication." No less than six times is the word used in connection with the Assembly, and once regarding the man who spoke in a "tongue,"—thus edifying himself only. He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification; the one who spoke with "tongues," was to pray that he might interpret, so that the Church might receive edifying. They were exhorted that they might excel to the edifying of the Church, and even when one gave thanks, the other was to be edified. Self-aggrandizement and display finds no room here. That which is merely interesting, entertaining, or amusing is done away with. Yet how much time is often wasted in relating funny anecdotes! Spirituality will evidence itself in anyone seeking to minister the Word, when others are "edified" through his ministry. To be able to occupy time, and interest the Lord's people, is not the full credentials of God-given ministry; but rather to be able to speak a word in season to the upbuilding of the saints. This "commandment" is intended to control the "singing" as well, and if it did, it would rule out the "jazz choruses" that some are seeking to introduce, for they remind one more of the dance-hall than the sanctuary. "I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also," says the Apostle by the Holy Ghost. Read 1 Cor. 14:15.

The next **four** are concerning the **control** of the gift of tongues, which seems to have had such an attraction for many of the saints in Corinth, and alas to many professing Christians have still. Even if the gift of tongues was permanent, these four simple commandments would put an end to all the meetings of the present day "tongues movement." In the companies where the "tongues" (?) are supposed to prevail, these four commandments are completely ignored. Only two, or at the most three, to be allowed to speak, and that by course,—no two to be speaking at the same time. One was to interpret, and if no interpreter was present then the one with the gift of tongues must be silent. Add to this the fact that women were to be in silence, and that the spirit of the prophet was to be subject to the prophet, which implies perfect self-control,—a thing unknown in the present-day movement, for they glory in the fact that they must speak with tongues when the power (?) takes hold of them. Their jaws move and they utter incoherent sounds that they could not stop if they wished to.

1 Cor. 13:8 is clear that tongues shall **cease**, the word used when Peter exhorts us in his epistle "—let him **refrain** his tongue from evil." It is also used in Luke 8:24, in connection with the storm at sea. There was a great calm for the raging waves had **ceased**. Tongues were for a "sign" to the unbeliever, more especially the unbelieving Jew, the final sign that He was leaving them, and that henceforth the salvation of God was to be sent to the Gentiles. (Deut. 28:49; 1 Cor. 14:22.) What a claim to spirituality is made by these

false movements, and how simple the Scriptures are that the spiritually-minded will desire to own the Lordship of Christ, by regarding these,—the “commandments of the Lord.” (1 Cor. 14:37.)

The next three are intended to control the prophets in their ministry. They should “speak by two or three,” for if three have spoken profitably, the Lord’s people should have had as much as they can carry away with them. This prophetic ministry is described in Ch. 14:3, “He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” To build up, stir up, and cheer up the people of God, is the purpose of the prophetic ministry. There was doubtless a gift of prophecy in the early Church which is not to be had today, for the simple reason that the Word of God is now complete,—which was not the case then. Yet, considering the prophet as one who gives us the mind of God as revealed in the Scriptures, fulfilling the three-fold ministry referred to in verse 3, they are still here. They were not to be their own judges. Others were to judge, and if the “others” judged a man’s ministry to be unprofitable then he should be content to be quiet.

The next two commandments are regarding the women. They were evidently quite prominent in Corinth, taking part in one way or another. But to do so after receiving this word from the Lord would not be a sign of spirituality, but the reverse. The Spiritual will acknowledge these commandments as from the Lord, and will naturally desire to honor the Lord by obedience to them, for “obedience is better than sacrifice.” As to public prayer, 1 Tim. 2:8 is clear enough. “I will therefore that the **men pray** everywhere.” In verse 5 when speaking of the Lord Jesus as Mediator between God and **men**, the word for **mankind** is used, but when exhorting regarding prayer, the word for **man** in contrast to **woman** is used. The Apostle is clearly giving instructions as to who should pray in the public gatherings, and what character of men should be those who were to pray—“lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.” As spirituality is evidenced in the individual submitting to the Mind of the Spirit, the spirituality-minded sister will obey the commandment, “Let your women keep silence in the churches.”

The next one (verse 37) gives the earmark of **the** true spirituality when judged in relation to these commandments. To acknowledge Him as Lord, means we are to carry out His Word. “Why call ye me Lord and do not the things that I say?”

The next one is very caustic. “If any man be ignorant let him be ignorant.” If we do not desire to know the will of God, we will be allowed to go on in ignorance. In contrast to this, we have Jno. 7:17. “If any man willeth to do His will he shall know the doctrine—.” The heart of a disciple is necessary, if we are to be taught

the mind of God regarding these things. May we have teachable spirits, and submissive wills.

The last one, "Let all things be done decently and in order," like the first, seems to cover the whole portion. Everything is to be done becomingly, with grace, and with order. If grace rules, good order will characterize all our gatherings. To suggest everything to be done by arrangement, seems to nullify the force of all the preceding commandments. The "order" referred to is what should have characterized their assemblies in contrast with the confusion that had characterized them in the past. When the "shout of a King was in the camp" even the false prophet was forced to acknowledge "How goodly are thy tents O Jacob, and thy tabernacles O Israel!" When Gideon defeated Midian, and was asked to accept the honor of kingship, he refused it, saying "The Lord Himself shall rule over you." That was Theocracy,—the rule of the Lord,—and has its counterpart today in the Church, where these "commandments" given in 1 Cor. 14, are being acknowledged and obeyed. Well it will be for us if we do not depart from them.

CHRIST FOR US,—THE SPIRIT IN US.

It is well that we should be clear as to the distinction between the ground of our peace, and that which is the spring of holiness and devotedness in our daily course. In other words, that we should understand the distinction between the work of Christ FOR us, and the work of the Spirit IN us. The former is illustrated by the blood on the lintel without: the latter, by the Israelites' actings within (Exod. 12). When anyone, through grace, receives Christ, in the Divine efficacy of His accomplished work, he is introduced into a position in which God can address him as to his conduct;—he becomes the subject of parental care and discipline. But then he must be careful not to confound the question of his walk with the ground of his perfect, his profound peace in the presence of God.

Many suffer in this way; they do not understand the fulness of Christ for them, and their everlasting completeness in Him, together with the settled judgment of God about them. Now, while there is any dimness or uncertainty as to this, there can neither be settled peace of conscience, nor any intelligent ground of Christian activity. Everything will be referred to the question of peace, rather than to the glory of Christ, which should be our aim, and which will be our aim in proportion as we enter into the Divine reality of what we are in Christ, through the infinite grace of God. The more we realize the truth that everything has been accomplished by Christ, for the perfect establishment of our peace in connection with the holiness of God; the more we shall see how futile is every thought about our-

selves. A question as to the believer's peace is, in reality, a question as to the accomplishment of the work of Christ. If you touch one, you touch the other; for "Christ is our peace." He is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." (Heb. 13:8.)

And not only is He the same always, but God's estimate of Him and of us in Him, is also the same—"Ye are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power." (Col. 2:9-10.) "As He is, so are we in this world." (1 John 4:17.) "Wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. 1:6.) "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel." (Num. 23:21.) Not that iniquity and perverseness are not there; for "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8.) It would not give us any peace to be told that the Lord's people have not perverseness in them; but that "**He hath not beheld**" it, tranquillizes the heart most blessedly. It is God's grace that blots out sin, through the precious blood of Jesus. He delights to do this; yea, it is His glory. "Thou hast cast ALL my sins behind Thy back." (Isa. 38:17.)

This, beloved Christian reader, should banish every fear from your heart. **God is not looking at your sin, but at the blood of the Lamb;** and in that He sees the exquisite fruit of His own love, and triumphs in it. Now, if God is not looking at your sin, why should you keep dwelling upon it? If He graciously triumphs in the fruit of His love, why should you not triumph in it also? The spring of your communion is your keeping your eye fixed upon the same object that God is looking at. Now, if God is looking at Christ, and you are looking at your sins, of necessity there can be no communion. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3.) God says, by virtue of the blood of Christ, "Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 10:17.) Are **you** calling them to remembrance? How many are anxiously occupied about the question of personal peace, which really stands at the very threshold of the Christian course!

This sorrowful state of soul may arise from various causes. It may arise from imperfect or muddy views of the Gospel; from not seeing the fulness of Christ, and the absolutely settled character of the forgiveness of sins.

But there is another cause, and one of a far more grave and serious nature: namely, a careless and an unconscientious walk;—and cases of this melancholy kind often run to a great extreme—even to actual despair. Such cases teach the importance of seeking a close and faithful walk with God. "He will keep the feet of His saints;" (1 Sam. 2:9), but they are exhorted to "keep their hearts with all diligence." (Prov. 4:23.) The Spirit reveals Christ, and, if not grieved by sin and worldliness, will build up the soul in His

fulness, and establish it in the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. But, alas! when conscience is tampered with,—when we sin against light,—when we walk in an indolent and a self-indulgent spirit,—when we let in the world upon our hearts, then the eye becomes dim, and the understanding darkened; feebleness and languor take the place of energy and vigor; and unless the soul be thoroughly broken down under the sense of its delusion, and restored by the grace of God, in all probability Satan will entangle it in the destructive meshes of carnality and worldliness; or, it may be, will well-nigh drive it into dread infidelity.

Should this paper fall into the hands of any one suffering in this way, let me entreat him at once to pause, and having ascertained, by honest self-judgment, the real cause of his low and heavy state, to bring it into the presence of his heavenly Father, and thus confess, judge, and put away his evil. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9.)

There is no reason why the believer should continue in a low or impoverished state of soul, unless he is deliberately trifling with conscience, and grieving the Spirit of God. It is his privilege to have Christ, in all His Divine fulness, between his soul and everything, no matter what,—sins, infirmities, or circumstances; and when the eye is steadily fixed upon, and filled with Christ, nothing can interfere with his peace. But the secret cause of the low condition of so many of God's dear people is, that they have let slip Christ, and allowed other things to come in and occupy their hearts.—C. H. M.

Have faith, and take thy bread, thy cross, thy strength,
Just day by day!"

"God metes not out our life in one long length,
But in a tenderer, wiser way.

"Rear highly as thou wilt, thy branches in the air,—
But that thy roots descend as deep in earth have care!
Wouldst thou go forth to bless?—be sure of thine own ground,—
Fix well thy **center** first,—then draw thy **circle** round."

Lord, are not ravens daily fed by Thee?
And wilt Thou clothe the lilies, and not me?
Begone, distrust! I shall have clothes and bread,
While lilies flourish, and the birds are fed!

Man has no spot on the face of the earth where a body unsupported will not fall, nor can we find any place in our experience where we are independent of sustaining grace.

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

Everyone who has the fear of God in the heart will at once acknowledge that the authority of the sacred Scriptures is absolute; that from them there is no appeal; that they are binding upon us as though we heard the voice of the Most High speaking to us individually. The Book of God stands supreme above all other books. If we take up the books of men who have written on the things of God, we may admire them and gain much help from them; but as we read we feel we have to weigh all that even the wisest men have written, and are at liberty to dissent from their conclusions. We are conscious that we have a standard, and whatever does not, in our judgment, fully correspond with it, we cannot receive, though we may leave some things for further consideration.

Not thus does the humble believer deal with the Word of the Living God. There is but one attitude that is becoming either to the youngest or the most advanced believer in dealing with Scripture,—that is the attitude of the youth Samuel, whom the aged Eli taught to say, **“Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.”** Let us take up the Bible in this spirit, and we shall hear God speaking, and shall know His voice.

No one could with the mere voice of authority, or by subtle questioning, command an utterance from the Christ of God—the Living Word; but when the ear of the contrite and lowly was open He could not be silent. When the Pharisees demanded His authority for what He did, He refused to answer; when they sought to entrap Him He silenced their questionings, and then by one question put them to confusion. (Matt. 22:15-46.) When Pilate presumed to sit in judgment upon Him, He answered him not a word; and Herod, who gladly caught at an apparent opportunity to satisfy his curiosity, was met with the same silence. But Mary at the feet of Jesus had only to sit and listen while He poured forth words of heavenly wisdom; the woman “who was a sinner” received at His feet the words that assured her of forgiveness and gave peace to her soul; and numbers untold who came in need and in faith heard His voice and were filled with gladness. In like manner, as one has said, “this ‘Book of books’ withholds its secrets from the proud and the hostile; while to the loving and lowly spirit it becomes as the body of heaven in its clearness.”

The truth of the pre-eminence of Scripture is being much assailed, and on every hand men who profess to be Christian teachers are affirming that we are to treat the Book of God as we do other books, and bring it to the bar of human judgment. As a natural consequence they find it full of difficulties, for it refuses to yield up to them its treasures of wisdom. That which is a well-furnished table to the

hungry, becomes a trap to the self-conceited, for "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." Shall the saints of God be troubled because the wise and prudent of this world find nothing but difficulties in the Scriptures? Should not the fact rather remind us of the words of the Lord Jesus: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes?" Moses lays down a great principle for our guidance in dealing with Scripture when he says, "Things which are revealed belong unto us . . . **that we may do all the words of this law;**" and the Lord Jesus adds the assurance, "If any man desireth to **do His will** he shall know of the teaching."

We are all familiar with the fact that the Psalmist often speaks of the Scriptures generally as "the Law of the Lord;" but why is this term used? Is it not to make prominent the very point on which we are dwelling,—the authority of Scripture? It is not that we have simply a book of commandments, but rather that all Scripture, and every separate portion thereof, comes to us as a voice from the eternal throne, commanding the reverent attention of those to whom God in His grace is pleased to speak. Every revelation of Himself which He deigns to give, demands our faith; and the slightest intimation of His will is a claim on our obedience. He who walks with God waits not for a decided command; his spirit is rather that of David's mighty men who, hearing him express a wish, risked their lives to fulfil it.

To the one who owns the absolute authority of Scripture, there are no such things as "essentials" and "non-essentials." There are truths which are of supreme importance,—the fundamental verities of the Gospel of God; and there are other truths which may be regarded as comparatively of secondary consideration. But no one who is taught of God will call any truth non-essential, or be content without seeking to learn the whole will of God, and to yield obedience to it. The Lord Jesus distinctly asserted that "judgment, mercy, and faith" were "**weightier** matters of the law" than the tithing of "mint and anise and cummin." And yet He does not say that the latter was of no consequence, but, "These ought ye to have done, and not leave the other undone."

Those who bring the Book of God down to the level of other books, or put any other book, or any human tradition, by the side of it, make it void. It is well, therefore, if this growing practice of the present day affects us as it did the Psalmist. Having poured out his complaint—"They have made void Thy law"—he adds, "Therefore I love Thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold, therefore I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way."—W. H. B.

LAW AND GRACE

The law could promise life to me
If my obedience perfect be;
But grace does promise life upon
My Lord's obedience alone.

The law says "Do, and life you'll win;"
But grace says, "Live, for all is done."
The former cannot ease my grief,
The latter yields me full relief.

The law will not abate a mite,
The gospel all the sum will quit;
There God in threatenings is array'd,
But here in promises display'd.

The law brings terror to molest,
The gospel gives the weary rest;
The one does flags of death display,
The other shows the living way.

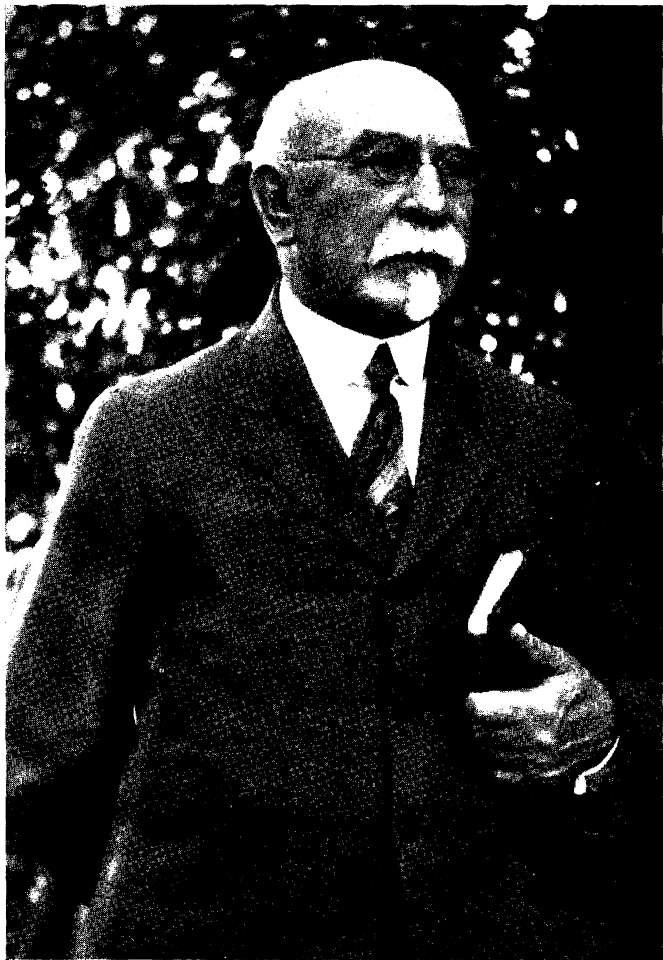
The law's a house of bondage sore,
The gospel opes the prison door;
The first me hamper'd in its net,
The last at freedom kindly set.

An angry God the law revealed,
The gospel shows Him reconciled:
By that I know He was displeas'd,
By this I see His wrath appeas'd.

The law still shows a fiery face,
The gospel shows a throne of grace;
There justice rides alone in state,
But here she takes the mercy-seat.

Lo! in the law Jehovah dwells,
But Jesus is conceal'd;
Whereas the gospel's nothing else
But Jesus Christ revealed.

(Ralph Erskine, 1685-1752.)



W. J. McCLURE

GOD "IN THE MIDST" OF HIS PEOPLE.

THOS. D. W. MUIR

It may have been enough for Israel to know that God was **FOR** and **WITH** them, but it was not so with God! To have God rid them of the cruel bondage of Pharaoh, and bring them out of Egypt, a free people; and then, in addition to that, to have Jehovah with them, to guide, protect, and provide for them; what more, they might ask, could anyone want? How easy are our poor hearts satisfied! How selfish are our best thoughts! As long as **we** are saved, and cared for on the way to heaven, we think little of what **He** desires, in order that **His** heart may be gratified!

Israel were satisfied with a God who was **for** them and **with** them,—going before them,—coming in behind them, when the foe was pressing hard upon them,—overshadowing them,—lighting the way, giving manna for their food, or bringing water from the flinty rock for their refreshment. But, God wanted a place "in the midst of them." He wanted them gathered around Himself, that **His own heart might be satisfied** by their companionship and worship. Hence, we read of the Sanctuary.

The God of the Sanctuary.—And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring an offering, of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take My offering . . . And let them make Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in the midst of them (Newberry). (Exo. 25:1-9.)

Thus did God express the desire of His heart. **They** might be satisfied with something short of this,—**He** was not. He not only wanted a people **for** Himself, and accompanying Him, He wanted to see them assembled around Himself, and He having His dwelling-place "in the midst of them!" This, we may say, is His desire for His people now; for like Israel, we are redeemed not merely to obtain an inheritance by and bye, and meanwhile to be **pilgrims**, led and fed by God's hand, but, to be in communion with, and worshippers of Him whose Sanctuary is in the midst of His scattered ones!

"For, where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). This is no idle word,—it is a mighty fact, as thousands can testify. The early disciples proved that their secret place of meeting, with its safely-guarded windows and doors, while it might shut out the malice of the **enemy**, was no barrier to Him, or against His faithful love; for on that

eventful evening of that first resurrection day—the day He arose from the tomb, “Jesus stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you” (John 20:19).

The place of His presence.—Surely, to have the Lord in the midst of His people is a great honor, and cannot be over-estimated, but, is it not true, that increased privilege brings with it increased responsibility? In Israel’s day, it was the God whose place was “in the Sanctuary,” who heard the **murmurings** and chidings of His people! It was He who heard the **envious words** of Aaron and Miriam against His servant Moses (Num. 12). It was He who noted the **rebellious words** of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and **sent swift judgment** into their camp! (Num. 16.) And let us not forget it,—He is the same God still!

Here is a little company of God’s people who gather in the Name of the Lord in happy fellowship with Him, and with one another. For a time everything goes on smoothly, and the blessing of the Lord is upon their efforts to make Christ known. But, coldness of heart towards the Lord ensues, or, it may be alienation of heart from one another manifests itself. In course of time worldliness and the spirit of self-seeking gets into the assembly, and somehow everything goes wrong, and every effort of well-meaning persons to right things seem futile, for the happiness and usefulness of such a company is secured and perpetuated only as the hearts of the individuals composing it are kept, not only loyal to God, but in the enjoyment of His love. When, therefore, there is departure from Him, things never get right, until there is a breaking down before God and true humbling under His mighty hand! For the presence of the Lord in the midst, demands that “holiness” which becomes His house. (See Psa. 93.5.)

It is a notorious fact, that in the midst of men’s religious systems, where human authority, with its rules and regulations, supplants the Word of God;—where a human President or leader takes the place that, among His people, belongs to God the Holy Spirit,—there worldliness and all sorts of evil runs rampant,—and yet they grow and seem to prosper! “Why is it,”—the question is oft-times asked by tried and tested saints,—“that God deals so severely with that which is His own, and allows the world to pass unpunished?” Such was the puzzle of the writer of Psalm 73,—until he “got into the Sanctuary.” Then the enigma was solved. It was not yet God’s time and place to deal with the world,—**that** He would do later. But, He who was and is the “God of the Sanctuary,” must take His people on the ground of their profession, and, therefore, as in Ezekiel 9:6, His judgment begins at His Sanctuary,—at that which is nearest to Him,—for, as we read in 1 Peter 4:17, “judgment must begin at the

house of God,"—though eventually it will be seen that it does not end there.

In the past, God judged Egypt, and also the nations of Canaan, to their destruction. In contrast, He **disciplined** Israel, His people, whom He had redeemed, and among whom He had His dwelling. For, God **disciplines** His saints and His Assemblies which profess to give Him His place now. Christendom, as a system, He will **destroy** by and bye!

The "Church of God at Corinth" is a case in point. The keynote to the first epistle to the Corinthians, is "the Lordship of Christ." The epistle is addressed not only to the Assembly there, but to "all that call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2, R. V.). In other words, here was a number of saints, described in this peculiar way, indicating that in a very definite way they gave Him His place as Lord among them in the Assembly, even as they gladly gave Him that place individually. And, He takes them at their word, for, because He **is** Lord, He proceeds, in this epistle, to correct the things He finds wrong among them,—their divisions and sectarianism,—the immorality allowed,—their unseemly bickerings,—their wrong thoughts and conduct in connection with the Lord's Supper,—and the false doctrines concerning resurrection and other things, that had arisen among them!

If He were "Lord," and had made them His "inner-temple" (Newberry),—His Sanctuary, individually (1 Cor. 6:19), and, collectively, as an Assembly (1 Cor. 3:16), then He insisted upon that holiness of character in them, which must be associated with His dwelling-place. The people of the world then, or now, may have their "religion," and evil doctrines and evil practices be allowed among them, and yet apparently God heeds it not, until some of those who are truly the Lord's are, like the writer of Psa. 73, led to conclude that they have "washed their hands in vain," as they contrast the trouble that the discipline of the Father's house brings them into, with the seeming "ease in Zion" of those whose ways are contrary to the Word of God, and who, whatever they may do as individuals, are associated with that which does not, even professedly, give Him His true place as Lord over His own Assembly!

Israel, His redeemed people, He associated with His own Name, by putting it upon them (Deut. 17:10), were thus brought into the place of highest privilege, and at the same time of greatest responsibility to have their conduct in keeping with the character of Him who was in their midst! Known as Jehovah's people, His honor was linked up with them, and, therefore, He **must** correct that which He finds in them inconsistent with Himself. Even so it is now. May we who profess to gather in His Name alone, feel daily the solemnity of our profession,—judging our motives and our ways; remembering

that if we would "judge ourselves we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:31-32), and so prove to ourselves and the world that it is a reality to have God, not only **for** us, and **with** us, but a living power **in the midst** of us! May our behaviour in the home, in the business, and in the Church of God, evidence that communion with Him who is "in the midst" of His gathered out, and gathered together ones, has produced in us that practical godliness which will cause even men of the world to confess that God is in us of a truth (1 Cor. 14:25). Our God, Himself, grant that, with purpose of heart, we may bear a clear and positive testimony for Him, and to the glory of His gracious Name, who is "the God of the Sanctuary," till He come with the shout that will lift us up into His presence, forever!

THE THREEFOLD TEMPTATION OF THE LORD; SATAN'S OFFER OF THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD.

W. J. McCLURE.

"And the Devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the Devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If Thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be Thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." (Luke 4:5-8.)

This temptation comes last in Matthew, who gives the order in which the temptation occurred, and the reason why the order is different in the two gospels will be suggested when we deal with the next temptation. Unless this is seen, a difficulty will be created, namely, that here in Luke it would seem as if Satan dared to continue the temptations after the Lord had said, "Get thee hence, Satan" (Matt. 4:10). But most assuredly at the command of the Lord, he had to slink away, unable to resist His Divine authority, even though, as he did so, it was with the determination to return again and seek to crush by force the One he could not conquer by craft.

We are here face to face with a most amazing sample of **the power of Satan**. He is permitted to take our Lord up into an high mountain, and there in a moment of time, he causes to pass before His gaze, the military pomp and pageantry of Rome and Carthage, all the glory and splendor of the arts of Greece, all the learning of Corinth and Athens, in a word, all that has ever dazzled and captivated the heart of man, in order to grasp which man has waded through seas of blood.

And all this power and glory he offers to our Lord, on the condition that He worship him. He claims that all this was delivered to him, and that he can give it to whomsoever he will. The Lord does not say that he lied in saying this. Nor do we believe that he did, for from Rev. 13:2 we see that in a coming day, he will give the kingdoms of the world to another man, and on the very same terms on which he offered them to Christ.

But what of the statement, that the kingdoms of the world were "delivered" to him? Was that true or false? We believe there is both truth and falsehood in the statement. In Eze. 28:11-17, God gives us some information about **Satan**. A very cursory reading of that passage would be enough to satisfy anyone that it is not a man that is spoken of there. The king of Tyrus is but the figure, just as God uses Solomon, to convey truth about Christ as the Messiah. The one spoken of was "created" (verse 15), whereas the king of Tyrus was **born**, not created. He was "perfect," as we read, "Thou was perfect in thy ways from the day thou was created, till iniquity was found in thee" (verse 15). The king of Tyrus was not perfect, he was born in sin. Again, he is said to have been in Eden, and is called a cherub, and these things were not true of the king of Tyrus. He (Satan) was the last word in created beauty and intelligence. "Thus saith the Lord God, thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" (verse 12). This is very different from the foolish caricatures, which both Protestant and Romanist alike give of Satan. And even though he has fallen, that does not mean that he has lost the form and grace in which he was created. Six thousand years of sin have not quite robbed man of his natural beauty, and why should we think that Satan has changed into a composite creature, part monkey, ox and man?

Those words of verse 14 bear most directly on what we are looking at in this temptation. "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth and I have set thee so." The R. V. we believe makes this plainer, "Thou **wast** the anointed and I set thee so." This looks back to Satan in his unfallen state, and shows him as having a vicegerency in connection with the throne of God over this earth. But instead of using the power, which was but delegated to him, as the servant of Jehovah, he has grasped it for himself, and as usurper, he seeks to reign as the "prince of the world."

Isa. 12:12-14 gives us another picture of Satan, but there it is not as the **prince** of the world that we see him, but as usurping the place of **God**. Those two titles, "prince of the world" and "god of the world," are not by any means empty names, but stand for fearful realities. And here he would fain use his liberality as prince of the world, to get worship as the god of it.

He failed with Christ, but he will succeed with the head of the revived Roman Empire, for we read, "And the dragon gave unto him his power and his throne, and great authority." (Rev. 13:2, R. V.) And then Satan will get what he had the temerity to ask from the Lord, worship. And they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority unto the beast." (Rev. 13:4, R. V.)

In view of this revelation of the power of Satan, how painful it

is to read or hear the flippant way that some professed workers for Christ speak about Satan. Those who indulge in extravagant talk, as to what they are going to do to him, might read with profit Jude 9, where Michael, the archangel, in contending with the devil, could only say, "The Lord rebuke thee."

This temptation brings out Satan's great opposition to the cross, and his endeavor to get the Lord to seek to reign without suffering. This is brought out in Matt. 16:21-23, where we read, "Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee." The Lord had just told the disciples of His approaching death at Jerusalem, and Peter's human sympathies were stirred, and he sought to turn the Lord out of that path. But little did he know, that just then Satan was using him as his tool, making his lips utter Satan's words. So the Lord addresses Satan directly, with the rebuke, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offense unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

The cross was ever before the Lord Jesus, and ere He came into the world He could say, "Lo I come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me. I delight to do Thy will, O My God." (Psa. 40:7-8.) That will was, that He should go to the cross and lay down His life for the sheep. (John 10:15-18.) For Him there was no other path than that which led to Calvary, and He would seek no other. When He joined the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, He opened up the Scriptures to them, and showed them the necessity of the cross, saying, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:26.) And Peter tells us in his first epistle that the Spirit of Christ testified in the prophets beforehand, "The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." (1 Pet. 1:11.) Before He could reign, God must be glorified in respect to sin, by His work upon the cross.

From the consideration of our Lord's victory over this seductive temptation we turn to the Church, and, alas, what a different story must be written here. On every hand we see evidence of the triumph of Satan, in the desire to escape the cross, to be esteemed and honored in a world where the Church's Founder was rejected and crucified.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, the apostle speaks with great plainness of this very thing. "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." (1 Cor. 4:8.) Those words, "**without us,**" might well have stung their consciences. When they were affecting to reign as kings, how was it with the man by whom they were saved, their spiritual father? Let us hear what he has to say as to his condition.

“For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted and have no certain dwellingplace. And labour, working with our own hands; being reviled we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed we intreat; we are made the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.” (Verses 9:13.)

Which of these two pictures more correctly represents what should be true of the Church while Christ is away? Most assuredly that which sets before us the condition of the apostle and his fellow-laborers. Till the Lord comes back again, the Church should be but a suffering stranger in the world. Her reigning time is when He will reign, not before that.

We look back to the middle ages, and we see a man, who claimed to be Christ’s vicar on earth, reigning over the kings of Christendom, and they regarded as but his vassals. We think of what has occurred this very year, the pope becoming a temporal sovereign, not subject to the ruler of the realm where he lives: maintaining a court, and, like the kings of the world, sending and receiving ambassadors from the nations of the world. Then we look into the future, as revealed by the prophetic Word, and we see that great system (having gathered back into its bosom, the sects which split off from it), arrayed in royal apparel, astride the scarlet colored beast, the revived Roman Empire. Thus in that coming day, she will reach a pinnacle of power greater than any she has known in the past. But her reign then will be very brief, and her judgment, like that of Jezebel, her prototype, will be by the hands of those who waited on her (2 Kings 9:30-37; Rev. 17:16), an awful but righteous end.

But whether we look at the middle ages, the present, or that coming day, we have just the logical development of 1 Cor. 4:8-13. Every child of God has in his or her heart that which, unjudged and unhindered, has led up to the great system of the papacy, the desire to reign now and not suffer.

But apart from misapplying and misinterpreting the Word of God, taking what is said of the true church in a coming day, and applying it to a false system now, Rome never could have imposed her rule on men. Such, however, was the ignorance of God’s Word in the middle ages, and such is the ignorance of it still, that her misuse of Scripture has passed as the right thing. And its supposed sanction has become her strongest bulwark.

In the Lord’s address to the overcomers of Thyatira, the church that pictures Romanism, He holds out “power over the nations,” that which has ever been the lust of Rome, as the reward for overcoming, overcoming the desire to reign now. In those verses (Rev. 2:26-29)

we get what will be the portion of the true church, when that filthy system, which pretends to be the spouse of Christ, has been disowned and judged.

(Next paper, the third and last temptation, Christ taken to a pinnacle of the temple.)

THE GLORY OF THE LIGHT

L. SHELDRAKE.

There is a three-fold display of natural light in the world, the glory of the light in the sun, in the flowers, and in the rainbow, and this triple manifestation of the light beautifully suggests the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

First, think of **the glory of the light in the sun.** While the sun enlightens, enlivens and energises the earth, yet so bright are the pure rays of its light that they would destroy the sight and blind the eyes of one who would dare to behold them with unveiled face. Now this would remind us of the eternal essential glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2). His glory before the world was, is the infinitely pre-eminent glory of the incomprehensible God. That glory is so exalted, so dazzling, so piercing, that human eyes cannot look upon it. Even the seraphim, when that light shone forth about them, veiled their faces and cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa. 6:2), and John tells us that that was the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 12:41). In this we have a manifestation of the incommunicable glory of "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to Whom be glory and power everlasting. Amen." (1 Tim. 6:15.)

But while in the heavens shines that unapproachable light, we have in the world **the glory of the light in the flowers.** All the diverse beauties of the flowers of earth are only reflections of the glory of the light. Light in itself is colorless to our eyes, but in truth all the colors of the flowers and of the rainbow are contained therein. The excellency of the rose and the delicate beauty of the lily are not seen in the light itself, but they are there. The flowers see what we cannot see, and they gladden our hearts with the beautiful expressions of the light that shines upon them. I cannot look up at the sun and let its piercing rays shine into my eyes, but I can look around on the flowers that grow upon the earth and see everywhere the captivating display of the perfections of light. The flowers can do what I cannot, they can look at the sun and show its glories to me, and so I know the light is beautiful because I see its beauty in the rose, the violet, and the daffodil.

And John says of the Lord Jesus while He was living and labor-

ing down here, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This is the moral glory of Him Who is the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valleys. Could we have known that the light was so beautiful had He not been here? Holiness made the seraphim veil their faces, and God's law made men afraid, but we would never have known the beauty of the glory of God were it not for the face of Jesus Christ. As the flowers reflect the glory of the sun, so the moral glories of the Lord Jesus Christ reveal God's perfections to man. "No man hath seen God at any time: the Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

In the Old Testament I see, as it were, the light immediately from the sun, but in the Gospels I see the beauty of the flowers in the lovely ways of the Lord of Glory. I see those glories in Him Who suffered long and was kind, Who envied not and vaunted not Himself; in Him Who was poor in spirit though Heir of the Kingdom of heaven; Who hungered and thirsted though the Creator of all things; Who was ever merciful, the Peacemaker and Redeemer of men. The excellent moral perfections of our Lord in all His ways, are the beautiful manifestations of the glory of that Light which God is. Where man failed, He glorified God. Where man was ugly, He was beautiful. Where man sinned, He said, "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God." Where all sought their own, He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. Where men spake "corrupt communications," "idle words," and "evil speakings," His words were "words of eternal life." Even when His enemies listened to Him they said, "Never man spake like this Man." Where men lived for self, He died for others. Who could begin to declare the varied beauties of that life which commenced in the manger and ended with the cross? He was glorious everywhere: asleep on the pillow or walking on the sea; healing the lepers or reproving the Pharisees; at the grave of Lazarus or in the garden of Gethsemane. Everywhere, under all circumstances, and at all times, He was altogether lovely, and that loveliness was the glory of the light, the glory of God.

Then there is **the glory of the light in the rainbow**. The beauty of the rainbow is due to the refraction of the sun's rays, the light shining through the rain on the after-side of the storm. The flowers are on the earth, but the rainbow spans the heavens. And the beauty of the rainbow tells out the glory of Christ. "And above the firmament . . . was the likeness of a throne . . . and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness of the appearance of a Man above upon it, . . . and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about" (Ezek. 1:27, 28; see also Rev. 4:3; 10:1).

Yes, the glory of the rainbow is the glory of Christ. The varied glory of the Lord Jesus has been seen on the earth, now He has taken that glory to heaven, where it encircles the throne of God, sending the message of covenant mercy to men, because judgment has spent its force upon the Man that was God's Fellow. The Son of Man has ascended up where He was before, and He has been invested with "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was." But there are new glories also that are His, a refracted glory now in heaven. There is a rainbow as well as effulgent light around the throne. Our Lord speaks in His prayer to the Father of "the glory that Thou hast given Me." What glory is this? It is the glory of the Lamb that was slain. He ever was God over all: now He is our Great High Priest, crowned with glory and honor. His **given** glory on the throne is the glory of the rainbow after the storm of Calvary is past, because now the shining of the light is in covenant mercy to man.

Our Lord has glory now as the Lamb. "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: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God that raised Him up from the dead and **gave Him glory.**" This is the glory the Father has given Him. This is the glory we are to behold in the future. It is the glory of the rainbow, the glory of the light after the storm, the glory of the heavenly throne, the glory of the Lamb that was slain, the glory of our Great High Priest. "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which **Thou hast given Me,** for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

In the scriptures, as in a glass, we behold the Lord's moral glory now, and as we look we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. In that coming day we shall behold the glory the Father has given Him, as He sits upon that throne that ever was His by right and title. It is written, "God is light," and He says, "I am the light." The glory of the light in the sun of the heavens, in the flowers of the earth, and in the covenant rainbow of the throne, all portray the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is over all God blessed forever. Amen.

Christ has been exalted as the enthroned sin-purger (Heb. 1:3). As the triumphant and glorified Son of God (Heb. 1:5). As the crowned High Priest of His people (Heb. 8:1). As the accepted Sacrifice—all sufficient and efficacious (Heb. 10:11-12). As God's faithful Witness who sealed His testimony with His blood (Heb. 12:1-2).

DEFEAT AND VICTORY

A CONFERENCE ADDRESS

"WHEREFORE HATH THE LORD SMITTEN US TODAY BEFORE THE PHILISTINES?" (1 Sam. 4:3.)

That was a very good question the children of Israel asked in verse 3. It was not merely, "Why have the Philistines got the victory over us?" It went deeper down than that. **"Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us?"** If they had only waited for the answer to their question it would have been well for them; but they did not do so. They just said, "Fetch the ark of God, that when it cometh it may save us." They brought the ark of God, and gave a great shout; but it was only a shout in the flesh. The Philistines fought and slew 30,000 of Israel, and took the ark of God. All this is very instructive; for "whatsoever was written aforetime was written ~~for~~ for our learning," and again, "now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless **afterward** it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11.) It is "those who are exercised thereby" who get the benefit. All the Lord's dealings—sickness and other afflictions—may not be for a direct sin against God. "Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it" (John 15:2.) May we then have "exercised" hearts before the Lord,—and learn through our trials the lesson He would have us learn.

The priests here were wrong. Eli and his sons were not right with God; and when things are not right at headquarters how can they be elsewhere? It is most important that we, who seek to help the people of God, be in a state of soul to profit those we are addressing. A mother once said, "When I get sick, my baby gets sick too,"—it was drinking its mother's milk. May we give the sincere milk of the Word, purely, to the dear children of God.

Here, then, we get the defeat of Israel; after which they were under the power of the Philistines for a long time. In chapter 7 we get the victory. Much of our life is made up of defeat and of victory. It is blessed to see Samuel here,—for Samuel is not spoken of in chapter 4. But now the Lord speaks to Samuel, and he became the instrument in the hands of God of directing the people aright, and as a consequence, we see how **"all Israel lamented after the Lord."**

Now Samuel can give them counsel (Chap. 7:3). It was God's mind to help His people, but they were in a condition in which God could not, consistently with His holiness, help them. They must first "put away their strange gods" and "prepare their hearts to seek the Lord." Have **we** any idols that are hindering our God and Father blessing us and giving us the victory? If so, they must be put away from us, ere God can pour out the showers of blessing He has in His storehouse.

We are in danger of keeping up a controversy with the Lord.

The Lord is perhaps teaching some of us to give up some bad habits, and the voice of God's Spirit is carrying it home to your heart and saying, "Do not cleave to that abominable thing, which I hate";—still you cling to it, and God's Spirit is grieved. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." The Holy Spirit would comfort us; but that comfort may be withdrawn, and instead of that you may have the mysterious trouble which arises from a grieved Spirit. Though no trouble in the business or family, yet one may be in deep sorrow; and why? Because no smile from God,—no Word of God,—“a famine of hearing the words of the Lord.” Can we say with the apostle, “I know nothing against myself”? (1 Cor. 4:4, R. V.) Though the apostle said that, he added, “Yet am I not hereby justified.” I understand the force of it is: “As far as I know I am right with the Lord, but I do not say there is nothing amiss in me, for, if nearer the light, and more in His light, I might see many a black spot yet.”

Perhaps some idle or filthy habit is indulged, or some commandment of the Lord disobeyed, and is thus keeping the Lord from blessing some of you. If there is to be blessing, individually and collectively, remember there must be the putting away of our strange gods, and serving the Lord only;—and then He has promised to deliver us.

They hearkened to the voice of Samuel; and now, says Samuel, “I will pray for you” (ver. 5). How beautifully this comes in. We may be hindering the answer to our prayers by not putting away our strange gods, but as with Israel so with us, God is swift to answer the cry of His repentant ones. Israel brought water, poured it out, and confessed that they had sinned against the Lord. It is beautiful to see a company of saints now doing that:—taking the low place before God and saying, “We have sinned against the Lord.” Sin brings weakness, as obedience gives power.

The Philistines hear that Israel is gathered together, and they come up against them. What a difference we have here: the Philistines coming up against a humble people,—humbled before God! Israel says to Samuel, “Cry unto God for us, that He will save us.” In chapter 4 they said, “When the ark cometh, IT will save us,” but here they have learned their need of God. The further we get away from God the more we are inclined to trust in something else; for even the ark of God, without the God of the ark, what was it? Nothing! The less that people know of God, the more they like to have forms,—great attractions,—great men,—anything to lean on. It is so easy to get away from the simplicity of simple faith in the living God alone!

It is also beautiful to see now the sacrifice coming in. This is our confidence and joy: a humble people before God, and the sacrifice

offered for us. Israel said to Samuel, "Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us" (verse 8). Then we find Samuel takes a sucking lamb and offers it for a burnt-offering, and "he cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him" (verse 9). The character of the sacrifice,—a sucking lamb, indicates the place the people were taking. It was not a bullock, typifying strength of faith, but a little lamb—weakness.

What can God not give the sinner who takes the guilty place and pleads the sacrifice? If I am humbled, and take the place of poured-out water, God will surely give the blessing. But how?—**through the Lamb.** When we look to our God through the blessed Lord Jesus in the presence of God for us, Oh! the power of the plea! Our hearts wait on Him that His heart of love may flow out for us in the presence of God. The order changes here from chapter 4.

In chapter 4, Israel gave a great shout; but in chapter 7 **the Lord shouts** with His voice of thunder upon the Philistines (verse 10). They pursued the Philistines and smote them; and then Samuel took a stone and placed it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Israel got all the "spoils" back again that the Philistines had taken from them. How glad is our God to restore to us that which the enemy robs us of. How many of us may be in chapter 4, defeated by the enemy;—let this be a call to us to return unto Him with all our hearts, —and He will bless us. May we all be led into chapter 7, and so be able to raise our Eben-ezer, and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—A. F.

The heavenly up-look. In Luke 1:26-35 we see a man unto whom it had been revealed that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he did see Him, but in a lowly form. It was **as the babe** in His mother's arms he saw Him, but faith recognized that here was "the salvation of God," and Simeon blessed God for it. Later Stephen, in Acts 7, gets a sight of the same One. Perhaps he was one who saw Him on Calvary, but now his eye is directed to the heavens and there he saw Him. How? "He being full of the Holy Ghost looked up steadfastly into heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). And, beloved, it is just as we by the power of the Holy Spirit look up, that the glories of earth will fade, and we will see the glory as manifested in One the world rejects, but God has received, and glorified.

Our Frontispiece—Believing that our readers will be glad to have a portrait of our esteemed brother, Mr. W. J. McClure, we take the opportunity of inserting in this issue a recent photograph, which we have obtained from a friend, who made it while he was visiting in Florida.—H. A. C.

THE AFRICAN, THE PARTRIDGE, AND THE CROCODILE

PART OF AN ADDRESS TO CHILDREN BY MR. J. A. CLARKE

(From Notes of Dr. H. A. Cameron)

I am going to talk to you, boys and girls, tonight, about an interesting thing that once happened to me, not in this land, but away in Central Africa, in a place where there are no roads, no autos, no buses, no trains, but where we have large forests and plains and where all the boys and girls are black.

I want to talk to you about an African, a partridge, and a crocodile. You all know what a partridge is. How many legs has it? "Two." Yes, it has two legs. What is it? A bird or a beast? "A bird." Yes, it is a bird. Now, who can tell me something about a crocodile? "It is like an alligator." Yes, it is somewhat like an alligator, but more fierce and blood-thirsty. In Florida I saw some alligators in the streams and saw people in the same streams bathing, but you would not do that in Central Africa where crocodiles are, at least not a second time.

Well, at the time I speak of I was reading in front of my house when, looking up, there was standing before me a great big African, one of the largest I have ever seen. He had a big spear, an assegai, and a bow and poisoned arrows in his hands, and he was clad in two leopard skins, one behind and one before, looking just like a Highlander's kilt. When I looked up at him he shouted in his African language, "Where is the partridge? Where is the partridge? Where is the partridge?"

I asked him what he meant by shouting that question at me. Then I remembered that that morning I was sitting out early in front of my house, reading the Holy Scriptures, while waiting for the workmen to come (for they usually came about six o'clock) when an African suddenly appeared before me with a live partridge in his hand and said, "Do you want to buy this partridge?" "Where did you get it?" I asked. He told me, "I set some snares in my field, because I saw that my corn was being eaten every night by some bird, and this morning I found this partridge caught by the leg. Now, will you buy him from me, for I want a little bit of cloth?" Well, I needed that bird for food, as I did not have anything to eat in my house, and so I went in and got him the bit of cloth and he gave me the bird. Then I called to my cook and said, "You were asking me about my dinner. Now see what the Lord has sent me. We are going to have roast partridge today." You here have to be content with roast chicken and roast beef, but the missionary has roast partridge.

But very soon after this the big African of whom I told you came with his question, "Where is the partridge?" "Partridge?" I said, "What partridge?" "The one that was brought here this morning that you bought," "Well," I said, "what business is that of yours?" And he answered, "I am the friend of the partridge. I want that partridge. I am here to redeem it, because my name is 'the friend of the partridge.'" But I said, "Look here, my friend, tell me all about this. I have never heard before about a partridge being redeemed." "Have you never heard," said he, "of 'the friend of the partridge?'" "No, I never have, but suppose I get the partridge for you, what will you do with it?" "Well, I will take it out to the open field and throw it up into the air and say, 'Fly away, partridge, for you saved my life and I have redeemed yours.'" I had thought at first that he was crazy, but now I was sure of it, for who ever heard of redeeming a partridge? But I called to the cook, "Where is the partridge? This man wants to buy it." The cook came to me, and I said, "What about the partridge I gave you?" "Oh, it is all right," he answered, "I chopped off its head and the boy is plucking its feathers." When the man heard this he cried out, "Oh, it is too late. O partridge, I am so sorry I did not get

here in time to redeem your life." And off he went. But just as he was going Kapekele met him and said, "Oh, how do you do, my friend?" And I said to Kapekele, "Do you know that man?" "Oh, yes, he is the 'friend of the partridge.'" "Well," I said, "bring him back and try to get him to tell me the story." Kapekele went after him and at last, after much persuasion, he came, and I said to him, "Tell me all you know about the partridge." Kapekele and he sat down on the ground and I was sitting on a chair before them. He began, "I cannot tell you about it today, for my heart is very black just now." That was his way of saying he was very sad. But I asked him again and he started, and this is the story he told me. And the story is perfectly true, for I investigated all the details by inquiring of men who lived there and knew the circumstances, and so far as I am concerned I believe every word of it.

He said: "Master, many years ago we lived on the Luapula, one of the rivers that flow into the Congo. I was very fond of fishing, and there was a valley there where we used to cross the river, and at that place I was fishing one day with a long bamboo pole, some twenty feet long, and rope made out of the bark of a tree, and a bent piece of iron. The river was rushing along, and as I stood in the water I felt something tug on my line and on pulling it in I found that I had caught a fine, big fish; and soon I had another and another, three or four. It was all so exciting, and I was so intent on fishing that I forgot all about the danger of standing in the water until presently I was caught by a crocodile who fixed his teeth into my leg. Then I felt myself being drawn down into death beneath the river and I lost consciousness. I knew nothing more until I found myself in a dark cave away down, deep down in the earth, and there at my feet I heard the river rush past me. I felt the water and I began to roar, 'I am dead already,' and then I remembered how that in trouble we always called to the Father of Creation, and so I cried, 'Father of Creation, come to my help; come to my help,' and I kept calling, but there was no response; I cried and cried again, but there was only silence. Then I felt a great pang in my leg and putting my hand there I found it was bleeding; and then I remembered that great crocodile, and again I saw its cruel eyes, and I recalled how he had carried me down into the bowels of the earth. And I also called to my mind how our fathers had told me that these crocodiles had great caves under the river banks, where they carried fish, or beasts, or men, that they had caught, and after a while they would come back when the carcasses were putrid and eat them. So in my terror I called and called again and between the calls I listened, and suddenly I heard a tapping sound, and hope came to me. I called out again, 'Help,' and again I listened and heard, 'Tap, tap, tap.' I said, 'That is heaven's answer. The Father of Creation has sent someone to help me.' I reached up my hand and found that the roof of the cave was soft mud above me. And there again I heard the 'Tap, tap, tap,' and then I began to dig and dig with my hands and part of the roof fell down upon me. I turned over and called again, and again I could hear the 'Tap, tap, tap,' and with renewed efforts I dug until I got through the roof of the cave, and that hand of mine shot into the air and a ray of light from heaven entered. I enlarged the hole and struggled partly through it, and then I saw that I was only a few feet away from the fields where my friends were reaping their grain. Thinking that the crocodile might soon come back, I began again to dig and dig and the roof fell in and I pulled myself up and out into the air. And again I began to call, 'Help, help.'

"In the village 150 yards away there was a great group of women gathered, and they were wailing, for, in the midst of the group, was my weeping mother, and they wept with her as she cried out, 'Oh my beautiful son is gone from me.' Presently in the midst of the wailing and weeping she heard a voice cry, 'Help me,' and rising up she said to the women, 'My son is calling me,' and she ran

in the direction of the voice. The others thought she had gone mad, and they followed her, when, to their surprise, they found me lying in the field, bitten and bruised terribly by the crocodile, and so they brought me into the village. Only a short time had elapsed since I had been caught, but no doubt the crocodile had left me there in that cave so that my body might decompose.

"And then the chief came and ordered them to call the doctor. While the doctor was treating the wound, I told the story and when I spoke about the 'Tap, tap, tap,' the chief sent messengers to the place to find out what it meant, whether the Father of Creation had really sent a spirit, or what the explanation was; and the messengers found, when they looked carefully, that a covey of partridges had been there picking the grain that was lying about. They quickly returned and said that the Father of Creation had sent these partridges to tell me how to escape. And when I heard it I formed a blood-sealed friendship with all partridges, and then and there changed my name, saying, 'I am going to be known now and hereafter as 'the friend of the partridge,' and by that name ever since I have been called and whenever I hear of a partridge being in trouble I go and find it and redeem it. I take a yard or two of calico or a cup of salt and I redeem it and set it at liberty, and in this way I am showing my gratitude to the partridge for saving my life. See, here are the scars of the wounds. After I got well from these wounds I went through the whole country telling the story and doing good to the partridge."

Well, when I heard all this I said, "Now I am going to tell you a story. That lovely purling river is the moons as they pass, the river of time. There is danger in that river, for in it there are great crocodiles, and they are sins. That river is always there and sin is always there. Sin is like that crocodile, and it has dragged us down into a deep, deep cavern, and unless some one comes to save us we will perish." He became interested in my story and asked me to tell him more about it. And again I told him that sin, like the great crocodile, had dragged us down to death. I told him that when he called to God in his cave for help, God sent the partridge, but that when I found myself down in the darkness of sin and I thought of dying for ever in that horrible cavern I cried and God sent some One to help me.

He asked, "Whom did He send?" And I answered, "His name is Jesus the Savior, the great Deliverer, Who came from the glory and bliss of heaven, when He saw me dragged down into the cavern of darkness. And He did not merely tap upon my prison, but He came down into the cave Himself."

Again he asked me, "Did He really do so?" "Yes," I answered, "He came down, right down to where I was, and He put His arms under me and He brought me out of the darkness of sin into the light of God's love."

And that poor, old African said, "Did you then take a new name?" "Yes," I said, "I am now 'the friend of Jesus.' Just as you took a new name and went around telling your story, I also have a new name, and I came here to Africa to tell you about Jesus."

O boys and girls have you learned the story?

Those crocodiles! I could tell you many gruesome stories about crocodiles that would make you shudder. I will tell you one. A good missionary was going down the river one day to meet his fiancee, who had come out to Africa to marry him, and they were to meet each other and be married the next day. The missionary and a native were paddling along and after a time they thought they would stop and have something to eat: but the white man said, "I am very hot and I will go into the river and bathe before we eat." The African said, "You would not dare to go into this river: it is full of crocodiles." The black men in many ways are much wiser than the white men. But the missionary said, "We will both go in together." He had not been in the water but only a few minutes when he called to the native that a crocodile had got him by the

foot. The native hurried to him, for he was a brave man, and he put his arms around him and pulled him out of the crocodile's jaws, but when he brought the missionary to the bank of the river he found that the white man had lost part of his foot. "Run and get help," said the missionary. It so happened that there was a white trader camped near to the place, and the native ran quickly and when he got help came running back to where he had left the missionary, but the missionary was gone. There were signs of a great struggle having taken place and here and there were little pools of blood, but the missionary was not to be seen. The crocodile had had a taste of blood and had come in the absence of the native to get more, and although a great struggle had taken place the missionary had become a victim to that thirst for blood. The young bride-to-be came on the morrow and everything there was dark; and that is a picture of sin.

Sin when it tastes your blood will never leave you until it has dragged you down to the river of death. But, thank God, for the Lord Jesus Christ, Who came down into the river and the darkness. Sin is marching down these streets, the sin that will blast you and make you impossible, the sin that will take away your manhood and womanhood. But, thank God, Jesus is here to save; He is the great Deliverer. Abandon your hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ, for there is such a thing as a great crocodile and its name is sin, and it is found in every corner and in every pleasure. Not that it always looks like a black crocodile. Sometimes it looks very beautiful. I remember one day in Africa seeing a wonderful tree, and as I drew near to that tree a man shouted to me, "Watch your step, watch your step." I said, "What do you mean? Do I have to watch my step out here in Africa? Under this wonderful tree is the very place I would choose to lie down. It is hot, and under that tree there is refreshing and coolness" But again he said, "Watch your step," and I answered, "What do you mean? Are you mocking me?" "No," he replied, "come with me." And taking me around the tree he said, "Look, look." I looked and poised in the tree I saw a great beam, about fifteen feet long, and at the end of the beam a spearhead covered with arrow poison, and hanging from this was a string. Then he told me that the path under that tree was an elephant track, and in the tree was a snare for the purpose of killing elephants. "Had you gone a few steps more you would have touched the trigger and the spear would have been buried in your body and the deadly poison would have done its work." And it was all hidden by that wonderful tree. And I thought, "Oh, how that is like sin, so beautiful." The movies and the shows and other pleasures are the beautiful things that hide the spearhead, but it is just the crocodile in another way.

But Jesus came! He came! Wonderful story of peace and love. He saw us here dying with no hope. Presently the roof of the cave split in two, and He came down and He lifted us up with His strong right hand and brought us into the light of His presence and still He is saving us moment by moment.

Now we have come to the point and I wish to press the point. Are you going to be a "friend of Jesus?" That African said, "I am going hereafter to be called the 'friend of the partridge,' and I am going through the country to redeem partridges." Now, are you going to get a new name? Are you going to say, "I am a friend of Jesus? I have learned He came to deliver me and I am going to serve Him just as that African went through the country to help the partridges." Who is going to be "the friend of Jesus" tonight? He loved you and died for you. Is that going to be the song tonight, "The friend of Jesus," the One Who took you out of darkness and delivered you from sin, the sin that is after the life blood of boys and girls? O come to the side of the Lord Jesus Christ and then you will be a little friend of Jesus. And whenever you think of Africa, think of the African, the partridge, and the crocodile, and when you think of sin and yourself and the Lord Jesus Christ remember the greatest of these is the Lord Jesus.

THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

Sweet to trace His toiling footsteps
Here amidst the desert sands;
Bear in memory all His sorrow,
Thorn-clad head and pierced hands!
Learn His love beside the manger,
Learn it on the stormy wave,
By the well and in the garden—
Learn it by the Cross and grave.

Yet not only in remembrance
Do we watch that stream of love—
Still the mighty torrent floweth
From the throne of God above.
Still a treasure all uncounted—
Still a story half untold—
Unexhausted and unfathomed,
Fresh as in the days of old.

On His heart amidst the glory,
Bears He all our grief and care,
Every burden, ere we feel it,
Weighed and measured in His prayer.
All His love, His joy, His glory,
By His spirit here made known,
Whilst the Spirit speaks the sorrows,
Of His saints before the Throne.

He, of old the Man of Sorrows,
Pleads before the Father's face,
Knowing all the needed solace,
Claiming all the needed grace.
We, so faithless and so weary,
Serving with impatient will—
He, unwearied in our service
Gladly ministering still.

When the Father's house resoundeth
With the music and the song;
When the bride in glorious raiment
Sees the One who loved so long;
Then for new and blessed service
Girt afresh will He appear,
Stand and serve before His angels
Those who waited for Him here.—Sel.

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

JUNE, 1929

No. 6

"SOWING DISCORD AMONG BRETHREN"

THOS. D. W. MUIR

"These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16-19).

In contrast to the above enumeration of those things that God hates, we invite the reader to read prayerfully the "beatitudes" of Matthew 5. They are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, in His oft-quoted "sermon on the mount," unfolded the principles governing His coming Kingdom. They are words equally true in their beneficent application to His disciples now. For instance, what a benediction and blessing is conveyed in verse 9, "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God,"—what a contrast are they to the "sowers of discord among brethren," of Proverbs 6!

It is a basic truth of God's revelation concerning the Church, that we are **"members of Christ."** United to Him by the Spirit of God, we can never cease to be what we are, "members of His body,"—Christ being the Head—thus are we "one body in Christ." The youngest babe in Christ occupies this place,—the most matured saint of God, in this sense, occupies no higher (1 Cor. 12:13).

Another truth running parallel with this is, that we are not only "members of Christ," but we are **"everyone members one of another."** If I am a member of Christ, then I am a member of every other child of God on earth, for He says that "the whole body" has been "fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth." (Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:16.)

Springing from this there is a further truth, namely, that God's intent in placing various members in the body, standing in such close relationship to Him and to one another, is in order **"that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another"** (1 Cor. 12:25). Hence, all true spiritual ministry will tend to the uniting and binding together of God's people, that being part of the "care" the "members" have one for the other. In a coming day it will be known, that "to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward" (Prov. 11:18).

Said our blessed Lord, in His prayer to God, "Holy Father keep

through thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, **that they may be one** as we are . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; **that they all may be one**, as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be **one in us, that the world may believe** that Thou hast sent Me" (John 17:11, 20, 21).

Now, it is to be expected that the efforts of Satan would be directed against this expressed desire of the Lord Jesus, that thus the work of God might be hindered, and His Name dishonored, by the sowing of discord among the saints, resulting, as it does, in the formation of cliques, parties, and schisms **within** the circle of the church, leading eventually, in many cases, to open rupture and division. How sad to think of it that the history of God's Assemblies proves that the enemy finds his allies for this kind of work **within** the church,—in most cases among those who should be guides to the flock,—even as it is written, saying, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse (twisted) things, to draw away disciples after them"—(Acts 20:30). Positive identification of the power behind the active participants in such work, is found in the words of our Lord Jesus in John 10:12, when He says:—"The wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep," for the "wolf" is Satan, and his is the malignant power that lies behind the dividing and scattering of the Lord's flock. Thus every effort of the enemy to alienate God's people from one another, is a blow aimed at the heart-desire of the Lord Jesus for the unity of God's people, and will have to be accounted for, by any child of God thus engaged, at the judgment seat of Christ.

How very sad it is to see men, who, by reason of their years in Christ should be seeking to shield the saints and assemblies of God from ravages of the wolf, actually allowing themselves to be used in furthering his cruel work! May God open the eyes of such to realize the sin of it. Perhaps one reason why men can blindly think they are doing God's service while dividing the sheep of God's pasture, is that their's "the sheep are not,"—they cannot say with Paul,—*"In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel"* (1 Cor. 4:15). It is an easy matter to agree to "divide the child" (1 Kings 3:24-27), where one has never travailed in birth for it. Men who have never through their labors in the gospel, "planted" an assembly of saints, as a testimony for God, can, to carry out their own way, ruthlessly sow discord, and produce division among companies that the labors of others have gathered together and nurtured: and, in doing so, claim they are "standing for the truth." But where they know what it is to pray over the souls of sinners, until they see them rejoicing in Christ, and then united in Assembly testimony for Him, they are "jealous over them with godly jealousy," and would cast themselves in the

breach to save such from Satan's assaults. Difficulties and differences there have always been, as witness the instructions of the epistles, but where godly forbearance is manifest, and the spirit of prayer prevails, there never can be division. No division has its source in God, nor has it His smile. And the "sower of discord" never obtained the power for his work in the holy place of prayer. May God deliver and defend His people and His testimony!

CHRIST'S THREEFOLD TEMPTATION;

OR, SATAN, AND THE WORD OF GOD.

W. J. McCLURE

"And he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee: And in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." (Luke 4:9-12.)

Though this temptation is given last by Luke, it was really the second, as we see in the gospel of Matthew. To read the two accounts carefully, one could hardly fail to see this. Satan could not continue the temptations after the command of the Lord, "Get thee hence, Satan." He could not resist the Divine authority of that command, though he only "departed from Him for a season;" for he would return, to seek to overcome by the Cross, the One he could not seduce by his subtilty; and return only to suffer a more crushing defeat.

In Matthew we have the chronological order, in Luke the moral order of events. That is, it is not the **time** at which the different temptations took place, that fixes their order in the gospel of Luke, but their **importance** from a moral standpoint. Thus this temptation is given last, because it is the most subtle and dangerous of all. In it, for the first time, Satan makes use of the Word of God, seeking by means of it, to turn the Son of God out of the path, which His Father had marked out for Him. Satan makes use of the words of Psa. 91:11-12. "He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee: And in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone." Here he tampers with the Word of God. In Eden, God had said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17.) Satan added just one little monosyllable, "Not," "Ye shall **not** surely die." He succeeded then with our first parents, and he is still succeeding with their progeny, by that same form of lie.

In Eden he **added** to God's Word, but here, in the temptation, he **takes from** it. He left out a very important clause, "In all Thy ways." The 91st Psalm speaks of the Father's care over the Son. "He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee **in all Thy**

ways." Now to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, was not one of His ways as the Messiah. He came into the world to do His Father's will, and absolute obedience to His Word, ever characterized His walk. He was the perfect exemplar of **faith**, and faith must ever have the Word of God by which to act. So He had nothing in the Word, to tell Him that it was the will of His Father, that He should cast Himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, and to act without that, would be **presumption**, and not faith, and He could not be guilty of that. He meets Satan with, "It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Acting presumptuously, that is without the Word of God, is to **tempt** the Lord.

"Cast Thyself down from hence." One might be disposed to regard this temptation as somewhat frivolous, and hardly in keeping with the others for satanic subtilty. But on the contrary it has a depth which the others do not have. And not alone because that in it, Satan seeks to use the Word to gain his end, which indeed marks it off from the others, but also for the suggestion it contains, as to how the Lord should present Himself to the people.

"**If thou be the Son of God**, cast Thyself down from hence." As Son of God, He was the Messiah, the King of Israel, as we see in John 1:49, and this temptation is nothing less than an effort to have Christ manifest Himself in Satan's way. If he cannot prevent His coming, he will seek to control the **manner** of it. How impressive it would be, to descend in the sight of all the people, from the dizzy height of the pinnacle of the temple, and alight unhurt in their midst! They wanted a sign, this would be a sign, and they would perhaps think of Malachi 3:1, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple."

As in his offer of the kingdoms of the world to Christ, in which he would have Him grasp the crown without the Cross, so here he would force the hands of the Lord, and would have Him manifest Himself to Israel in a way other than that the Father had chosen for Him. He will **descend** to His people, and in a more sudden and dramatic manner, than coming down from the pinnacle of the temple. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory." (Psa. 102:16.) Like the lightning for swiftness (Matt. 24:27), and "the stone cut out without hands," in its awful crushing effect (Dan. 2:34-35; Matt. 21:44), He shall descend from heaven for the deliverance of His people, the destruction of their foes, and the setting up of His kingdom.

But His path to all this, lay by way of the Cross. He must suffer ere He enters into His glory (Luke 24:26). And another thing—next in importance to His Cross work—the Holy Spirit will have to convict and convert Israel, to see their sin in rejecting Him, ere He can manifest Himself to them. "For I say unto you, Ye

shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:39; see also Acts 3:19-21, R. V.). At the moment Satan was urging Christ to descend among the temple worshippers, three things remained to be accomplished ere He could come in blessing to Israel: He must die on the Cross; the Church must be gathered out, and caught up; and the Jews led to repentance. These things Satan ignored then, and men are ignoring them still.

Satan's Greatest Success. This character of temptation is, I was going to say, peculiar to our days, but perhaps it would be more correct to say that Satan is using it now as he never did before. He is using the Word of God to sanction the gravest departures from sound doctrine. A way which has become very common of recent years is by means of "the book pedler." Who has not heard of some young and unestablished believer being caught in this way? The man, or it may be, woman "pedler," shows a book, which, they say, will afford great help in explaining difficult passages in the Bible, especially on prophecy. On looking at it the believer sees a great many Scripture quotations in it, so concluding that it "must be a good book," buys it. But a careful examination, discovers it to be full of deadly heresy about the person of Christ. His full Deity, His true Manhood, His resurrection, His presence as Man now in heaven before the Father, and His literal coming again,—all are flatly denied or explained away. Thus, through a crafty appeal to the Word of God, which is garbled, misquoted and misapplied, Satan is spreading through Christendom the errors of Russellism, Seventh Day Adventism, Christian Scientism, and other cults of like nature, which thrive upon the perversion of the Word of God.

We would, therefore, warn the believer against buying books, even though they are supposed to afford great help in opening up prophecy, unless the publishers are known to be sound on the foundation truths of the Bible. If the authors and publishers are unsound on the Deity of Christ, His Virgin Birth, His perfect Humanity, the Inspiration of the Bible, and the Eternal Punishment of the wicked, their publications cannot be trusted to give help on prophecy. And what they do say or write, as a matter of fact, is misleading.

"Cast Thyself down from hence." Faith and presumption are like the poles, far apart. Faith must have the Word of God on which to act. Presumption acts without it. God honors faith, but He will ever rebuke presumption. Almost every new cult that has arisen of late years, stresses "faith healing," so-called. With them the body bulks more largely than the spirit, and so to be healed of some trifling, or imaginary illness, is far more important than to conquer some lust of the flesh. And many who would repudiate the vagaries of the "tongue movement," and much which goes with these

new sects, are caught in the snare of "faith-healing," and that because of the misuse of Scripture.

One who has imbibed these views, is overtaken with some slight illness, for which the Scripture and common-sense would suggest some simple remedy, but this is regarded as incompatible with faith, and so the person grows worse, suffers weeks and months of pain, and even dies. Yet the Lord set His approval on the "Healing-Art," in those words, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matt. 9:12), and on the use of remedies, in "the plaster of figs" laid on Hezekiah's boil (2 Kings 20:7), in the wine and oil administered to the wounded Jew (Luke 10:34), and again in Paul's prescribing wine for Timothy's weak stomach.

In all these cases we surely have "Divine healing," though God was pleased to use the remedies. But presumption tells God how He must work, and will allow the person to die rather than give up a pet theory! We do not forget that through wrong teaching, many really think it would be dishonoring to God to use Doctors, or means for the recovery of the sick, and He will know how to reward the desire to please Him, even though mistaken as to what is according to His mind. Faith uses means in dependence upon God, counting on His blessing. There is a chasm over which I must pass: I see two planks across that chasm, one is sound and good, the other rotten and worm eaten. Faith will lead me to take the sound plank. Presumption says, "God can take you over safely, even if you walk on the rotten plank." If I take the rotten plank, it is just a case of casting myself down from the pinnacle of the temple, I am tempting God, and I have no reason to expect that I shall be saved from the consequences of my mistaken course.

If you want your interest in spiritual things to be productive, it must be intense. You cannot afford distractions. You must "lay aside every weight." To kindle a fire with a burning glass, you must keep the focus on the same spot. You do not wait until the smoke begins to curl and then move it a little. Keep it right there, and you may soon have a small fire. If you can only get one splinter in a blaze, from that you may kindle a forest. So one Christian whose faith and love are at white heat will move the world more than ten thousand who are almost aglow.

The Power of His Coming.—The thought of the near approach of the Lord's coming is eminently calculated to sanctify, by raising the heart above the world, its occupations and its lusts; and as it sanctifies while comforting, so does it comfort while it sanctifies and separates to Him.

"OBTAINED"

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS

(Heb. 9:11-12; 2:9; 1:3-4.)

The thought before us in these verses is one. They bring out what the Lord Jesus obtained, how He obtained it, and what we obtain through what He hath won for us; for He shareth with His own what He hath obtained, giveth us with Himself joint-heirship. We are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

In chapter 9 we get a comparison between the value and effect of the sacrifices of old, and the value and effect of the sacrifice of Christ. They wrought certain things, purifying for a time. "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, Who, through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience," once and for ever, for it tells us there that the Lord Jesus hath, by the offering up of Himself, "obtained **eternal** redemption." "For us," you notice, is in italics—it is perfectly true though not in the original; but the thought is not the personal application of the atonement, but the act itself. Now, I want you to notice the word "**obtained**," and to dwell upon its use, that our hearts may be stirred to think of what that blessed One has done. Casually reading it, we might say that He obtained as a gift from God eternal redemption, that He interceded with, besought God to give a certain thing; but not so, nor did the Lord Jesus obtain it from God as though He wrung from God something for us.

Oh, the false views of God which make Him seem **unwilling** to be propitious! The Lord Jesus could do nothing of Himself, for even in regard to the laying down of His life He says, "I and My Father are one" in eternal counsel that it should be done. So "**obtained**" is not used in the sense of **getting**, but of **winning** by title the right unto redemption. And this is brought out in chapter 1:4, "Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." Let us ponder this in connection with that which has already been said. What inheritance hath He won? In what sense is it said that He has obtained a better portion than the angels? Is it not again in connection with purging? "When he had by Himself purged our sins" (verse 3). He did not obtain it, again I say, by a life of devotion, or wring an unwilling gift from God for us; but, by the carrying out of salvation's conditions, He obtained by death the inheritance. Christ has "entered once into the holy place," having won by His death an eternal inheritance. Now, compare that again with what we get in chapter 2,—"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by

the grace of God should taste death **on account** of every man," not "for every man," as if He died in substitutionary fashion for every man, but that unto every man might salvation be made known,—proffered to every man. "Crowned with glory and honor," **because** He suffered unto death,—this is the title to eternal redemption,—the eternal inheritance He obtained was purchased on the Cross.

Now, is it any wonder that the Lord causes to run throughout Scripture references to this, that from first to last the one theme is the Lamb slain; in type and shadow, in prophecy and history, the Lamb slain is always brought before us. People may try to touch men's feelings with wondrous tales, but nothing will move us truly but the Lamb slain for us. And God in wisdom has instituted a feast of remembrance, in order that we may constantly be stirred to true worship; for God has prepared the hearts of His people that have come in to worship Him, by leading them to that which is His great work. This is the leading cause of all true affection and worship. Neglect the Lord's table, and you take away one of the motive powers to serve God properly; neglect the memorial of the dying love of the Lord Jesus, and you leave your soul starving, feeding on itself instead of on Christ. God will not have His people neglect His table with impunity. This feast is a divine and an all-wise provision for us to remind us of what brings us together. And this does not exalt, or lift **us** up; instead of lifting up, it is a most deeply humbling act of worship,—it puts us in our place, and exalts **Him** before our eyes.

Let me here speak a word of loving caution: it is a day when men think to put aside God's ordinances which He has ordained for the growth and strength of His own. Let us remember that God foresaw what was good and best for His people; and those who sit at the Lord's table and feed on the God-provided food, shall be strong and fruitful for God,—shall be "like trees planted by the rivers of water, that bring forth their fruit in their season, and whose leaves do not wither," and not like the heath in the wilderness, which is in parched places. If we are striking our roots deep down into the soil of the grace of God, we shall send up-spreading branches, bearing fruit such as God loveth. Oh! never turn aside from the all-wise provision of God for His people, and never think that because the world's days are changed, the laws of the all-wise God are changed. Has He not foreseen what would take place; what the vanity of man would lead to,—to his setting up laws in order to meet the popular demand, and that they may sway the people? My friends, they little know that God alone can truly sway hearts, and the hearts which are God-swayed cannot be moved, but the hearts that are man-swayed are like reeds shaken by the wind. Oh! God give us to say from our hearts, "We own allegiance to one Lord." Hezekiah was called the captain of the Lord's people; so Christ is the Captain

of His people, and it were secret rebellion, secret dissatisfaction to **think** even to go from His revealed will. Let us dare to stand against the world, ready to do whatever is His will, and remember His foreseeing wisdom has provided for us that which leads our hearts Godward. And as we see the virtue of the Cross in removing sin and bringing nigh to God in an everlasting covenant; as these things come afresh before us, let us see that this is a God-provided reminder as well as God-provided nutriment; that we may be kept during the time we bide down here, faithful and grateful to Him, lest Satan lead us into by-paths. May He teach us this, for Christ's sake!—N. W.

COMMUNION WITH GOD

"Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).

Although much has been written on this subject, yet it is in itself so important, and has such far-reaching consequences, that we need to be "put in remembrance of these things, even although we know them and be established in the present truth" (2 Peter 1:12). Perhaps there never was a time in the history of the Church when a healthy, spiritual intuition was more needful than the present time. The snares of the adversary are so subtle, and error is so mixed up with truth, that without that correct spiritual discernment which fellowship with God alone can give, it is sometimes impossible for the young and uninstructed believer to know which of the various voices he hears is the voice of the Good Shepherd, and which is the voice of the seducer.

The Spirit of God has foretold that "men would arise" inside of the assembly "speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30). We are also told that this is done by "good words and fair speeches which deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18). Few things are more painful, and nothing requires more grace, than when we have to turn away from those whose ministry we have enjoyed, and whose leading we have followed in days gone by. Error in these days, in some of its phases, is so subtle, and has such an appearance of truth; and those who are leading saints astray have such an apparent zeal for God, that, without a measure of experimental communion with God, it is impossible to discern the "right" path. God's ways are so simple that, in times of special difficulty, it is the "spiritual" soul that can discern them, whilst "carnal wisdom" is sure to go astray either to one side or the other.

In following out this theme let us look first at what communion is. It has been said that "there are two links between Christ and the believer." That of **union** and that of **communion**. Every believer has this "union" with Christ, and that never can be broken. Christ Himself is responsible for that (John 10:27-30). But the link of

communion is a very tender cord, and easily broken, and without some spiritual knowledge of what it is, and how it can be maintained, and also, how it can be restored when it is broken, the joy of the believer will be very fitful, and his peace often unsettled.

Communion is more than prayer;—it is more than thanksgiving;—it is more even than worship! These are all on one side, but communion has two sides. It is mutual converse between God as a Father and His children as such. It is said of Enoch that he “walked with God” (Gen. 5:24). That was communion. God was not then revealed as a Father, as He now is to His children by the Spirit, yet there is no doubt that Enoch enjoyed a measure of fellowship with God which few, if any, attain to now. And therein lay his safety in a day of terrible apostasy; and therein is our safety in these “difficult times.” There is also no doubt that God enjoyed Enoch’s society far more than he was able to enjoy the companionship of God. In thinking of our lack of communion, we too often fail to apprehend how we rob our God of unspeakable joy by our living at a distance from Him.

Most of what I have seen and heard taught on the subject of communion, deals mainly with the love of God. How infinitely dear the children of God are to Him. To know and enjoy this is essential in order to fellowship. “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment” (1 John 4:18). In order to fellowship we must not only “know and believe the love which God hath to us”; we must also know the truth that gives power to **dwell** in that love.

When God gave unto Moses the pattern of the Tabernacle, He began with the Ark, in which was the “testimony” which He gave unto Moses. This was an expressive type of Christ with the “law of God in His heart.” The next piece of furniture was the Mercy-seat, and it was put “above upon the ark,” teaching how “grace is reigning through righteousness” in the economy of man’s redemption. “Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Psalm 85:10). After giving directions as to the structure and position of the Ark and the Mercy-seat, the Lord said, “There I will meet with thee, and I will **commune** with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the Cherubim which are upon the Ark of the testimony” (Exod. 25:22). The Lord thus revealed in type the **place** of communion. The dwelling-place of Jehovah was between the Cherubim in the “most holy place.” It was there the “cloud of glory” rested; it was from above the Mercy-seat that God communed with man, and it was towards the Mercy-seat that man drew near to commune with God.

Under the law, which had only “a shadow of good things” to come, man was shut out of the immediate presence of God, and

could only worship and commune with Him at a distance, and through a veil; but sin having been "put away" by the one offering of Christ on the Cross, the veil was rent, and the way opened for the believer to enter into the "holiest of all,"—that is, right up to the true Mercy-seat,—into the near presence of God. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God" (Heb. 7:19).

When the Lord gave instructions concerning the "continual burnt offering," which was at the "door of the tabernacle," He said, "Where I will meet with you, to speak there unto thee; and there I will meet with the children of Israel" (Exod. 29:42-43). It was at the **door** where all sin was confessed. If even a priest committed sin he could not get past the door till that sin was confessed and atoned for (see Lev. 4:3-12). The Altar of burnt-offering, which stood by the door of the tabernacle, evidently pointed to the Cross; and if it is a question of actual sinning, the Cross is still the place of confession. If it is God dealing with a guilty sinner, it is at the Cross where He, as Judge, becomes the Justifier of every sinner who meets Him there, and puts faith in the blood that was there shed. And just as a priest who had committed sin was shut out from the place of worship and communion until that sin was confessed and forgiven, so a child of God now who is guilty of actual sin, though still a child, is shut out from the enjoyment of the Father's presence, and can only get back into the light on the principle of confession; and God, as a Father, dealing with the sin of a child as such, can only forgive that sin on the ground of the **one propitiation** (see 1 John 2:1-2).

It is of paramount importance for every child of God to know the distinction between being outside of the family, and being outside of the light of the Father's presence;—or the difference between "union" with Christ, and "communion" with God. It is also important to distinguish between the **self-loathing** of a believer who is "walking in the light;" and the **unrest** or unhappiness of one who is shut out of the light on account of unconfessed sin, or even by careless walk.

There is no time when sin is seen to be so hideous, and when one is so painfully conscious of unlikeness to Christ, as when consciously in the presence of God; but if the Holy Spirit is ungrieved, He will reveal to the soul the infinite value of the precious blood, as meeting all his defilement and unworthiness. Doubtless one reason why Christians know so little of the "groaning" spoken of in Rom. 8:33, and 2 Cor. 5:2-4, is because they know so little of real communion with God; but this groaning to be freed from a body which is defiled by sin, is quite compatible with the sweetest fellowship with God; but confessed sin on a Christian's conscience will shut the soul out from the enjoyment of His presence. Therefore, be-

liever, beware of trifling with sin, if you covet communion with God.—G. A.

FAITH'S RESOURCES IN GOD

FRAGMENTARY THOUGHTS

I can never be independent of man until I learn how dependent I am upon God.

I cannot be fearless of man unless I fear God and have strong faith in Him.

I can never be free from the bondage of man in some form or other until I am the willing bond-servant of Jesus Christ.

In order to be equipped with that boldness and fortitude, before men, which are requisite to the faithful service of Christ in these days of party strife, I must know what it is to fear and tremble before God; not with that kind of fear which hath torment, but which arises from a sense of my own weakness and tendency to err; that is, a fear and trembling caused, not by the knowledge of God, but the knowledge of myself. If I would that God should do anything by me, I must know that I can do nothing by myself.

I enjoy fellowship with my brethren best when I am so filled and satisfied with the love and presence of Christ that I **could** do without it; and yet this is just the time I seek it, because it is pleasing to Christ and in accordance with the desire of the new nature in me.

To bear patiently and calmly the abuse of men, or the ill-treatment of my brethren, I must be able to say, in reality, "The Lord is my shield;" and to know that if He does allow a sharp arrow,—even a bitter word, shot from a brother's bow, to pierce my heart, it is only that He may heal it with the tender touch of His deep sympathy, that thus I might know Him and His love better. Instead of its causing ill-feeling in my own breast, the matter becomes an occasion for the expression of that love in me. And there can be no thought of returning their treatment, not only because one sees that their conduct itself, in its consequences to them, is a sufficient retribution, but because divine love leads one to take sides with Christ as their Advocate, instead of with Satan as their accuser. A readiness to pass judgment upon others, and a reluctance in judging myself, always go together; as do also a readiness to judge myself, and a reluctance in judging others.

While I look at myself in relation to people and things around, and people and things around in relation to myself, and as they affect my poor petty reputation, I shall always be unhappy,—shall never be what I desire to be, nor shall I have what I desire to have. But when I look at myself and things around in relation to Christ, and as His honor is affected thereby, I can "rejoice with joy unspeakable

and full of glory," because I see I am all I could wish to be; yea, what I could never have thought of being, without the revelation of the purpose of God: and that I have all I could desire to have; yea, more than I could have conceived, had not the blessed God sent down His Spirit to make known the things He hath freely given us. And my only concern will then be for the interests of Christ, and the blessing of others. For what have I to seek for myself, when I see what I am and have in Christ?

How little one knows the reality of all this. Thank God for the desire to know it.—J. H. B.

Pride kills the spirit of praise; when thou shouldst be praising God thou art praising thyself.

"BESTOWED"

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us" (1 John 3:1). Divine love going out after the lost and the wandering "until He find it." Nothing in the object on which to rest; infinite and unchangeable in its own strength, it flows on like a tide through all the ages of man's rejection. This is love bestowed. The gift of God's Son for sinners is the measure of its depth and height. Its breadth and length is eternity.

The love of John 14:21 is responsive and conditional, and is measured by our obedience, having to do with the love of God shed abroad in **our hearts** by the Holy Ghost; but the love of John 3:16 is the overflow of **God's heart** to sinners, and knows no measure, being infinite and eternal as He is, for "God is love." "**His grace which was bestowed** upon me was not in vain" (1 Cor. 15:10). Grace filling the earthen vessel, first because it is empty (Psalm 107:9), and then because it is full (Matt. 13:12). Finding nothing in man, being cast back on the boundless resources of Divine wisdom for a reason to bless, our need and our fulness alike call forth the supply, because of what God is!

"The gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons" (2 Cor. 1:11). Not content with being the one Giver to His saints, in manifold grace, Christ, as the Son over His own house, brings us into personal fellowship with His purpose, as when He gave the bread by His disciples to the multitude, thus enriching His servants by the fulness of what He imparts to others, whether of deliverance or of power, entrusting them by the Spirit with His messages to the throne in Heaven (Rom. 8:26), and with His ministry to the members on earth; filling their hands with the Living Bread, that He may call them givers too. Thus, from the Head in heaven, enthroned and glorified, all the body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered . . . increaseth with the increase of God.

"Mary, who bestowed much labor on us" (Rom. 16:6). Yet not Mary's labor, but the labor of the Great Shepherd of the sheep, bestowed by Mary's hand, as a vessel through which the love of Christ to His needy servant might flow **in**, in fellowship, and flow **out** in service. May we thus discern in every ministry, whether concerning giving or receiving, the undying care of the Chief Shepherd, that we lose not in it the greater blessedness of contact with Himself.

"Lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (Gal. 4:11). It is the labor still of the Shepherd through the apostle, "though He spend His strength for nought" (Isaiah 49:4). Shall we ask our hearts, as we bow in the dust before Him, how much has Christ "bestowed" on us personally of labor "in vain"? One thing only can withstand His purposes of blessing,—our unbelief. Though the floods of Divine wrath lay between Him and our redemption, yet He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem; for many waters could not quench love, neither could the floods drown it. Alone He trod the awful winepress;—alone He stood, the Conqueror of death and hell, for His ransomed ones. Redemption work was done for us, but we are with Him in the work of sanctification. Let us take heed that we stay not His hand. The gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church, but unbelief within can sap her vitality and leave a door open for the enemy to enter. We who have been long in His hand for guidance, let us trace back the tenderness and the loving kindness, the training and the discipline, the restoring and the deliverance, with which He has filled our lives, and ask ourselves individually, has He found in us the fruit for which He has labored, for our blessing and the glory and praise of God?—A. E. W.

THE STORY OF A STANZA

DYSON HAGUE.

Many years ago Dr. Valpy, a well-known English scholar, wrote a little verse of four lines as the longing of his heart and the confession of his faith. This was the simple stanza:

"In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see:
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me."

Some time afterward he gave this verse to his friend, Dr. Marsh, and the verse became a great blessing to him. Dr. Marsh gave the lines to his friend, Lord Roden, who was so impressed with them that he fastened the paper over the mantel-piece in his study; and there, yellow with age, they hung for many years, a memorial of the beloved hand that traced them.

Some time after, an old friend—Gen. Taylor, one of the heroes of Waterloo—came to visit him. Lord Roden noticed that the eyes of the old veteran were again and again fixed upon the motto over the mantel-piece. "Why, General," said Lord Roden, "you will soon know the verse by heart." "I know it now," replied the general, with much feeling; for the simple words were the means of bringing him to know the way of salvation. Some two years after, the physi-

cian who had been with the old general while he lay a-dying wrote to Lord Roden to say that his friend had departed in peace, and that the last words of the veteran soldier were:

"In peace let me resign my breath, and Thy salvation see:
My sins deserve eternal death, but Jesus died for me."

Years afterward Lord Roden was relating this story of the old general and these lines. Among those who heard it was a young officer in the British Army recently returned from the Crimea; and no impression seemed to be made at the time. A few months later, however, Lord Roden received a message from the officer that he wanted to see him, as he was in a rapid decline. As the Earl entered the sick-room the dying officer extended both his hands to welcome him, repeating the lines—

"In peace let me resign my breath, and Thy salvation see:
My sins deserve eternal death, but Jesus died for me."

And then he added: "These simple words have been God's message of peace and comfort to my heart in this illness: they have been brought to my memory by the Holy Spirit after days of darkness and distress."

As I was telling this story in Old St. Paul's, in Halifax, N. S., I noticed that an old gentleman who was sitting not far from the pulpit, in front of me, was being overcome with an extraordinary emotion. I thought for a moment that it was a transient attack of some physical affection. But as I went on telling the story, there was no doubt it had laid hold of the listener's soul, and deeply touched his feelings. The story ended the sermon. After the singing of the hymn I went into the vestry. Presently a knock was heard at the door, and the old gentleman came in and said: "I do not know whether you saw that I was very much touched by the story you related, but it almost overcame me." And then with tears he told me the following: "Years ago, when I was a young man, careless and indifferent, I sauntered one day into an old churchyard near Wolfville, Nova Scotia, in the land of Evangeline, and, seeing a fallen gravestone, overturned it in pure curiosity. There, engraved in the stone, was this verse of four lines. It took such hold upon me, and so clearly explained to me the way of salvation, that it was the means of my conversion. From that day, nearly fifty years ago, by God's grace, those four lines led me to a consecrated life for Christ. You can imagine, therefore, my amazement, as well as my delight, when I heard you tell the story about these lines. You brought back to me the wonderful way in which God was pleased to save my soul."

It was not long after that I was sent for to visit this old gentleman in sickness. One of the last things he did before he died was to take my hand affectionately and ask me, as his clergyman, to do him this favor: that at his funeral, and over his coffin, I would tell the story of the lines, in the hope that the prayer of a dying man might be answered, and that they might be a blessing to many souls more.

Soon afterward he died; and at his funeral, which was attended by some of the most distinguished citizens of Halifax, I told, over his coffin, amidst the most profound and interested silence, the story of the stanza that had transformed so many lives. I ended by saying that it was the wish of the dear old man on his dying bed that the words, which would be distributed as his last memorial to all present, might become a blessing to their souls. And as each one passed from the house of mourning he received a beautiful card, with the name, age and burial date of that aged saint on one side, and on the other the never-to-be-forgotten words—

"In peace let me resign my breath, and Thy salvation see:
My sins deserve eternal death, but Jesus died for me."

"IT IS FINISHED"

O mighty work! Oh grace of heaven!
 Love unto death at Calvary given!
 What mortal tongue can e'er express,
 That work in all its blessedness.

The blood-stained cross uplifted high,
 Twixt quaking earth and darkened sky;
 The lightning's flash, the judgment's flood,
 Poured on the sinless Son of God.

"Made sin for us, Who knew no sin"
 That grace through righteousness might reign.
 A Shepherd smitten by His God;
 Crushed under sin's relentless rod.

A spectacle to angels given:
 Christ on the cross! and God in heaven
 Turned from His Son! and then that cry
 Piercing the lonely earth and sky!

Wrung from the very heart of Him
 Who bled beneath His creature's sin:
 Who single-handed broke Sin's power,
 A Conqueror in His dying hour!

"'Tis finished" now the veil is rent!
 And Hell has all its fury spent!
 "'Tis finished"; planned in ages past,
 Redemption's work is done at last.

"'Tis finished!" Heaven's stupendous plan;
 The Grace of God, brought down to man:
 Up from each ransomed heart, what praise
 Should rise to Him through endless days!

—E. M. T.

The one thing indispensable in the service of Christ we can learn nowhere except at His feet. Here is the spiritual secret which makes a saint so potent for the highest good. For it is true of a saintly man that "the least of his words and actions may be of more vital effect in the world than the life's labor of any of the herd of benevolent people who are busied about much serving."

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

JULY, 1929

No. 7



MR. WILLIAM MATTHEWS

BORN 1851,—BORN AGAIN 1866,—FELL ASLEEP JUNE 1, 1929

Early in the morning of Saturday, June 1st, 1929, there passed into the presence of the Lord, whom he had known and loved for fully sixty-three years, our beloved brother in Christ, and esteemed fellow-servant in work of God, **Mr. William Matthews**, late of Cambridge, Mass. Born in the city of Belfast, Ireland, in February, 1851; born of

God, through faith in His gospel, in the same city fifteen years later; he was, for eleven years, from 1878-91, associated in Gospel service with the late Mr. James Campbell, who went home to be with Christ, February 17th, 1904.

For ten or more years after his fellow-laborer's death, our brother Matthews continued alone, or in companionship with Mr. W. H. Hunter and others, to preach the gospel in various parts of the U. S. A. and Canada, when the strain of his arduous labor began to tell on his none-too-strong constitution, and he was called upon to hear the tender voice of his beloved Master bidding him to "Come apart—and rest awhile." This rest, with short periods of partial activity, continued for his remaining years to be our brother's portion, in the will of God—a "portion" in which grace was given him to cheerfully acquiesce. And who will say that those years of quiet—mixed oft-times with pain and weakness—were not among the most fruitful of his life? For, his constant companion was his Bible, on which it can be truthfully said he fed, and in the pages of which he found delight as well as comfort and sustenance; while his interest in the work of God, and in the welfare of the Lord's people, occupied him in prayerful intercession for the spread of the gospel, and the prosperity of the children of God.

During all these years, the faithful and skilled ministrations of his beloved wife, who was his inseparable companion and nurse, was undoubtedly used of God in prolonging his days. The last two months of his life were filled with anxiety and care to his wife, and others who waited on him, ending for him in a short period of unconsciousness, which lasted until shortly after 1 A. M., June 1st, when he "fell on sleep" and was "absent from the body and present with the Lord." Funeral services were held June 3rd at his late home, 140 Upland Road, Cambridge, Mass., when Dr. E. A. Martin gave out a favorite hymn of Mr. Matthews (No. 7 in the Believer's Hymn Book), "A debtor to mercy alone," then read and commented on suitable scriptures. After prayer, Bro. W. P. Douglas read and spoke from 2 Cor. 5. of the present "clothed" condition of the believer, in which he groans; the "unclothed," or intermediate state, when "absent from the body," and the "clothed upon" condition, when the Lord comes. T. D. W. Muir closed the services at the house by a brief message, connected with brevity of life and the importance of our passing days, in the light of eternity. At the grave, Mr. W. Beveridge spoke a short word, Mr. R. McGill gave out the hymn, "Till He Come," and Mr. H. Thorpe closed the services with prayer. Mr. Matthews lies within three minutes walk of where 25 years ago he laid the body of his friend, Mr. James Campbell. Together they await the shout of their coming Lord! Of the six brethren who carried him to his burial, were at least three who were led to Christ through his ministry—two of them being the fruit of labor in the north of Ireland in 1880; the third, saved more recently,

during the years of his enforced retirement, reminding us of the words of the Psalmist, "The righteous shall flourish as the Palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing to show that the Lord is righteous." Psalm 92:12-15.

A forceful and fruitful Gospel preacher, our brother was also in his ministry of the Word to Christians, simple, direct, and earnest in its evident intent to reach the conscience and the heart of God's people, and lead them into a holier walk with God. An extract from a briefly reported address at a conference held many years ago will best illustrate our reference to this matter of directness in his ministry.

A Three-fold Indebtedness. "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" asked one. God's claims on His child, in answer to such a question, might be voiced in the language of another, "Thou owest unto Me thy life also" (Phile. 18-19). And again, "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought (or is indebted) to walk even as He walked" (1 Jno. 2:6). One has said that "Young Christians ought to be taught that conversion means a transference of ownership and all they have, from themselves to God." Let there, in this, be no "mental reservation." Let us be consistent and constant in our devotedness to God. Pharaoh tried various schemes to hinder Moses and Israel in their obedience to God, as regards separation from Egypt and its ways and worship. But Moses said, "No," there shall "not a hoof be left behind." Moses thus, on behalf of Israel, acknowledged God's claim.

"We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (Jno. 3:16). In Acts 2:45, we find them giving up their **goods** for the brethren. Here we find something further in 1st John—we are exhorted, if needs be, to lay down our **lives** for them. We are to "owe no man anything, but to love one another." This is following in the footsteps of our blessed Lord.

In Romans 1:14, Paul acknowledged the claim of the unsaved upon him. The cultured Greek, the proud Roman, the rude Barbarian, and the religious and bigoted Jew, needed the Gospel of Christ, and to all such he felt he was indebted to see as far as he was able that they heard it: He counted himself a debtor—and ever strove to pay the debt. Thus, to sum it up:

We owe it to the Lord, whose children we are, to "walk as He walked"—in holiness and truth; ever seeking to please God in all things.

We owe it to our brethren, to love them, to serve them, to care for them as members of the one body, seeking in every sense their welfare—and to spend and be spent for them—yes, even if called upon, to lay down our lives for them.

We also owe it to the world, of which we once formed a part, and which still "lies in the wicked one," and is hastening with increasing speed down to hell, to preach God's one remedy for sin to them, even the gospel of the grace of God, telling them that God loves them, Christ has died for sin and sinners, and by His Spirit is now proclaiming salvation. Thus will we be found, "Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom: that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28).

Our brother's story of his conversion to God, which follows on this page, was written by himself, and was a living reality in his gospel testimony, often told by him to the praise of God's grace in saving him and His faithfulness in keeping him, even as He would save and keep any unsaved one who may read those lines.

MR. MATTHEWS' CONVERSION

TOLD BY HIMSELF

I was brought up morally and religiously, and went to the English church, when a boy. At fifteen I was working in a foundry in Belfast, in the North of Ireland, with a young lad, a companion of mine—he was a Presbyterian; his father an elder in one of the churches—and somehow he got troubled about his soul's salvation. He was the first one I had ever come in contact with in soul trouble.

In 1859—I was then a lad of seven—there was a church near our home, and there I heard the cries of the people in the church who were under conviction of sin. I saw them taken out of the church, laid upon an Irish jaunting car crying for mercy as they were taken along the street. Our minister at that time knew nothing of salvation. I had the privilege, later, of speaking to him; and he told my folks years after that, he could say "the same as William"—he could now say he was saved.

There was a very religious man in the foundry, and I went, when I saw this lad in such soul trouble, and asked him the meaning of it. He said, "That is conviction of sin." And I said, "What is that?" He said, "Its a feeling that comes over you, and you believe you are the worst individual in the world." "Well," I said, "I have never had it; but then I have lived a good life." As far as I knew I had never uttered an oath. I did tell lies on the sly, but I was afraid to tell lies openly. I never felt I was one of the worst in the world. He repeated that verse, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven." And he told me I would find it in the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel by Matthew. He also remarked: "You will never be converted until you are convicted." Now that was the clearest preaching I had heard when I was fifteen years of age.

This young companion of mine, who was so concerned about his soul, alas! became hardened and got back into sin. I remember when I got home that day, taking the Bible and looking up the scripture, and wondering what is this conversion? and how is conversion to take place, without which a soul will never enter heaven?

Just at this time I took sick. God often makes His providential dealings to work with His Blessed Spirit in dealing with sinners about their souls. And he dealt with me. "If I die," I thought, "I am not converted, and I can't enter

heaven, and there is no other place but hell." God raised me up from typhoid fever; my mother took it, and died. We had a little store, and I remember one day sitting in that store reading the Bible, anxious to know about how to be saved; but afraid, or ashamed, to speak to anybody about the matter. Indeed, I didn't know anybody to consult only this religious man in the foundry. And I remember I opened my Bible this day, in the evening—the gas was lit—but I didn't know where in the Bible to find salvation. I opened the book of Revelation, the hardest book, one would say, in the Bible, and yet God has got His salvation there. I commenced to read the first chapter, and I read until I came to these words, "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. To Him be glory and dominion forever, and ever, Amen." (Rev. 1:5). And as I read it over, God opened it up to me and I could see that the work of Calvary had put away my sins, settled the question forever; that my sins were washed away by His precious blood. I didn't know that hymn, "O Happy Day," it wasn't in our hymn book; but I sang,

"Glory, honor, praise and power
Be unto the Lamb forever;
Jesus Christ is my Redeemer,
Hallelujah, Amen."

And I sang,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

There was I, a lad of fifteen, saved sitting on the counter that day. God's Holy Spirit had entered!—that which prophets looked forward to—that which patriarchs longed for—that which men under the old covenant prayed for—the Holy Spirit He had entered—I had the forgiveness of sins—I received Eternal Life—I was born of God!

There are many people who have faith, but not "saving faith" which rests on Christ. Israel passed over the Red Sea "by faith," and yet thousands later died in the Wilderness; and many of them perished as idolators: I fear there is a danger of us misusing the word "believe" and thinking that because people say they "believe," that therefore they are true children of God. Not necessarily!

Fifty years has rolled by since then. I had very little teaching from the Word the first seven years of my life: but, the marks of the "New Birth" were there. God has made "marks" that distinguish between the living and the dead. Does he say that? He says, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me." (John 10:27). They may stumble as they follow, but He says, "They follow me." And a stranger will they not follow: they will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:5.) Mark you, reformation is not regeneration; and there are multitudes in these last days professing to be saved—professing to be Christians—professing to believe in the Lord—professing to give their hearts to God—and they have never yet found out the first thing, that is, that they are lost, ruined, miserable sinners, on their way down to hell and need a Saviour. "Hereby we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." Such is the story of my conversion as I now remember it; and God says, "Call to remembrance the former days." Heb. 10:32.—William Matthews.

If the sufferings of Christ, Who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death,—the death of the Cross—be much in my heart, I shall see my worst enemy to be pride, especially pride of wisdom, and pride of righteousness. I shall charge my soul, as did the King of Syria his captains: "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel." In my soul's warfare let pride be subdued.

THE TRIUMPHS OF THE TRUTH

(Acts 13:6, 12)

JOHN RANKIN

Cyprus was an island, which, in early days was "honorably associated with the work of successful evangelization." Barnabas was a native of Cyprus. The saints who were "scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, Cyprus and Antioch preaching the Word of God. There also Barnabas and Saul went, when they set out on their first missionary tour. Called, fitted, and sent forth by the Holy Ghost, and fully commended by the church in Antioch, they departed from Seleucia, the seaport of Antioch, and sailed to Salamis, the Grecian capital of Cyprus on the Eastern side. There they preached the gospel in the synagogues of the Jews, but nothing is said of the immediate results. From thence they went through the isle unto Paphos on the opposite side, a distance by land along the South coast of about one hundred miles. Paphos was the Roman capital, and the "favorite sanctuary of a shameful idolatry." There Sergius Paulus, the deputy or pro-consul of the country, resided. When Barnabas and Saul met him, he was accompanied by a certain sorcerer—"one of a numerous class of imposters who at this time of general unbelief were encouraged even by cultivated Romans." In this wicked sorcerer, we have a striking evidence of the power of Satan in resisting the gospel, but in Sergius Paulus the power of Christ to deliver is marvellously demonstrated.

What an accurate record God keeps of those who are the willing tools of the Devil; who lend themselves for sinister motives, or who through ignorance or prejudice, become his instruments in seeking the eternal ruin of souls! God records his name—"Bar-Jesus," or "Elymas; his nationality, "a Jew"; his profession, "a false prophet"; his character, "full of all subtlety and all mischief, a child of the Devil and an enemy of all righteousness"; his power, "he perverted the right ways of the Lord, and withstood the servants of God"; his purpose, "seeking to turn the deputy from the faith." Then follows his judgment. It was divine, "Behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee." It was righteous, "wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" It was sudden, "immediately there fell a mist and a darkness." It was severe, he was smitten with blindness. It was public, "seeking some to lead him by the hand." It was effective. Whether Elymas profited by this display of God's power we cannot tell, though tradition says he did; this we do know, it left its impression for good upon one man, and upon how many others the future will reveal.

Though the magician and the proconsul were on common ground inasmuch as both were sinners, outwardly the contrasts were great. Elymas, an expert of the "black arts" (which many are eager to

acquire in our day) is seen to be absolutely under the sway of the Devil. He expresses the bitterest hostility to the gospel. How stern was Paul's rebuke! Not given in a heat of passion, but being full of the Holy Ghost, he uttered his awful denunciation and prophecy which was immediately fulfilled. Those who in any way seek to hinder the progress of the gospel ought to tremble before such a warning as this. The truth made manifest the diabolical enmity of his heart to God and His Christ. It was this more than perhaps the mere dread of dismissal, that account for his fiendish conduct. All unregenerate men are enemies of God, but those who have anything to do with sorcery or spiritism are ever blatant in their protests against what is of God. The dark background as presented in this Jewish sorcerer, brings into wonderful relief the more pleasing features exhibited in the heathen governor. Some of these characteristics let us now notice.

A Prudent Man—His distinguished position is suggestive of intelligence, but when we read he was prudent, or intelligent, we naturally conclude he was exceptionally brilliant—a man well informed in philosophy. The intellectual giants are not all foolish enough to remain in the ranks of the Devil. The reason many wise men never become Christians is because they fancy they must have all their difficulties and objections removed one by one, instead of accepting by simple faith the revelation of God in Christ. "The thoughts of the wise are vain." A lawyer said to a preacher friend of his, "If I could believe that Christ rose from the dead I would be a Christian." His friend gave him a book containing evidences of the fact; he studied it carefully and on returning it he remarked to this effect: "I am now convinced from the evidence given, that Christ was raised from the dead, but I am no more a Christian than ever. I suppose the seat of the trouble is not in my head but in my heart." He was right. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts."

To strengthen his erroneous position a Unitarian preacher gives, in a pamphlet, a long list of great men—Presidents, Statesmen, Philanthropists, Philosophers, Educators, Ministers, etc.—whom he says were all Unitarians. But, supposing he had made his list a mile longer, would that justify the suggestion that all profound thinkers are men opposed to true orthodoxy, or what is scriptural? Is not this the common argument in the mouth of infidels and arrogant modernists? One word from the Son of God is sufficient to confound all who call in question His Deity: "If you believe not that I AM; ye shall die in your sins." According to this plain statement, no Unitarian, as such, will ever find himself in heaven.

"Not many wise men after the flesh are called," but this does not mean there are "not any." For the few such who have become as

little children and have entered into the kingdom of heaven we truly thank God. It is to babes and not to wise men as such, that the things of God are revealed. "The natural man," however learned, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." They are to be discerned only by the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit of God dwells only in those who have been born from above. Hear the words of our Lord when addressing his Father: "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father for so it seemed good in thy sight." And Paul says, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

"Elymas" is Arabic, and means "The Wise." His was the wisdom of knavery, but the wisdom Sergius Paulus displayed was the wisdom of bravery, for in the face of great opposition he was not too cowardly to accept Christ, as the sequel will show. As a prudent man in the truest sense, foreseeing the evil, he hid himself, took refuge in Christ, while the simple sorcerer passed on and was punished.

An Earnest Man—This pro-consul, we note with pleasure, was not so much under the power of the degraded sorcerer as to be without freedom to fulfil his desire to hear the truth. His philosophical disposition would account for his curiosity but that a superior motive actuated him seems apparent. "He called for Barnabas and Saul and desired to hear the Word of God." How precious was the Word of God to these true men! They did not corrupt it or huxterise it; they did not handle it deceitfully; they did not make merchandise of it, as so many of their professed followers do today. Indeed, some have the effrontery to set up their own immature vaporings over against the authoritative sayings of the Son of God. What then do they preach? Everything, it seems, but the Word of God. Commenting on "A New Commentary On the Scripture," edited by Bishop Gore, which perhaps would be better named, "a manual on modernism," "The Churchman" (Episcopal) observes, "that every theological seminary of any standing in this country (U. S. A.), has been teaching for a quarter of a century almost everything contained in this new commentary!"

"Preach the Word!" May this divine injunction to Timothy, given in view of these present times, sink deeply into our hearts. To God we are surely accountable. How should it be preached? Prayerfully, Reverently, Earnestly, Appropriately, Confidently, Habitually, Thoughtfully, Humbly, Effusively, Wisely, Openly, Radiantly, Devotedly. This acrostic suggestion is given, fully realizing that "except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it." "They

preached"—"The Lord wrought" (Mark 16). Some may rage as Elymas did, but others like Sergius Paulus will rejoice that we did not deceive them, but gave them God's wheat instead of man's chaff. "He that hath a dream let him tell his dream, but he that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully, what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?"

When Christian, in Bunyan's Allegory, was stepping in at the wicket gate Good-will gave him a pull. "What means that?" he inquired. Then he was told, "A little distance from this gate there is erected a strong castle, of which Beelzebub is the captain, from thence both he and they that are with him shoot arrows at those who come up to this gate if haply they may die before they enter in." The proconsul found it so as the words express, "seeking to turn the deputy from the faith." To turn men from the faith of Christ is the Devil's object still, and what delight must he find in having so many willing instruments in modernistic preachers, instead of having to depend wholly upon sorcerers and such like. But all opposers have God to reckon with. "Are we stronger than He?"

An Astonished Man—"Then the deputy when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." "The doctrine of the Lord" was what he heard, and when he witnessed its remarkable confirmation, he was astonished. His heart was softened. Unlike Pharaoh, who hardened his heart when, in the Egyptian court, Moses and Aaron withstood the magicians of that time. Astonished was he to hear he was a guilty sinner in the sight of a holy God; to hear of the certainty of coming judgment; to hear of the irrevocable doom of the impenitent; to hear of God's boundless compassion toward him in sparing not His only Son; to hear of Christ's vicarious death, his burial, his resurrection and coming glory; to hear of salvation free and eternal to be received by faith alone in Jesus; to hear the earnest pleadings of those men of God to whom eternal things were so intensely real. Astonished still further to see the flaming eyes of Paul as they pierced the soul of the enemy; to see that enemy who was "seeking to turn him from the faith" now blind and "seeking some to lead him by the hand"; to see his boldness turned to fear, his defiance to shame, his rage hushed in darkness and despair. Astonished to behold this and to know that it was God's doing, God's vindication of His servants, His truth, His gospel. Astonished! But have not many been astonished at the doctrine of the Lord who never received Him into their hearts?

A Believing Man—"The deputy believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." Grace was triumphant in his case. No longer was he spiritually dead—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" no longer lost—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"; no longer condemned—"he that believeth on Him is

not condemned"; no longer guilty—"all that believe are justified from all things"; no longer a child of wrath but a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus; no longer in the bondage of idolatry and sin, but gloriously set free. What a change! Sergius Paulus becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus—old things pass away and all things become new. To hinder this was Satan's object. He well knew what it would mean for such an influential man to become a Christian. Though we have no record of others being brought to Christ through his life and testimony, it is more than likely many were. Thus what was intended to hinder the gospel, proved rather the means of its extension. It is from this time that Saul of Tarsus became known as Paul. For all time the name of Sergius Paulus, the first recorded convert on that memorable first missionary tour, becomes linked with that of the Apostle Paul. What wonders grace has wrought! Does it not rejoice our hearts to think of the triumphs of the gospel not only in Cyprus but everywhere all down the ages since that time, despite opposition in its multitudinous forms, and frequently from sources least expected.

"It is a well known fact in the African jungle that the larger beasts of prey are usually most dangerous just before the dawn. They know by instinct that their power goes when the sun rises, and many lions which have watched patiently around the camp the whole night, will suddenly attack it in the early morning before the sunrise." If the Devil seems in our day, without much resistance, to be having things according to his wish; if his activities seem to be greater and his methods more subtle and successful, let us but take it as a forcible reminder, that for us, the night of conflict is far spent, and the day of final victory is at hand. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Appropriate and weighty is the apostolic exhortation: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; and in **nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.**"

OUR ENJOYMENT OF HIS LOVE

It is well to remember that through Christ all the affection of God's heart flows out toward us, His people, like an overflowing stream. And we have in our new and heaven-born nature, affections and cravings which only a sense of God's love can satisfy. Nothing but love will satisfy love, and nothing but the reciprocation of love will satisfy the heart of God and the hearts of His saints. My soul longs to interchange love constantly, but I know that when there is any interruption, it is owing to something in myself, for when His love is being poured out into my heart by the Holy Spirit, the current

never ceases to flow, till my soul, being satisfied and feeling unable to bear the weight of His love, ceases to draw. In the glory we shall be strengthened to bear the perfect bliss and joy of His unveiled presence! What will it be to me there?

SUSPICIONS!

THE LATE C. H. SPURGEON

It would be better to be deceived a hundred times than to live a life of suspicion. It is intolerable. Nor is suspicion merely a source of disquietude; it is a moral evil, and injures the character of the man who harbors it. When once this terrible evil has curdled all the milk of human kindness in a man's bosom, he becomes more fit for the detective police force than for ministry; like a spider, he begins to cast out his lines, and fashions a web of tremulous threads, all of which lead up to himself and warn him of the least touch of even the tiniest midge. There he sits in the centre, a mass of sensation, all nerves and raw wounds, excitable and excited, a self-immolated martyr drawing the blazing fagots about him, and apparently anxious to be burned. The most faithful friend is unsafe under such conditions. The most careful avoidance of offence will not secure immunity from distrust, but will probably be construed into cunning and cowardice. It is vain to reason with the victim of this folly, for with perverse ingenuity he turns every argument the wrong way, and makes your plea for confidence another reason for mistrust. It is sad that he cannot see the iniquity of his groundless censure of others—especially of those who have been his best friends and the firmest upholders of the cause of Christ.

No one ought to be made "an offender for a word"; but, when suspicion rules, even silence becomes a crime. Brethren, shun this vice by renouncing the love of self. Judge it to be a small matter what men think or say of you, and care only for their treatment of your Lord. If you are naturally sensitive, do not indulge the weakness, nor allow others to play upon it. Would it not be a great degradation if you were to keep an army of spies in your pay to collect information as to all people said of you? And yet it amounts to this if you allow certain busybodies to bring you all the gossip of the place. Drive the creatures away! Abhor those mischief-making, tattling hand-maidens of strife. Those who will fetch will carry, and no doubt the gossips go from your house and report every observation which falls from your lips, with plenty of garnishing of their own. Remember that, as the receiver is as bad as the thief, so the hearer of scandal is a sharer of the guilt of it. If there were no listening ears, there would be no tale-bearing tongues. While you are a buyer of ill wares the demand will create the supply, and the factories of falsehood will be working full time. No one wishes to

become a creator of lies, and yet he who hears slanders with pleasure, and believes them with readiness, will hatch many a brood into life.

Learn to disbelieve those who have no faith in their brethren. Suspect those who would lead you to suspect others. A resolute unbelief in all the scandal-mongers will do much to repress their mischievous energies. Especially distrust reproaches, and evil reports, because they spread fastest, as being grateful to most persons, who suppose their own reputation to be never so well grounded as when it is built upon the ruins of other men's. Resolve to turn towards the whole business your blind eye, and your deaf ear!

THE SHEPHERDS AND THE FLOCK

READ PRAYERFULLY EZEKIEL 33

The Lord's flock was His people; the Shepherds were the Overseers of the flock. The Lord's censure was voiced not against the flock, but against the shepherds, and on them He pronounced His "woe"—and gives His reasons.

First: The shepherds fed themselves, but fed not the flock (verses 2-3).

Second: They did not strengthen the diseased, or heal the sick; they bound not the broken, nor brought back again that which was driven away. They did not seek those that were lost; thus were they scattered, because there was no shepherd. Instead of tenderly guarding and guiding them, they "with force and cruelty had **ruled** them" (Verses 4-5).

Third: Therefore, because of the lack of loving and Godly care, He complains "My sheep have wandered," "My flock was scattered," and "none did search or seek after them"—and hence His "flock became a prey"—"because there was **no** shepherd, neither did any shepherd search for My flock." Is it any wonder that He says, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hand" (Verses 6-10).

You will note He never calls them "**My** shepherds"—He had not appointed them; **that** they had done for themselves, or perchance they appointed one another. He says they were "no shepherds," inasmuch as a true shepherd is not known by his **badge** of office, but by the **work** he does, and their "work" had been to feed or gratify themselves; to rule meanwhile the flock with force and cruelty, thus to scatter them and to cause them to wander, and He saw their manifested indifference to it all, evidenced by the fact that they did not seek them, nor heal them, or try to bring them back. They may have counted the flock as "unruly" and felt relieved when they wandered away. But He whose sheep the flock was, looked on, and saw the ever-diminishing company, and at last interfered to the discomfiture

of the shepherds, and the blessing of His own flock. Notice what He says:

"I will both search my sheep and seek them out."—Vs. 11.

"I will bring them out . . . and gather them . . . and feed them."—V. 13.

"I will feed them in good pasture . . . in a good fold."—V. 14.

"I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down."—V. 15.

"I will seek that which was lost and bring again that which was driven away."

"I will bind that which was broken, and strengthen that which was sick."—V. 16.

"I will save my flock, and they shall be no more a prey."—V. 22.

"I will set up one Shepherd over them and He shall feed them."—V. 23.

"He shall be their Shepherd, and I will be the Lord their God."—V. 24.

"I will make with them a covenant of peace . . . they shall dwell safely."—V. 25.

"I will make them, and the places about My hill a blessing, and I will cause the showers to come down in his season: there shall be showers of blessing."—V. 26.

"Thus shall they know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel are **My people** saith the Lord God. And ye **My flock**, the flock of **My** pasture are men, and **I am your God** saith the Lord God."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO YOU

There's a sweet old story translated for man,
 But writ in the long, long ago—
 The Gospel according to Mark, Luke and John—
 Of Christ and His mission below.

Men read and admire the gospel of Christ,
 With its love so unfailling and true;
 But what do they say, and what do they think;
 Of the gospel "according to you"?

'Tis a wonderful story, that gospel of love,
 As it shines in the Christ-life divine;
 And, oh, that its truth might be told once again,
 In the story of your life and mine!

You are writing each day a letter to men.
 Take care that the writing is true.
 'Tis the only gospel that some men will read—
 That "gospel according to you."

HOW A DEN OF THIEVES BECAME A HOUSE OF PRAYER

A few years ago X. was arrested by the Secret Police on account of his zeal in spreading the gospel in Russia. He was cast into prison, but even there he would not be quiet. He proclaimed the gospel to his fellow-prisoners. The Lord gave power with the Word, many were converted, confessed their sins, and received peace with God. When this was known, the Police informed him that he must be silent. Courageously said he: "So long as I can open my mouth, I will never be silent, but will preach Christ. I would like to say that you who are now my judges must appear before the highest Judge, God, and must appear before His judgment seat, whether you will or not."

Enraged, they shouted and said with terrible oaths: "We'll soon teach you to be quiet." They brought him to a cell where several Communists were locked up because of their opposition to party discipline. Not even here was our brother quiet. With joy he testified about the holiness and grace of God, read portions of the Word of God in connection therewith, and prayed on his knees loudly for the conversion of the Bolsheviks. This was not without effect. One after another came at night-time and talked with him. Most of these were desperate sinners who found forgiveness and peace through the blood of Christ. The number who bowed the knee with our brother increased continually. After a time X. was called before the authorities. "Well, have they taught you yet to swear?" they asked ironically. "No, God be praised, but I have taught them to pray." "What?" shouted they, "you lie." "By no means; I never tell lies; I speak the truth; they bow the knee and confess that Jesus is their Saviour and you also ought to do the same."

The imprisoned Bolsheviks were called and right enough they confessed with joy that they were new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The infuriated police decided to cast our brother into a den of thieves. "We assure you, you'll lose the desire to pray and preach there," they shouted after him.

Some time before, a band of robbers in the Caucasus had robbed villages and murdered innocent people. These were captured; they would not confess and their execution was postponed for some time. They were thrown into a cellar in order that they might confess, and had been there for quite a time. This den the police used for another purpose; prisoners whom they would not shoot publicly, but wanted out of the way, were cast into the cellar. Like wild beasts these robbers pounced on them, drew the clothes off them and abused the poor victims, so that most of them died. Of course it could never be decided which of the band had done it. It was to this cell our brother, along with an old Greek Catholic priest and a major in the late czar's army, was cast. Before the robbers could say a word or do anything, X. stepped forward to the chief, stretched out his hand and said in a friendly manner, "God's peace: We are also death doomed." His happy manner had some effect on these otherwise hard and brutal men. "Comrades, no one has ever greeted us in such a manner before; we will not do him any harm," said the chief. When some of the robbers took hold of the priest and major, X. said: "You must not injure these either; these are my friends. We are all together." The chief said "You can lie beside me and no one will touch you." Before our brother lay down on that cold and dirty cement floor, he bowed his knees and prayed loudly. The robbers looked up, greatly surprised. They had never seen or heard the like; a man who was not a priest pray, and pray although it was not divine-service, and he had no prayer book either, and quite naturally committed those at home, and even the prisoners in that cell, yes, even his enemies, to the grace of God. A few mocked and cursed, but a look from the leader silenced them.

The night was awful. Although our brother had been in a few prisons in Russia which by no means are known for cleanliness—such had he never experienced before. All kinds of insects and vermin kept the inmates of the cellar in continual motion; but even here "the night and the morning was the first day." When our brother on his knees had prayed his morning prayer, he made himself more acquainted with his fellow-prisoners and it even proved that cords that were broken began again to vibrate. The second day passed and the robbers were more friendly, only the poor priest had a bad time. They mocked him and said some dreadful things. The

poor man did not know what to do. When X. prayed, he thought he should pray also, but he felt he could not. "Why don't you also pray, you long-haired scoundrel," shouted one of the robbers. "Come, we will teach him to pray, he's a priest, therefore he must pray; perhaps he has forgotten his prayers." They drew up the terrified priest to his feet. One of them hung a paper with a caricature of a saint in a corner of the cellar. Now must the poor priest pray. All the church prayers he knew he groaned out, while the robbers kept punching him and made him cross himself and bow before the picture of the saint. When he prayed a time, he stopped, but that was not to his advantage. "Go, on, there has been no right praying yet; you must pray like X. When he prays, we have always a sort of good feeling in our hearts. Pray like him." In his desperation the poor man called on the virgin and saints to help him; "Listen, you wicked crew, do you really believe there is anything in your praying?" When he would not answer, he got a few blows on the head: "Answer, do you believe in your prayers?" At last in agony of soul came the confession: "No, I do not believe in them." There was no end of noise among the band: "Do you hear, comrades, he does not believe in his prayers and so he has taught the people, and he has taken a good deal of money for his prating." "Bloodsucker, you old dog, you are the cause that I'm a robber and murderer. If you priests had taught us to pray like X. here, so had we been honest men; now we'll be shot and you are the cause of it. Wait, we'll . . . but before we kill you, we'll teach you to pray."

Although our Brother was sorry for all that was happening, yet he had a feeling that there was an equitable judgment that he could not hinder. He groaned before the Lord that He might reveal Himself; then he said to the priest: "Confess your sin and call upon the Lord Jesus, He will save you." In his death agony the poor priest from his heart called on God. He confessed openly his sins, that he as a blind leader of the blind led the people astray, that he had been a shepherd that was more concerned about the wool of the sheep than their welfare. "That's a little better," said one of the robbers: "you pray a little like X. now—continue." God heard the prayer of this troubled soul. His prayer became quieter, happier, and at last went up in thanksgiving for received forgiveness and grace. When he finished with a threefold Amen, our Brother also prayed and thanked God for revealing Himself. The robbers were now quiet: the change in the priest made an impression on them. Verily the priest was now a new creature in Christ Jesus. Every time our Brother bowed his knees, he, too, bowed his knees and prayed freely and heartily. The major, too, believed and joined them. The following day our Brother said to all, while they sat eating a sort of fish soup: "Do you know, friends, I have heard enough of your awful history and curses, I would like to tell you a little from the word of God. They have taken from me my Bible, but God be praised, I can tell you a good deal from memory." "Do so, we will listen," said the robbers. Our Brother did not know how long he would be there; so he thought it best to commence at the beginning. The assembly listened attentively while he told them the story of the Creation, and spoke at length on the Fall; he told them about the giving of the Law on Sinai and finally about the prophets and spoke a good deal about Isaiah 53. Here he spoke about the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus, the Holy Lamb of God. This made a deep impression on these rough, though nevertheless brave men. The next day the leader of the band said: "Tell it again, how they slew and crucified Jesus." When our Brother came to the story of the two thieves, one on the right and one on the left of the Saviour, how one was saved because he openly confessed, the leader could contain himself no longer. Suddenly he sprang to his feet and shouted: "Comrades, I'm going to confess what I, too, have done." This was followed by a dreadful confession of crime and murder . . . it was terrible. "I have done all that, can God forgive me?" "God be praised, He can and will, just as the Lord Jesus forgave your colleague on the cross." "Pray for me, it may be so," and it was so. God cleansed his blood-stained conscience and gave peace. Comrades, said the chief: "we must die at all events; therefore let us at the end be honest. I will confess to the Police all we have done." "Do so, if this is the will of God," said the others. The leader made an open confession which surprised the Police, but they were more surprised when he told them that our Brother through his preaching and praying was the cause of all this. The impression was so great that there was a good deal of emotion manifested among the Communists. Eight days after, X. was liberated.

Brother X. was told he was free. He was glad to come out of the cellar to see daylight and soon see his loved ones at home, but was sorry when he saw the faces of the friends he left behind. "You have been a Father to us," the chief said. "You have taught us to pray, we can die rejoicing." "Yes," answered X., "we will meet before the Throne of Glory," and gave all, the priest, the major, and each robber, the kiss of love before departing.

"At any rate, it was the best time in my life down in that cellar," he assured us when telling us this event. Once must the Son of God say that the Jews had made the temple of God a den of thieves, which should have been a house of prayer. Here had the grace of God used the testimony of a disciple of the Lord Jesus to change a den of thieves into a house of prayer in which not only a priest learned how to pray, but even a whole band of thieves found the way to Paradise.—Translated by Jas. Lees.

"FOLLOW ME"

(Matt. 4:18-20)

I would; but must Thou really go
 That dreary up-hill way?
 I shall be wearied out, I know,
 By the end of the day.

Nay follow Me, and thou shalt run
 Unwearied until set of sun.

I have a mind to go. But still
 What then of all my fisher's skill?
 Gotten none knows how stressfully
 In violet dawns and twilights dim.

Must all my gain be loss to me
 For what may prove a passing whim,
 If I shall follow Thee?

Thou shalt catch men! This needs not less
 But more of skill than men possess.
 Thou shalt not minish thy capacity,
 But widen it—if thou wilt follow Me.

But what will happen if I do?

Tax-payers throng me as I sit,
 And who will carry on? Yes, who
 Will grapple with this waiting queue?

It lengthens. There is no end to it.
 Besides, all onlookers will jeer to see
 A publican rise up and follow Thee.

O follow Me, man of the book and pen.
 Thou shalt not heed nor hear the jeering then.
 With pen and parchment in the years to be
 Thou shalt excel—if thou but follow Me!
 For I am He Who fashioned all the worlds alone;
 Who made of Jonas' son a stone;
 Yea, suns and stars move to My plan;
 I make the thief an honest man;
 I bring clean things out of unclean;
 I form a woman from a Magdalene;
 Distillings from a thousand hills are Mine;
 I turn the limpid water into wine;
 And it is I—yes, I—Who ask of thee
 That thou wilt leave thy "all" and follow Me.—F. I.

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

AUGUST, 1929

No. 8

"THE LAST DAYS"

THOS. D. W. MUIR

It has been frequently remarked that the truth contained in the second epistles of the New Testament, applies more directly to the last days of the dispensation, and the fact seems in itself so self-evident to any careful student of the Word, that any attempt here to more than make reference to it would seem superfluous. We shall therefore at this time seek simply to direct the hearts and minds of God's children into some of the things God has written about those "last days," that we may be all the more ready to meet the conditions around us in a godly manner.

The Apostle Paul, writing to his son in the faith, Timothy, tells him that "in the last days perilous (difficult or trying) times shall come" (2 Tim. 3:1). Then, he proceeds to tell some of the characteristics of the days concerning which he gives warning. The "peril," or rather difficulty of the times toward which he looks forward was not of life or limb, but of that which is more subtle,—more deadly in its character and effects, to the spiritual life of God's people. In the description which follows, there is a near approach to the condition of heathendom,—as given in Romans 1:29-31. Here we have many of the main features of Rom. 1, covered with the additional gloss of professed religiousness. This is what is popularly called Christendom—**as God sees it**—the Satanic corruption of what God intended as a testimony for Himself.

There was "peril" or difficulty in the early days of the dispensation, Paul wrote this letter from which we have been quoting, while he was the Lord's prisoner at Rome, and evidently not long before the day of his execution because of the truth of God to which he had borne valiant witness. But there is something worse,—and more to be dreaded, than the prison, the stake or the sword. There is the deadlier peril of the times, when Christianity, instead of being linked up with a living Christ at God's right hand, shall be nationalized and secularized, and so become simply another form of religious worldliness! God's servant therefore warns of a time when men would embrace Christianity, while they hated Christ,—when they would wear, as a cloak, the form of godliness, but be destitute of the power thereof. And, who can read these lines of 2 Tim. 3,—and comparing them with what is all around them, not see enacted

before their eyes the fulfilment in every detail of the Apostle's prophecy?

In the reference to Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses in the court of Pharaoh, we find illustrated for us the solemn fact that the Word of God can be resisted by **imitation** as well as by open **opposition**. "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth" (2 Tim. 3:8). It will be recalled that these men, who were magicians, resisted the command of God by Moses and Aaron, through imitating the signs they did. For a time they were successful, but eventually God confounded and judged them. Even so will it be with Satan's servants and dupes in Christendom. That things will not improve as the end draws near is evident, for we read: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." So that the dream of the optimistic preachers who tell the people how, by the spread of Christianity, civilization, and culture, the world is becoming so much better, that presently we shall have a millenium of peace and good will, has no foundation in this—or any other—part of God's Word!

Nevertheless, imitation and sham are not the only signs of the "last days." There is much sham, it is true. Sham revivals, sham conversions, produced by preachers of "another gospel," and the fruit of another power than that of the Spirit of Christ. If his eye is on the Word of God, the true Christian may be aware of all this. But, in 2 Peter 3, we have another sign of the last days—"Scoffers!" "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming"?"

You will notice the special form of the infidel questioning is against His coming. Two things are evident in their question,—they have heard He is coming again, but His apparent delay has emboldened them to become scoffers and mockers. These things are solemnly suggestive of the present time, and hence we can see the grace and wisdom of God, who for "our learning," has placed this prediction before us in His Word.

At no time since the days of the Apostles, has the gospel been preached with such simplicity and clearness as during the past hundred years. Missionary and other evangelistic activity has been a prominent feature of the time, and from pulpit, platform and press, God has sounded out His own clear gospel. The results have in thousands of cases been found most fruitful. The Bible has been read more diligently and intelligently by the rank and file of God's people, from among whom hundreds have gone forth to herald the Word of life, and to become channels of blessing to perishing souls.

Now, in Apostolic days, Satan's offset to such a work, would have

been the prison sword and stake. But he has learned wisdom, and hence his twentieth-century attitude in so-called Christian lands, is that of a **patron** of Christianity, who, by imitation, produces that which calls itself Christian,—tho' it has but little room in it for the truth of God, or the Christ of God. And, with the passage of time, he becomes increasingly clever at his work, so that the children of God need the anointed eye in order to be able to detect the spurious from the real.

Along with the preaching of a clear and scriptural gospel, however, has been revived, and brought to the front, much precious truth on other subjects. They have been all along in the Bible, but for many centuries Satan has succeeded in hiding, and covering up many of these things from God's people. One truth that has been specially emphasized, is that of the Lord's second coming for His people. Doubtless there never has been a time since He sent back the message, repeated so often, "I come quickly," when some of God's saints did not believe in and look for His coming, yet it was not publicly announced and taught as God has had His servants doing it during the past hundred years. As might be expected, imitations there have been. The extravagances and vagaries of the "Millerites," perpetuated in the various sects of the Adventists, has tended to turn into ridicule what God purposed should have borne solemn testimony to the world. Nevertheless, the truth of the "blessed hope" has spread, and as the result, many of God's dear people are reading their Bibles with more intelligence and profit, while, in their private lives, in proportion to the living grip this precious truth has on them, they are more godly and less worldly. As saith the Word: "Every one that hath this hope set on Him, purifieth himself even as He is pure" (1 Jno. 3:3, R. V.)

There is an apparent delay, however, and Satan is not slow to take advantage of it. To his dupes he suggests that there is nothing to it; "all things continue as they were since the beginning of the creation." And so with infidel questionings, men harden themselves against God and His warning Word! "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, but He is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish." To many this "long-suffering," which men interpret as the weakness of delay, is salvation. To others, who close their hearts to its gracious message, it but hardens them in their impenitency, and emboldens them even to the point of scoffingly declaring that He is **never** coming back! The true child of God knows that "delay with Him does not mean denial," and so when they look about, and see the sure evidences of that apostasy predicted by His Word, they with their hand upon the sure Word of God, and their eye upon that filled throne in the heavens, press on "toward the mark, for the prize of

the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Paul commended Timothy to the Word,—God-breathed and profitable, as being all he needed in such a day (2 Tim. 3:14-17). This treasure is ours also. May we cling more tenaciously to it, and seek, amid the perils of these last days, to be guided by its unerring counsels!

HOMELY OCCUPATIONS IN ISRAEL

AND WHAT THEY TEACH

W. J. McCLURE

"These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges; there they dwelt with the king for his work." 1 Chron. 5:23.

It has often been remarked, that one is tempted to pass over this section of the book, which is so very largely occupied with names, yet here we come across some passages which seem to us like garden spots in a desert. While that is how it **seems** to us, we know, on the other hand, that the records of the genealogies have their teaching, and in a coming day will serve their God-intended end, therefore in our reading of the book, we should not skip them. Among the passages we have in mind, is this one, and we shall find that it will afford an opportunity for bringing out some things, which are becoming more and more needed as the days go by. That God has lessons for us in a portion like this, we cannot doubt, in view of those words in Rom. 15:4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning." May the Lord give us to see His mind in it.

We have three trades brought before us in this verse, "Potters," "Gardeners" and "Hedgemakers." Humble trades to be sure, yet it is said that those who wrought at them, "**dwelt with the king for his work.**" This would surely ennoble these common occupations, and would put them on a level with that of being Captain of the Host, or Recorder of the Kingdom.

Potters—This does not imply the potting of plants, so as to bring them inside to preserve them in cold weather, or to decorate the home. It is the same word that we have in Jeremiah 18, and signifies one who makes earthen vessels, as the potter was doing in that chapter. God is the great Potter, and in Jeremiah, He was fashioning Israel, as a vessel for His glory, but His work became marred, and He is now fashioning another vessel,—the Church, which is His masterpiece,—that in and through it He might display the manifold glories of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In connection with His work on that Church, He needs "vessels" for service, and so we have Him taking up Saul of Tarsus, of whom He says to Ananias, "He is a **chosen vessel** unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15). But the honor of being a vessel is not peculiar to Paul,

though he was a very special one, for God in His sovereign grace has, out of the same "lump of clay" of fallen humanity, been pleased to fashion each believer into a "**vessel of mercy, prepared unto glory,**" (Rom. 9:21-23), to show His mercy in us now, and His glory by and by.

Paul as a "potter." In Jer. 18, we saw God as the great Potter, also in Rom. 9, He is brought before us in that character again. But in his letters to his "son in the faith," Timothy, we see Paul working at the trade of the potter, as he seeks to fashion Timothy into a vessel, to carry on the testimony so dear to his own heart, but which he must soon relinquish. He had borne the savor of the name of Christ near and far, to Jews and Gentiles, to Greeks and Barbarians, to the Court of Rome and the Jail at Philippi. And though he must leave the work, it is his endeavor to so fit Timothy that the testimony of Christ will be carried on inviolate.

Speaking of his own call to the ministry of making Christ known he says, "For the which cause I also suffer these things, yet I am not ashamed; for I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which He hath committed unto me against that day." (2 Tim. 1:12, r. v. mar.) He is not here expressing his confidence as to his own security, but the Lord's ability to preserve the **testimony**, even though he must leave the scene amid the dark days coming upon the Church.

Already the reproach connected with that testimony was more than many believers could bear, so to Timothy he says, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God," (ver. 8). Again, "That good thing, (good deposit) which was committed unto thee, **keep by the Holy Ghost** which dwelleth in us." (ver. 14). Only by the power of God can the believer be preserved from evil doctrine, and those who spread it, and also the sins and lusts to which the flesh is prone. Then and only then can the believer be "a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." (2 Tim. 2:21).

It must have cheered the dear apostle, especially in view of the defection of many, to see how cheerfully and whole-heartedly young Timothy accepted a path so full of reproach and suffering. Paul's fashioning of the vessel was, under God, a success. In 2 Tim. 3:10, 11, he bears witness to that. "But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, sufferings, what things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me." (R. V.) This should have a voice for those who seek to minister the gospel or teach believers, more especially those who are

older in the work. Will the younger men become more fitted as vessels which the Lord can use by their contact with us? Will they thus become in a truer sense men of piety, of prayer, and of power? Men who can trust God for their every need,—men who hide their needs from all but God?

We look back with thankfulness to some dear men, now with the Lord, who were **potters** in very truth, young men learned to imitate their godly ways. They were indifferent to ease, to the love of money, and to what people thought of them. From them others learned to strike out into new places, and not become meeting preachers, which is so common in our day. These dear men left behind them, as the result of their labor and example, simple, scriptural assemblies, free from the ways and methods of the sects, in carrying on the work of God, and their very simplicity had a charm that was irresistible to those dear souls in the sects, who were tired of the human machinery, that serves no end so well, as that of covering up the nakedness of the land, and keeping the absence of the Holy Spirit from being felt!

The great need of the hour is, men with Paul's heart for the saints, and his solicitude that those who ministered to them might be "vessels unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." It is nothing short of a misfortune that many are giving their time to the ministry of the Word, who never sat at the feet of some man of God, to learn God's ways, as Timothy sat at the feet of Paul. For as a result of this grave lack, instead of going out into virgin soil and plodding along for a few years in the gospel, thus proving God and themselves, they begin by preaching to Christians, and living where faith in God need not be tested. It is true they may gain a seeming facility in dealing with such as dispensational and prophetic subjects, but spiritual men are sensible of a lack of grip in their preaching, which condition will likely characterize it all their days.

Is it any wonder, that in many places there is a great desire for "methods" in gospel work, which never would have been thought of in the early days of the movement; solos, duets, quartets, musical instruments, and other practices brought from Babylon? May God help us to pass on the testimony, in the simplicity in which we received it. Oh for "potters" like Paul, and young men like Timothy, who will be plastic material in the hands of the Holy Spirit, to be molded into vessels "unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." If such men are not raised up, to take the places of those who are being called home, we dread to think of conditions a few years hence. Some meetings will lose all that has been distinctive of assemblies, and become little better than missions.

Next paper, "Gardeners" and "Hedgemakers."

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

WILLIAM ROBERTSON

There are various "Mysteries" mentioned in the New Testament, and of these, seven have a special bearing upon the present age. They are as follows:

1. "The mystery of Godliness" (1 Tim. 3:16);
2. The mystery of Israel's blindness (Roms. 11:25);
3. The mystery of the Church, "the One Body" (Ephs. 3:4);
4. The mystery of the Church, "The Bride" (Eph. 5:28);
5. The mystery of Christ indwelling the believer (Cols. 1:26);
6. The mystery of iniquity (2 Thess. 2:7);
7. The mystery of the translation of the Church (1 Cor. 15:51).

These mysteries, or rather secrets, were "hid in God in ages past," but now in this age are fully "revealed" by the Spirit, in the Scriptures of the New Testament. "The mystery of Godliness" is, we believe, the most comprehensive of all the other mysteries we have referred to, as it includes within itself, as we shall see, "the mystery of the gospel" ((Ephs. 6:19) in all its fullness.

Turning to 1 Tim. 3:16, we read these remarkable words: "And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." It will be noticed, there are six precise statements made by the apostle in his description of this "great" mystery, and we are persuaded that these statements are made, not at random, but in a consecutive way, as setting forth certain events which follow each other exactly in the order they are given to us. To make clear what is upon our mind, we would remark, that if the last statement, viz., "received up into glory," refers, as some writers tell us it does, to the ascension of Christ, then it follows, Christ must have been "**preached** unto the Gentiles," **prior** to His being taken up into Heaven, if their thesis is correct.

The question might be raised here—Was Christ **publicly proclaimed** (as the word "preached" in the text implies) either as a King or as a Saviour to the Gentiles at any time during His earthly life? If so, where is the record of it to be found? Did not our Lord expressly say to His disciples, as He sent them forth to preach "the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven." Go **not** into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not"? (Matt. 10:5-6).

It is true, that after the Lord's resurrection, and before He went up to the Father's right hand, He gave that grand commission to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to **every**

creature," (Mark 16:15), but not until He was "glorified," and the Spirit of God came down on the Day of Pentecost, yea and some time after that, was the commission in any measure carried out, and the "gospel of the grace of God" heralded forth to those outside the pale of Israel. Thus the argument, that "the mystery of Godliness" refers to Christ **exclusively**, falls, in our judgment, to the ground, as it does not give a fair treatment of the text.

And now, let us examine in detail, this "mystery" of which "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of **the truth,**" (1 Tim. 3:15) is called to be a witness.

First, we are told, "God was manifest in the flesh." As we ponder this statement, we feel as if we were treading on "holy ground," and like one of old, it becomes us to draw near with unshod feet, in the attitude of the deepest reverence, to gaze upon this wonderful, this unique, this august Person, who was declared to be, and in reality was, "God" and "Man" in wondrous combination. Not God **in** Man, but God **and** Man in a mysterious union, which it is beyond us to explain. We cannot understand it, but, thank God, we fully **believe** it. How jealously does God guard these two great foundation truths, and how often does He link them together in His own unerring Word, as if to teach us the solemn, yet blessed truth, that the Deity and Humanity of His well beloved Son must not be **tampered** with, as the men of Bethshemesh did with the ark of old, and were smitten of Jehovah for their vain curiosity.

Of the many texts which bring Christ before us as "God manifest in the flesh," we select but a few. In Isaiah 9:6 we read, "For unto us a **child** is born, unto us a **Son** is given. And the government shall be upon His shoulder." In this text we learn, that Christ must be "born of a woman" to be a **human** "child," but He was the "**Son**" from a past eternity, who was "given" by the Father in His wondrous love, (see John 3:16). Again in this same book we read, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a **son**, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Ch. 7:14). Here our Lord is spoken of, as "a son" who came "forth" (see Matt. 1:21) from the womb of the virgin, a real human "babe" (Luke 2:11), yet was He—"Immanuel"—"God with us," whose "goings **forth** have been from of old, from the days of eternity" (Micah 5:2—Newberry). Another prophet writes thus, "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against **the Man** that is **My Fellow**, saith the Lord of hosts: Smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered. And I will turn mine hand upon (i. e., turn back mine hand from. —Newberry) the little ones." (Zech. 13:7). Here God speaks of His Son, first as "My Shepherd," then as "The Man," and thirdly as "My Fellow." In the first title we have His **Substitutionary** work for "the sheep" suggested; in the second, His perfect **Humanity**, and

in the third His **Equality** with "God the Father," (see Phil. 2:15).

Coming to the Gospels we see the Deity and Humanity of Christ, beautifully blended, and shining out in all their luster, in His words and deeds of mercy. See Him "**sleeping**" in yonder boat on the sea of Galilee while "the storm" is raging. Surely His perfect humanity comes into evidence here. He is awakened, not by the storm, but by the rude hands of His disciples, only to hear from their lips these words of unbelief, "Master, carest Thou not, that we perish?" He rises with that quiet dignity that ever was His, and speaks the words, "Peace be still," and to the wonderment of His disciples, "the wind ceased, and there was a great calm" (Mark 4:37:41): Who can this be, when "even the wind and the sea obey Him"? 'Tis the **Mighty God of Creation**, who of old, by "the word of His power" "established the clouds above," and "shut up the sea with doors" (Job 38:8).

Look at Him yet again, as He **weeps** at the grave of Lazarus, in human sympathy with the bereaved sisters of Bethany. Touching proof is this of that Humanity He had assumed! At His bidding the stone is removed from the mouth of the tomb, and "with a loud voice He cried, Lazarus, come forth, and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes" (John 11:43). Here as the **God of Resurrection**, He shows His power over death and the grave, and has but to speak the word, and the tomb must yield up its prey. We need not multiply the scriptures, for they are many, which so fully and unmistakably tell out this ever glorious truth, that He who was born in Bethlehem's stable, who slept in the fishermen's boat and on the slopes of Olivet, and whose "path, uncheered by earthly smiles, led only to the Cross," yea He who rose again in triumph over death, hell, and the grave, was, by the clearest proof that could be given, "God manifest in the flesh."

And now another question arises in the mind. What could the apostle have had in view when he gave expression to those words, "God was manifest in the flesh"? Scripture alone can supply the answer. In Hebrews 2:9 we read, "We see **Jesus**, who was made (i. e., became) a little lower than the angels for (with a view to—Newberry) the suffering of death,—that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Peter, in his epistle, tells us that, "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being **put to death** in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (Ch. 3:18. The first of these scriptures proves conclusively, that at least one object before the heart of our Divine Lord, when He assumed a human body, was, to endure "the suffering of death"—"even the death of the Cross." The second scripture teaches us that, as "the Just" One, Christ stood in the place of "the unjust ones," and suffered for their

sins, and then follows those significant words, "being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

What words are these for us to ponder! Here again we are confronted with an inexplicable mystery, that just as God chose miraculously to assume a human body, so He should in that **body**, miraculously **die** upon a Roman gibbet. It would indeed be incongruous for us to say that one who was merely a man, could be "put to death **in the flesh.**" These words could only be applicable to One with a **dual** nature, to One who must be **God** as well as **Man**, and although we cannot explain how such an One could die, yet blessed be His Name, we know He **did** die, as a vicarious sacrifice for **our** sins, and as we stand in spirit at the place called Calvary, we can truly say with the poet:

"O solemn hour! O hour alone, in solitary might,
When God the Father's only **Son**, as **Man**, for sinners
To atone! expires—amazing sight! The Lord of glory
Crucified! the Lord of life has bled and died.
O mystery of mysteries! O death upon the tree!
Center of two eternities! which look with rapt, adoring eyes,
Onward and back to Thee! O Cross of Christ,
Where all His pain and death, is our eternal gain."

Concluded (D.V.) next month.

FAULT FINDERS

There are some people found in the Assemblies of God whose chief faculty seems to be to find fault with others, and usually they find an element in the meetings, that is ready to listen to them. They are not the most godly,—tho' sometimes they pose as standard-bearers for the truth:—Americans speak of such as "sore-heads,"—in social and political circles—because of their penchant for agitating and fomenting trouble, if they cannot get their own way.

You rarely find or hear these people at the prayer-meeting, or quietly and heartily showing fellowship in the ministry meeting; and as for the gospel meeting on the street or in the hall, they are conspicuous by their absence,—unless they expect to have a prominent place in the preaching! Nevertheless, they are,—in their own estimation,—quite competent, when they get sympathetic ears to give heed to them,—to criticise those who are seeking to do the work, and amid much confessed weakness and failure maintain a testimony for God. One would think to hear their censure of others who **do** what work is being done, that they feel like Absalom, when intriguing against his father David,—that he himself might get the throne. He was wont to say: "Oh that I were made judge in the land,"—and with a kiss and fair words, we are told **stole** the hearts of the men of

Israel." True men of God, **pray** for the saints, and **serve** them, and thus **win** their hearts for God. The intent of the fault-finder, however, is to unsettle the saints, and produce a condition in their souls like unto his own. In times of Assembly prosperity the real damage such do, is negligible, but let there be something causing weakness, and a lack of unity among the saints,—then they work with fresh vigor,—even to the dividing of the people of God. (Prov. 6:19).—Sel.

"HE THAT IS SPIRITUAL"

J. M. DAVIES—India

IV. Spirituality in relation to the overtaken one.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted."—Gal. 6:1.

Alas, how many "overtaken" ones there are in the Church of God, whether in Paul's day or ours; whether in dark India or in more favored lands,—like the poor, they are always with us. The question of restoring such to the fellowship of God and His people is of great importance, yet often they are allowed to drift away from the assemblies with little prayer, and less effort made to restore them.

In the message of the later prophets we are given very clearly to understand how the Lord Himself feels toward such. He will chastise, but judgment is his strange work. Listen to Hosea's plea, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? (11:8), while Isaiah cries to Israel to "look to Abraham their father and Sarah their mother." Seeing God called them when they were alone and helpless, and blessed them so that they became a mighty nation, surely he would be able to restore them. He exhorts them to "look to the hole of the pit from whence they had been digged, and to the rock from whence they had been hewn," and thus to encourage themselves in God.

The "spiritual" are exhorted to restore the fallen. As James and John mended their nets, so souls that have become leaky, need spiritual repairing. As the Lord "perfects praise" (same word) out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, so the overtaken one needs to be restored to the Lord, and his fellow-believers. Only then will there be a harmonious song in the life. A soul out of touch with God is like a musical instrument out of tune, producing discordant notes that jar on everyone's ears, instead of a melodious song that charms. Who of us does not need the skillful hand of the perfecter of praise to tune our "instrument of ten strings"? Instead of rejoicing, the heart grieves, and instead of the stringed instrument vibrating with the music of the "new song" (Ps. 33:3, 21; 144:9), there is moaning because of failure, and sorrow for sin. Oh, for skillful tuners—spiritual

men—in the assemblies, who will know where the discordant notes come from, and who will be possessed of spiritual skill to restore the overtaken one, so that “the chords that are broken may vibrate once more.”

An interesting and illuminating story is told of Paganini, the celebrated Italian violinist. One evening, so the story goes, he was walking through a London street, when he saw sitting in the pouring rain, a beggar, seeking to play his violin so as to attract the attention of passers-by, and arouse their sympathy sufficiently to get a few pennies. But his violin was wet and he was no musician, consequently his instrument produced the most weird and hideous noises, aggravating all who heard him. Paganini, seeing the plight the poor beggar was in, asked him for his violin. With his skillful hands he tightened the strings, and in his own inimitable way he began to play, producing the sweetest music out of the wet old violin, to the astonishment and amazement of all. People forgot the rain, and the traffic policeman forgot his duty, while all listened with rapt attention to the wonderful music proceeding from the beggar's violin. Presently, the musician's silk hat was put down, and the people dropped their coins into it. The beggar was poor no more,—all because he had committed his instrument into the hands of one who could perfect praise,—even out of the old violin. Our souls would not be impoverished and our lives would not be so full of discordant notes, if the “perfecter of praise” had full possession of our hearts!

The life of Abraham furnishes us with an apt illustration of the responsibility of the spiritually minded, in this connection. In the mercy of God, Lot had left Ur of Chaldees with his uncle, thus escaping “the corruption that was in the world through lust.” But the famine proved too hard a test for Abraham, and to Egypt he went,—Lot accompanying him. Having been made a blessing to Lot in the beginning, Abraham is now a stumbling-block to him. What Lot saw in Egypt left an indelible impression upon him. He became “envious at the prosperity of the wicked,” and when, on his return, he separated from Abraham, he chose the well watered plains of Sodom, which was “like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.” Poor Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, and soon forsakes his tent for Sodom's dwellings, only to be impoverished and imprisoned by Chedorlaomer. (Gen. 14:12). The news of this reached Abraham. It came as a challenge to him to deliver his nephew,—his once fellow-pilgrim. Lot, 'tis true, was reaping the sad consequences of his own foolish choice, and Abraham might have left him in his predicament, but being “spiritual,” he could not rest without seeking to deliver his brother. The valley of Siddim, where the battle was fought, was full of slimepits, full of danger. Hence, when in the New Testament,

the "spiritual" are exhorted to restore the fallen, he is warned to consider himself, lest he also be tempted,—and fall into the slime-pits. Only warriors trained in the art of self-examination, and armed with "the spirit of meekness" can be victorious in such a conflict.

But, before the scene closes, we find Abraham in the "Valley of Shaveh," which is the "King's dale," where he received the blessing of Melchizedec, the Priest of the Most High God, and where he received a new revelation of God as "El-Elyon, — the Possessor of heaven and earth." This was followed again by a vision of the Lord as his "shield," and "exceeding great reward." Thus blessing after blessing, and reward upon reward were his, for his faithfulness. Even though he failed to deliver Lot from Sodom, he did what he could for him by delivering him from Chedorlaomer. Abraham's spirituality was again revealed, when the news of Sodom's destruction was imparted to him. He fell on his face before the Lord to plead for Sodom, though not for Sodom's sake, but for the righteous in Sodom. God remembered Abraham, and delivered Lot from the overthrow. Abraham dogged the footsteps of Lot with unceasing, prevailing prayer. He might fail to fully restore him, but he would continue to plead for him! Indifference toward the wayward and overtaken is not a mark of spirituality but the reverse. Spirituality will reveal itself in a godly shepherd-care for the flock of God. May writer and reader alike bear the marks of true spirituality. Occupation with Christ in glory,—disassociation from sectarianism, and party strife,—recognition of the Lordship of Christ in the Church, and a godly care for the "overtaken,"—seeking to "restore" him to the Lord.

"REAPING"

J. A. CLARKE

(Notes of an address in Ferndale Gospel Hall, taken by Dr. H. A. Cameron.)

Read Matthew 9:35; Luke 10:1; John 4:31.

The word "laborer" is a strong word. We translate it in our African version of the Bible, "He that perspires with work," and that is the only man who should go out into the harvest field—the man that will face strenuous endeavor. The whole Christian life is one of strenuous endeavor; the Christian faith energizes, makes a man a true laborer.

The first portion that I read is in connection with the sending out of the twelve. They were commanded to go forth to the harvest. The second portion is in connection with the sending out of the seventy, and they were reminded that the harvest is plenteous. And in the third portion the Lord Jesus Christ Himself goes into the harvest field and reaps a sheaf of grain in the case of the poor Samaritan woman.

The more one studies the life of the Lord Jesus Christ the more we are surprised at the arresting things we see. When He said "Lift up your eyes," that was startling. "You say, There are yet four months and then cometh harvest. I say, Lift up your eyes." Peter might answer, "We do not see the fields waving with golden grain." But the Lord Jesus saw that great land of Samaria as a large field of ripened grain waiting for the sickle. And then you remember in the ninth of Matthew He sees them as sheep without a shepherd, bruised and wounded, and that same people he likens to a harvest-field. These are the arresting things that have come to me as I studied this Scripture.

Christ's outlook. He saw these men, bruised and wounded, tired and fatigued, but He was not despondent. He says, "That is opportunity." Hopeless conditions always mean opportunity to Christ. When we look out on the fields we are discouraged, but that is because we do not have the eye of Christ. "No," says Christ, "hopeless conditions constitute a harvest in the economy of Christ. The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The whole Bible tells about God's activities on the earth. He is never despondent; He has gauged all these conditions. The Lord Jesus Christ had faith in Himself and in His work and in His Father, and He said, These hopeless conditions make large golden harvests. Oh, that that might get to our hearts. If it did, then our feet would run. Whenever you get a black background of sin, you have the realm of divine grace. When men and women say they are "good" they put themselves outside of God's activities. When you say "I am as good as Mr. So-and-So," at once you put yourself outside the realm of divine activity.

Christ never told us to go and sow, but He has told us to go and reap. "But do you not read in Scripture, 'Plow up the fallow ground?'" Yes, that is a field in the Church: a fallow condition caused by disobedience, by our living selfish lives. "The hardness of our hearts." Then the plow has to be put into that ground. But when God sees the mass of humanity hopelessly wicked, that is the opportunity for His grace. Go into this field. The Sower is the Son of Man. He sowed the seed and we go to the harvest.

The Gospel is for the lost and therefore for all. I remember I was once entertained by the Governor of the Province. He was the son of a well-known bishop. One night he said to me, "I am surprised that you came here to teach these black fellows that they are as good as the white man." And I looked into his eyes and said, "I am not here to teach these Africans that they are as good as the white man. My mission is to teach them that they are just as bad as the white man and I tell you it is hard to get them to believe it." There is none righteous, no not one. We were all outside the circle. But because God saw these conditions, He also saw that there was a harvest into which we should put the sickle. He wants us to go and labor strenuously and reap the rich harvest. He knows the conditions, but where sin abounds grace much more abounds. These very conditions constitute the realm for the grace of God. If so, then we shall go into the streets of the city, and into the State and further. If we do not, the ground will become fallow, and we shall criticise one another, and trouble will ensue, and all because we have failed to go out and put in the sickle of God's Gospel. Nothing so good as reaping to keep us in condition. The world is getting worse and worse. People say it is going to the Devil, but God is in His world and He is on the throne. What a wonderful Gospel sickle! It can go in and reap and bring sheaves to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Another reason why He was optimistic was because God never abandons a people in the Gospel age. He goes out with the Gospel, that Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and in that Gospel there is ample provision for every man, and so Christ looks out and says, "There is a harvest."

It is ours to reap. This is a great and high calling. Our Lord Jesus Christ gives us a beautiful example of how to reap. Have you ever studied the tact that He used to reach that woman? And when He found her He said, "This is My meat and drink." The disciples wondered and said, "Hath any man given Him to eat?" The Gospel is the best tonic. Again and again I have been tired and have felt like giving up, and then one soul has crept up to me and said, "I would like to belong to Christ," and as the light broke on his face I was well again. I had eaten of the meat that my Master ate of. It was food for my soul. May that not be the reason that many are weak and sickly among us? Christ is the Sower and he has given us the sickle and we follow where He hath sowed. We shall reap and be strong men and women in the grace of our God and thus become true laborers with God. I speak these words that the young may not be weak-hearted, but rather go forth knowing that God is going to bring in those for whom Christ died. We offer to all that God may give to some. And we go forth and are assured that we shall bring our sheaves with us. He went all the way to the Cross and poured out His soul unto death. He sowed the seed and we go forth with Him to make His name known to the ends of the earth.

I want to show you how we reap the sheaves in Central Africa, how we present the Gospel to a people who have never heard it before. I was traveling with a number of men through a certain district where food was scarce. My men were hungry and I hoped to get meat for them at the next camping place. We arrived at a village where the old chief was sheltered behind a large fence. He heard that we were approaching and came out to welcome us, and I greeted him and then told him of our needs. I said, "Can you supply me with food for my men?" He replied, "I am sorry but we have no food even for ourselves. The elephants and buffaloes have been coming to our gardens and have eaten up all our grain." I thought that was not a reason but merely an excuse, and so I sent out my men to make inquiries.

They brought back the word, "It is true; there is no food in the village; but there is much game in the forest here. Come with us: let us go after the game and we shall get plenty of meat." I asked the chief if he would give me a guide and he promised at once to do so. He sent off a messenger for the guide and we sat down and waited patiently, but it seemed a long time and he did not appear. Hours passed and no guide and here I had with me fifty hungry men. I knew they would not go happy to bed without food, so I told the chief, "My men are hungry. They have not eaten for days." He answered, "Take hold of thy heart. Cause it to descend to thy breast." I sat down again and waited for a little while and then told him, "I can wait no longer. I am going without the guide." He answered, "You must not do that. The forest is full of wild beasts and there are many pits dug, and traps are there." The guide did not come. The African never makes haste. His motto is "Poly-poly" (slowly-slowly) and so I said, "I cannot wait longer, I must be off," and away I went with two of my men.

After walking through the forest for about half a mile we saw the spoor of buffaloes and followed their track. Then after a time one of my men picked up a leaf half-chewed, and he said, "Look out. We are near them." And suddenly the other man who was ahead dropped down to the grass and said, "Did you see them?" I had seen nothing, but I got up and looked and then I could see in the distance a great number of buffaloes, probably two or three hundred, and nearer to us were about a dozen. I took aim at one and he dropped, and then there was a mighty stampede. They rushed past us as we lay there, and after they had all gone we saw the big buffalo that I had shot, lying with his legs in the air, "saying farewell to his fellows," as the Africans put it. In a few minutes my men had the skin off. Then I told them, because the sun was down, to go back and tell the others to come. But they looked at me and said, "We do not know the way and, so far as being lost is concerned, we are lost." I looked at them and said, "What are we going to do? We cannot all go and leave this meat." But by this time it was getting dark, as it does quickly there, and then away in the distance we heard the roar of a lion. He had scented the game. Another roared, and then all around us there they were. My men said, "Master, get up that tree." With their help I got right up into the branches and then they followed me. They said, "We cannot do anything unless the chief sends someone to help us." Soon I asked my men, "Can you hear anything?" "Yes," was the answer. It was a lion, and shortly there were three lions that had tracked the carcass of that buffalo. They certainly were not going to bed that night without eating. We could hear them quarreling among themselves, tearing the meat and crunching the bones. I told one of my men to go up to the topmost branch of the tree and call. He went and cried out, "Lost, lost." For a short time there was quietness in the forest but soon the growling was heard again. After a while he cried again and kept up his calling. We were there for hours and it became very cold. I was afraid that I would get drowsy and fall. "Do you hear anything?" I asked. "Yes, it is someone saying 'Coming.'" Wafted out of the night there came the message, "Coming." That made us hope and we called again and after a minute we could hear the words, "Coming, coming." And soon the dark night was filled with a blaze of light. I called, "Who are you?" and the answer came, "I am the guide you refused to wait for. Come down. You were very foolish. This forest is the most difficult in Africa and it is full of dangers and traps." The old man went out and picked up the scraps of meat, from which the lions had been driven away. He did not leave one, and then we marched slowly. "I guide," he said, "Keep near to me." Away down into a ravine we all went and at last he brought us back to the village. The chief was very much disturbed. He said, "If anything had happened to you, I would have been blamed for it." And my men came to me, thanking God that I was spared.

I was very much impressed and I called the chief and his men and said to them, "I want to tell you something. Long, long ago I did the very same thing that I have done tonight." "Did you go into a forest?" he asked. "Yes. I went into the entanglements of the world. I was told all about the world and its danger and traps and in the pride of my heart I said, 'I can go through all this forest. I know all about the pitfalls,' and I went down into the place of danger and death, and my enemy, like a roaring lion seeking whom he might devour, was tracking me and I could not get back to the village. And then, this poor man cried unto the Lord and the Lord heard and delivered him." "Tell us about it. Were you lost in the dark and did someone come to save you?" "Yes, I was lost, fallen down into the pits there. But the Guide came out after me: He came out with the torch of His light and life and love, and said, 'You follow me,' and He brought me back to the village of God, to the place of laughter and plenty." And hour after hour that chief and his people listened and heard for the first time the Gospel of God, how God in His love had sent out His own Guide, His own Deliverer, and brought me back. In that way we reach people in these villages. We have to scrap all our sermons and begin where God begins, at creation, and use the means that God gives us and make them channels of approach.—Continued D. V.

ENRICHED BY HIM

"What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" Luke xviii. 41.

What wilt thou, child?

I would draw nigh my Father—God—
Believing that the sprinkled blood
Entitles me to come.

What wilt thou, child?

I scarcely know how vast my need:
Thou knowest, and art good indeed;
Mine eyes are unto Thee.

What wilt thou, child?

Lord, give me, first, a perfect heart,
That I may nevermore depart
From Thy Divine commands.

What wilt thou, child?

This, even this, most Blessed One:
From early dawn till setting sun
Let Thy smile rest on me.

What wilt thou, child?

Oh, grant me faith to trust Thee more,
Accepting from Thy heavenly store
All Thou hast there for me.

What wilt thou, child?

That love Divine may fill my soul,
And Thou Thyself possess the whole;
No room for self be left.

What wilt thou, child?

Make me like Christ, I humbly pray:
Thou art the Potter, I the clay;
Thine is the power alone.

Lord, I believe!

All, all I ask is in Thy name,
Assured that Thou wouldst have me claim
Thy promises in full.

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

SEPTEMBER, 1929

No. 9

THE FURTHERANCE OF THE GOSPEL

THOS. D. W. MUIR

"He that is wise winneth souls" (Prov. 11:30 R. V.) "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3.)

These two scriptures, while, in a sense they are divorced from their original context, yet present in a concise form God's estimate, and the future reward, of the true and wise soul-winner. That the many of God's people are **unwise** in this respect, will be undoubtedly manifested at the Judgment seat of Christ. "Give me the souls, and take the goods to thyself," said the King of Sodom to Abraham (Gen. 14:21), and Satan says the same today to the Christian; with this difference as to result,—Abraham **refused** the overture of the King, whereas many of the people of God **accept** the suggestion of the Devil, and while they add dollar to dollar, acre to acre, and house to house,—Satan gets the souls. One reason for this difference is, that Abraham had **grasped** the meaning of the blessing in the Name of the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth, just bestowed on him by Melchizedic. He reckoned as to the comparative value of things, by the **relationship** he now sustained toward God, who was the "possessor of heaven and earth," and acted accordingly; whereas, while we have greater and clearer knowledge given us of our treasures in Christ, we have not in our souls grasped the truth, and so we act as though we were dependent on the world for our true wealth. We go in for the "goods,"—the fleeting trappings of this poor world, which perish with the using, and fail to grasp the higher purpose for which God has saved and left us here, even to be His representatives in the world,—His witnesses to the world,—and His Ambassadors conveying to them His message of peace!

This world lies in spiritual darkness.—We, who have been saved by the grace of God, and into whose hearts He has caused the light of the glorious gospel of Christ to shine, has called us to be His luminaries,—to shine as lights amid the darkness of this world (Phil. 2:15). He says to such, "Ye are the light of the world," and exhorts us that we place not our light under the "**bushel**" of business, or the "**bed**" of slothfulness. This we are to do by "Holding forth the Word of life,"—privately, in the home and business circle, or publicly, as He may permit us. Thus do we make known as His witnesses to those

who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, the light of the truth of the Gospel, so that they being enlightened, may be also "lights" for Him to others.

The world is also in rebellion against God.—Found guilty of this, they are subjects for judgment,—they merit the wrath of God for their insubjection. But the wonder of the Gospel is, that God is in Christ "reconciling the world unto Himself," and has given to those whom He has saved, "the ministry of reconciliation," making them His ambassadors,—proclaiming the wondrous message, "Be ye reconciled to God." And who can measure the joy that fills the heart of God, when a poor rebel throws down the arms of his rebellion, and in contrition turns to God for mercy! And who can measure, or express the joy that fills the heart of the poor sinner thus delivered from the wrath to come As we sing:—

"Oh, what can equal joy divine, or what can sweeter be
Than knowing that the soul is safe for all eternity!
Safe in the Lord without a doubt, by virtue of the blood,—
For nothing can destroy the life that's hid with Christ in God."

The sphere of our service, in winning souls.—In John 1, we have a beautiful picture of soul-winning, and the best place to begin our service. John the Baptist had just preached away two of his disciples after Jesus. One of the two was called Andrew. Evidently a quiet, obscure sort of man,—there is little recorded of him, as far as we know. He never became a great preacher, or a great writer, but on this occasion he rose to his privilege, and won a soul to and for Christ, the influence of whose work in and for the Church of God will never have an end.

Oh, no, he did not there and then decide to be a foreign missionary! His work was nearer home, for we read, "He first findeth **his own brother** Simon, and saith to him, we have found the Messiah, which is being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." Andrew began well. Having found the Lord, himself, he bethought him of his brother, Simon,—poor, rough, godless, impetuous Simon,—and he longed for his soul, for he loved him. So he first "found" his brother . . . and he "brought" him to Jesus. His message was not eloquent, but it was earnest and to the point. "We have found the Messiah," said he, and as he was persistent, he did not leave him till he had "brought him to Jesus." And how great a man did that Simon Peter become! Andrew little knew how much he had accomplished that day when he found his brother, and brought him to Jesus. And as little do we know, when some wandering one is brought to Him by us, in our service of witnessing for our blessed Lord.

Variety in the manner of our service.—As the testimony of the Gospels to the varied form of approach, and method in winning is pondered, we see the necessity for heavenly wisdom in our dealings with men. Continuing our study of John 1, we find that the Lord found Philip, and bade him “follow Me.” This Philip did. He was of Bethsaida,—the same town as Andrew and Simon Peter. He had a friend, named Nathanael, who was of Cana of Galilee, and he went after him, and finding him he said:—“We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph.” And when Nathanael would have argued the matter, and uttered his objections and prejudices, Philip, as a wise man, urged him to “come and see” for himself. This Nathanael did, and ever after that interview with the Lord, he was a true disciple of His!

One can scarce pass away from this intensely interesting Scripture without noting the difference in the messages of Andrew and Philip. Simon, as a fisherman, had little time or inclination, possibly, to read the Scriptures, or to know anything about the various points of prophetic interpretation. To him it was enough to hear, in a general way, that the Messiah was come. He did not trouble himself with details. Hence, the message is short and to the point, “We have found the Messias,” and that was all that was needed to challenge Simon’s attention, and make him willing to follow his brother.

Nathanael, on the other hand, was evidently a close student of the prophets, and so we have in Philip’s message to him an enlargement of the evidence, for he refers to the testimony of Moses and the Prophets. Thus we find a variety in the messages that are given, which accords with the need and intelligence of their hearers, but in each case the result is the same, the men are brought to the Lord.

We might learn a lesson here.—In the strictest sense, the message of the Gospel is the same for all. It is the proclamation of the good news concerning God’s Son Jesus Christ. Yet, divine wisdom would instruct us **how** to present that Gospel according to the understanding of the hearers. To some, their ignorance of the letter of the Word of God unfits them for following heavy doctrinal expositions of Scripture. Rather do they need simple, plain statements of their need as sinners, and God’s provision in Christ,—this is possibly all they could understand. Again, we read of one who “reasoned out of the Scriptures” (Acts 17), and it is often necessary so to do. There is need that the one who would be a winner of souls, should be wise therefore, in the sense of getting his directions from God. If the heart be right, and the child of God is dependent on God for guidance, He will give in this, as in all else, that which is needful, in order to enable the whole-hearted and wise hearted to be true soul-winners!

HOMELY OCCUPATIONS

"Those that dwelt among plants and hedges." 1 Chron. 4:23.)

W. J. McCLURE

(Continued from August)

We have seen the "Potter," and considered his work in our last paper, and now we shall look at the "Gardeners and Hedgemakers." **"Those who dwelt among plants."** This is one of the most commonly used figures of God's people in either the Old or New Testament. In Isa. 5:7, the prophet says, "For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant." (R. V. Mar. The plant of his delight.) In Jer. 2:21 God speaking of the departure of Israel from Himself, says, "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, a wholly right seed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me."

But though God was thus disappointed with His people in the past, we look on to a coming day, when restored to their Messiah, and back in their own land, they will indeed be to Him what we have in Isa. 5:7, "The plant of His delight," as it is written, "Thy people shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Isa. 60:21). Again, "to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of gladness for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." (Isa. 61:3).

We have seen some famous gardens in California,—the land of sunshine, fruit and flowers,—which are the pride of the owners, and under certain restrictions, are open to the public. People who otherwise would never have known the owners' name learn it through the gardens, as for instance, the "Busch gardens" of Pasadena. Thus God desired to make His name and glory known by means of Israel, as they displayed the beauty of the Lord, like a well kept garden,—to which Balaam likened them in Num. 24:6.

Our Lord Jesus is also brought before us a **plant**. "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." The tender plant, tells us what He was to God, and the root out of a dry ground, what He was in the eyes of men, something neither gainly nor attractive. But more, it tells us that earth ministered nothing to Him, it was a dry ground, and the secret of His freshness, as God's tender plant, was that He could always say to His Father, "All my springs are in thee" (Psa. 87:7). Nor does earth minister any more nourishment to the new life in the believer; his moisture must come from heaven. But the day is not far distant, when He will be to Israel, no longer as a root out of a dry ground,

but, "The branch of the Lord—beautiful and glorious" (Isa. 4:2), and a "Plant of renown" (Eze. 34:29).

The Song of Solomon gives us some figures of what the Church is to Christ, and amongst these figures we have the garden, with its fruits and flowers. "My beloved is mine and I am His; He feedeth among the lilies." Again, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits, camphire and spikenard." (Song of Sol. 2:16; 4:12,13).

Two of God's Gardeners. "I have planted, Apollos watered." (1 Cor. 3:6). When the apostle planted an assembly, he looked upon it as a garden for Lord, and believers individually as plants. Given the right kind of soil, the most imperative need of the plant, next to sunshine, is **water**. Just at this season of the year, as we pass up and down the streets, we notice a very great contrast in lawns. One is parched and brown,—the plants wilting,—next to it is a lawn fresh and green, where the flowers are flourishing, and where all is so restful to the eye. The soil is the same, what makes the difference? The answer is that one is frequently watered and the other is neglected. The owner of the parched-up lawn may have flattered himself at first, that his lawn looked quite as well as his neighbor's, upon which more care has been bestowed, but it was not long till the passer by was able to see the difference, and tell the cause.

"Those that dwelt among plants." The gardeners of 1 Chron. 4:23 were in close touch with the plants, and could watch their state daily,—that was their responsibility. We have something like this in connection with caring for the people of God now. Paul charges the overseers at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock **in** which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." (Note the R. V. has the word "in" not "over" (Acts 20:28). Again we have the same thought in 1 Pet. 5:1,2. "The elders which are **among you** I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ. Feed the flock of God which is **among you,**" etc. It was never God's mind that overseers and elders should be a sort of **spiritual bosses** or legislators,—a class by themselves,—but those who by dwelling **among** the saints, were to be ever on the look out for signs of decay, and ready to water the plants. It was theirs to minister the Word that would reach the conscience and heart, and restore and revive the plants.

"There they dwelt with the king for his work." The care of God's plants calls for **spirituality**, to enable the one who would water the plants to see their true condition. It is so easy to sink down to the common level, which is very low, and then fancy that all is well.

People may stay in a room where the air is foul, till the tone of their own system is so lowered that they are unable to detect the vitiated condition of the air. A walk out in the pure air, would enable them to realize the condition of that room, when they came back to it. So is it possible to go on thinking that all is fine in an assembly, when there is much spiritual drought and barrenness. There is but one safeguard, **"Dwell with the king."**

Then again, those who will do the work of Apollos require **courage**, for to cheer discouraged saints, comfort those in sorrow, and strengthen the tempted and tried. This is the work of those who watch over the flock, but it does not exhaust that work. The cause of decay and barrenness needs to be pointed out, and faithfully and lovingly dealt with. We have only contempt for the man, who, when he learned that a member of his congregation, who was connected with the manufacture of spirits, was not present at the service, launched out that day in a denunciation of the drink evil. We have often been reminded by the way some men preach, of the silly Irishman who fancies he is displaying courage by cursing the pope in Sandy Row, (a very Protestant district in Belfast, Ireland). He would display his courage better, though not his discretion, if he went to the Pound, (a Roman Catholic district in the same city), and did it. If he tried it, more than likely he would be brought back in an ambulance.

It does not require courage to preach rigid "separation" to those who are revelling in ecclesiasticism! Nor is it a mark of faithfulness to proclaim an even, liberal line of things to those whose tendency is towards a very open liberalism. To do that is to give to each what they **want**, not what they **need**. But we have seen it done, and the men who do it acclaimed by those to whom they preach. Were they in the mind of God, and really wished to promote the good of saints, and not the interests of a party, they would say the same things, but conversely, separation to those who are in danger of too much liberalism, and a gracious evenness to those who are too ecclesiastical.

"There they dwelt with the king for his work." Very commonplace was the work of these men, but this lifted it to an high plane. And to the heart who sees in the companies of saints, gardens of the Lord, and the saints as His plants, the work of caring for them, is more honorable than ruling a city, a state or the nation. The need is for men to dwell with the king. What was it that emboldened Elijah to stand unafraid in the presence of King Ahab, and tell him some very plain things? We have the secret in 1 Kings 17:1,—**"As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand."** Ahab was of small account in the eyes of a man that stood before God.—Continued D. V.

Next paper, "The Hedgemakers."

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

WILLIAM ROBERTSON

(Continued from August)

Let us now consider the second statement which falls into its proper place, as a sequence to all we have already said about the first. Our Lord is further spoken of as being **"justified in the Spirit."** The word "justified" means to be cleared from every charge and declared righteous. It is unthinkable that our Holy Lord needed to be justified of any charge for anything He ever did or said during His sojourn here below. He was essentially "the Holy One of God," who "knew no sin," and "did no sin," for, "in Him was no sin." How then could it be true of such an One, that He was "justified in the Spirit"? We can only think of one way this could possibly be true, and that was by His glorious and triumphant resurrection from the dead.

To understand this clearly, we must revert again to our Lord as He hung upon the cross. We know that during those awful hours of darkness, when "forsaken" by God, "He was made sin for us, (He) who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21). God unsparingly poured out the vials of His unmitigated wrath upon our Substitute,—punishing Him as only an infinitely Holy God could punish sin itself, but ere that suffering One expired, He "cried with a loud voice, It is finished," and by these words we understand God's righteous claims against sin are fully met, and His justice eternally satisfied.

But what of that One who hangs upon the tree in the cold embrace of death,—who is laid by the tender hands of the two clean (see Num. 19:9) men, in the "clean place," even Joseph's new tomb prepared for Him? Is there still on Him any trace of sin; of the sin **imputed** to Him? Nay, verily. As the ashes of the sin offering outside the camp, told that the fire had utterly consumed the victim, and there was nothing more that could be burned, so He who died under the weight of our guilt, had passed beyond its claims for ever, having indeed "died unto sin" (Rom. 6:10), and now it remains for God by His Spirit to vindicate the spotless character of that Perfect One who died, and thus He is "quickened (i. e., made alive) by the Spirit" (1 Pet. 3:18), and "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4). The Father gave His only Son; the Son gave Himself; and the third Person of the Trinity—The Holy Spirit—set His seal upon the perfect worth and work of that Son, by quickening Him in resurrection. Thus, and only thus, could it be true that our blessed Lord was "justified in the Spirit."

The third statement, **"seen of angels,"** may now occupy our thoughts. Like all the other statements connected with the "mystery

of Godliness," it fills its proper place, and as we proceed, this will be more and more manifest to our readers. To understand aright the import of such a statement, we must first ascertain the meaning of the word seen in its original form, and how it is used in the scriptures. It is the word "optomai" that is employed in the text, according to G. V. Wigram's Greek Concordance, and is found some fifty-seven times in the New Testament. It is rendered quite frequently by the words "appear" or "appeared," as for instance in Hebrews 9:28, "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear (or, be seen) the second time unto salvation." Singularly, this word is never once used in connection with Christ being "seen" on earth by the eyes of unsaved men, but it is as singularly used again and again, in reference to the disciples beholding Him as the **risen** One. The first time we find this particular word "seen" being used in connection with our Lord in resurrection, is in Matthew 28:7. In this passage "the angel of the Lord" speaks to those women who came to the tomb in the early hours of the morning on "the first day of the week," thus, "Go quickly and tell His disciples, that He is risen from the dead, and behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: Lo, I have told you." We have found that almost invariably the first use of any word in the Scriptures, gives us a clue to its meaning. We conclude therefore from the many passages where the word "optomai" is employed by the Spirit, that it distinctly refers to Christ being "seen" in resurrection.

The question may arise here, "Why is it said, He was "seen of angels"? It is definitely stated in the Scriptures that when the Lord rose again from the dead, "He was **seen** (optomai) of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was **seen** of above five hundred brethren at once. . . . After that He was **seen** of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was **seen** (says Paul) of me also, as one born out of due time." (1 Cor. 15:4-8), but not a word is said about Him being seen of angels.

In considering this statement "seen of angels," we must not forget that we are dealing with a series of statements, which comprise "the mystery of Godliness," so that these words must be interpreted in the light of the statements made before it, and of those that follow after. And further, we may say, that if the "mystery" deals with truths which are peculiarly new, in contrast to the things which are "old" (see Matt. 13:52), of which the prophets spake in the Old Testament, are we not correct in concluding, that these words, "seen of angels," must convey the truth that these Heavenly Beings behold something unique,—something entirely new,—something that creates wonderment on their part, and that something is, a **real, glorified man**, sitting at God's right hand in Heaven? A Man seen on earth

among **men**, does not create wonderment to those angelic beings, but a Man in Heaven, in a glorified Body, **does**.

Thank God, the One who sits upon Heaven's throne is as really the "same Jesus" (Acts 1:10) as when in humiliation He slept in the fisherman's boat, or when He wept at the grave of Lazarus, or sat wearied at Sychar's well, or when He hungered at the fruitless fig tree, or when He cried upon the shameful tree, "I thirst." Yes, "we see Jesus," the One who has gone up to God's right hand, "crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. 2:9); "**angels** and authorities and powers being made subject to Him" (1 Pet. 3:22). Even now as "the Head," He can **suffer** what every member of His Body on earth suffers (Acts 9:1-5). Even now as the Great High Priest within the holiest of all, "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man,"—He can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. (Heb. 4:15). These myriads of holy angels surround the throne (Rev. 5:11) upon which He sits, and they gaze with wonder upon His Person, and bow in worship before Him, and speed with joyful alacrity to carry out His behests, in ministering unto them who are the heirs of salvation: (Heb. 1:14). These words, "seen of angels," speak volumes to us, who know Him, as they tell out all He now is, and all He is now doing for us, as our Advocate and Great High Priest in the presence of God.—Concluded D. V. next month.

THE WISE MAN

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."—Psa. 111:10.

"**Whoso loveth wisdom** rejoiceth his father." (Prov. 29:3.)

"**Who is the wise man?** and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine." (Eccles. 8:1.)

"**Who is a wise man** and endowed with knowledge among you, let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness and wisdom." (James 3:13.)

"**Who is wise**, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall in them." (Hosea 14:9.)

"**Whoso is wise**, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." (Psalm 107:43.)

"**O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or, who hath been His counsellor? Or, who hath first given unto Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For, of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen.

THE HIGH PRIEST

His Garments, His Sons, and Their Garments

Read Ex. 28:1-43 and 29:1-35.

J. F. SPINK

Aaron when looked at by himself is a beautiful type of Christ as our "Great High Priest." He was separated from his brethren and installed in the Priestly office by the direct call of God. (Heb. 5:1-4). His garments are typical of Christ's priestly work.

The first is the Ephod. Thus we read:—"And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. It shall have two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof: and so it shall be joined together." Verses 6 and 7. The "**gold**" points to the divine personal glory of Christ, as set forth in Hebrews: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest in the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Heb. 4:14. The **blue** tells us that heaven is the scene of His Priesthood. (Heb. 7:26). The **purple** gives us its Kingly or Royal aspect. (Heb. 7:1-24). The **scarlet** shadows its display or exercise during the Kingdom (Zech. 6:12-13), and the fine twined **linen** His righteous character. "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and Princes shall rule in judgment." (Isa. 32:1).

The two shoulder pieces of the ephod were joined and may suggest the perfect union of the glories of Christ. **The curious girdle** of the ephod conveys the thought of service, (Luke 12:37, John 13:4). It was made of the same materials as the Ephod and may teach us that Christ as Priest, whether in heaven or on earth, is the servant of His people. **The two onyx stones** denote the permanency and durability of God's remembrance of His Israel. Their names were engraven upon them, set in "ouches of gold." **The shoulders** are the well-known symbol of strength (Luke 15:5; Isa. 9:6), and hence their names on the High Priest's shoulders indicated that they were continually upheld and represented before God in all His beauty and glory. Note their names appeared on the Ephod, "according to their birth." This teaches us that the moment we are saved we become the object of Christ's priestly care and representation. It should also be noted that the "two onyx stones" were "for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel." That is every time they saw Aaron in his garments of glory and beauty they were reminded that their names were being exhibited before God by him. This was calculated to affect their walk from day to day, and further, when God saw their names in His Presence, He was reminded of their need of His constant care and blessing.

The Breastplate was made of the same materials as the Ephod and its girdle, and it was adorned with twelve precious stones on which were engraven the names of Israel. Seven of these stones are

found in the "twelve foundations of the wall of the holy Jerusalem." (Rev. 21:19-20.) They symbolize the wondrous glory and beauty of Christ in which the believer is now seen, and in which Israel will be seen during the happy days of the Kingdom. **The breast** represents the affections, and their names written on the breastplate as well as on the stones of the ephod, declared to Israel that they were sustained and loved by their representative. It should not be overlooked that their names were written on the breastplate according to the twelve tribes, and on the ephod, as we have seen, according to their birth. "Hence the name of Judah was first on the breastplate, while that of Reuben was first on the ephod. This does not imply that our Great High Priest loves the greatest of His people more than the least, but rather His love is specially manifested to those who carry out the desires of His heart:—"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John 14:21.) **The "Urim and the Thummim,"**—meaning Lights and Perfections, were put on the breastplate and expressed the truth that the saints are before the divine presence in the full value of what Christ is. The "Ephod" and "Breastplate" were joined by means of wreathen chains of fine gold," signifying that the divine and heavenly glories of Christ are not only united, but displayed in His Priesthood. Further, the rings of gold to which the chains and blue lace were joined may shadow the continuity of His Priesthood. (Heb. 7:23-24).

The next garment was the Robe of the Ephod, Ex. 28:31-35, made "all of blue," and doubtless figured the heavenly character of His Priesthood. We read, "For if He were on earth, He should not be a Priest." (Heb. 8:4). The Cross was the terminus of Judaism. There its priesthood and sacrifices were forever laid aside, and Christ, consequent upon His ascension, entered upon His present priestly work. In Hebrews His people are seen on earth, which has become to them a wilderness; being conscious of their strangership and pilgrim character, they journey onward seeking a heavenly country. (Heb. 11:13-16.) In accordance therewith, the Priesthood of Christ is given as their blessed stay and resource during their tedious march. The first allusion to it is at the close of the second chapter,—“Wherefore in all things it behooved 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 (atonement) for the sins of the people.” (Heb. 2:17.) Here we are shown that it was necessary that He should become man, before He could become the High Priest of His people or make an atonement for their sins. His atoning death is the grand basis of His Priesthood, which is now carried on within the veil. (Heb. 6:20.) Its first application to the believer is when

tempted: "For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:18.) He was tempted both by Satan and man, (Matt. 4:1-11, 22:15-40), and His unyieldingness caused Him to suffer unspeakably in spirit. The believer has also Satan to cope with, hence the urgent need of his Master's example, in the use of the Word of God, and the constant succoring power of his great High Priest. The believer has no excuse when he falls, because his merciful and faithful High Priest is able to give him strength to overcome all the forces of evil. How comforting to think we are not left to our own resources in the wilderness, though surrounded by enemies, and harassed by the presence of evil within. We have a perfect Friend and Helper, who is able to give us complete victory every step of the way!

We have a further view of the priestly work in the fourth chapter of Hebrews. "Seeing then that we have a great high Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our **infirmities**; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet apart from sin." (Heb. 4:14-15.) Our infirmities refer to our physical disabilities, sorrows, difficulties and various other experiences resulting from our present mortal state. In all these we have the profound and perfect sympathy of our Great High Priest, because He experienced the same. It is extremely consoling, both in sickness and sorrow, to bear in mind that He feels for us with a perfect feeling and invites us to "the Throne of Grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16.) He sympathetically endured every form of human infirmity, (sin apart), for in Him was no sin. (Isa. 53:4; Matt. 8:16, 17; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26.) (Concluded D. V. next month.)

THE STORY OF A NEGLECTED BIBLE

Some time ago an old man living in New Jersey discovered about \$5,000 in a family Bible. The bank notes were scattered throughout the book. In 1874 the aunt of this man had died and one clause of her will was as follows:

"To my beloved nephew, Stephen Marsh, I will and bequeath my family Bible and all it contains, with the residue of my estate after my funeral expenses and just and lawful debts are paid."

The estate amounted to a few hundred dollars, which was soon spent, and for about 35 years his chief support had been a small pension from the Government. He lived on in poverty and all the time within his reach there was the precious Bible containing thousands of dollars, sufficient for all his wants. He passed the Bible by. His eyes rested on it, perhaps his hands handled the old leather-bound

Bible with its brass clasps, but he did not open it once. At last, while packing his trunk to move to his son, where he intended to spend his few remaining years, he discovered the unknown riches, which were in his possession. What thoughts of regret must have come to his mind. If he only had opened that Bible years ago he then might have used the money to great advantage. Instead of it, the treasure laid idle for 40 years. And he might have had it and enjoyed it all that time.

This is a sad story. But there is something infinitely sadder than the experience of this man. It is the neglect of the Bible by God's people. Our God has given to His people a wonderful treasure in His own Word. In this Book of books the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God are stored up. Here the riches of His love and grace are made known and the highest wisdom man is capable of possessing is told out. All the child of God needs spiritually is found in its pages; all wants are there supplied. And yet these riches put at our disposal by a loving Father, are unknown and unused riches. Instead of being enjoyed, used, and in using them, multiplied, they are neglected. Many of God's people are dragging along in a spiritually impoverished state, when they might have all their needs supplied and constantly increase in the knowledge of God. Occasionally we receive letters from aged Christians, including preachers. They tell us how they deplore the fact that they did not know certain truths thirty and forty years ago. "How different my Christian life and experience as well as service might have been," is what an old Christian wrote us recently. And all this time these riches were in the Bible, they might have enjoyed them. Oh! the neglected Bible! May we arise and possess our possessions.

"REAPING"

J. A. CLARKE

(Notes of an address in Ferndale Gospel Hall, taken by Dr. H. A. Cameron.)
(Continued from August number.)

There are seven great districts where we are making known the Gospel. Around Bie are the people named the Vambundu. In that district all have the same religion. They are demon-worshippers, always trying to call up the spirits of their fathers. They say "God is too far away, but my father and mother have gone into God's country, and I ask them to supplicate for me." They are crying out for "a Day-man." The Vambundu are great travelers and they have gone from the west-eastward, even beyond Tanganyika. They are great traders as well as travelers. Even the little boys want you to come out and discuss the price of a chicken with them. A little fellow of eight or nine will not give up the eggs or fowl he wants to sell without saying, "Let us talk it over," and trying to get more money. These traders have gone over the whole land and they are hard to reach. They always despised their neighbors, the Chokwe, who were bandits. The Vambundu are "respectable" and are very proud, but thousands of them have been reached.

I will tell you of one man. He was saved and said, "I want to go back to my people and tell them the Gospel." It was a great joy to me to visit him later. He had built a little shack of bamboo, and mud, and thatch. We gathered the people in. They had no chairs. They squatted on the ground. This man said to me, "I would

like to have boards for the old men to sit on. I have no money and no timber. What shall I do?" I said, "Pray, and God will help you." By and by after he had waited on God about this matter, he went off one day into the forest without consulting anyone. He went hunting with his gun and, getting nothing, he said to himself, "Shall I return home with this powder in my gun? It might be dangerous." And just then he saw a hawk and thought he would try to get into range. He was about to take aim when he saw a great deer—or antelope—that had been lying asleep. It got up, and he dropped down and covered himself. The antelope looked around and could see nothing, and thus our friend was able to get nearer, and took steady aim, and it fell. As he rushed forward he said, "God has supplied the need." The people hearing the shot came out of the village saying, "Sanje is a great hunter. We will help him with the game and so get a bit of the meat." But when they came to him he said, "Boys, I am not going to eat that meat. It is God's meat. You know that house I built. I want it whitewashed and I want twenty planks, for this meat." The old chief was delighted, and took the meat and gave the orders for the whitewashing and the planks, and when I got back there I saw the nice house and the seats. I asked him, "How did you do it?" He answered me, "I asked God and He has given me these things." I mention this to show you how these Vambundu traders have been reached and saved.

The Chokwe. These people did almost everything to me but kill me. Just as they did to Livingstone, they did to me. Our dear brother Cuthell went to their country and they refused to help him. When he left the Vambundu to go to their neighbors, the Chokwe, the Vambundu said, "Are you going to the heathen?" You see they have "class" there. Our brethren went there and began amidst difficulties. The people almost starved them out. The chief forbade them to go near his house, but they went on year after year until a sister arrived. After she went there, she found out the sick and gave them medicine and food, and she won their hearts, and the Gospel triumphed. Not very long ago I asked our brother Griffith, "How is the work of God going?" and he said, "I wish you had been there last year. You remember how the Vambundu and the Ba-Chowke were such enemies, how the one hated the other. Last year a hundred Chokwe have been saved, and we have had a conference." It was one of the "impossible" places, but it proved a great land of harvest, and now they were going to have a conference. Some weeks before the conference the Chokwe Christians said, "What about our Vambundu brethren? We must have them at our conference," and they sent an invitation. Formerly the Vambundu would have said, "These Chokwe are not people. They are dogs,—they are cut-throats." The result was that about twenty of the Vambundu came into the Chokwe country. The women went out to welcome them. What has happened? What a sight for angels to behold. The believing Chokwe said, "Go and bring in our brethren, the Vambundu," and they kept them as their guests for three weeks. The women went down to the river for water, and they made the cereal and the mush, and, whereas formerly they would not have looked at each other, behold them now at the Lord's table, a mixed multitude, believing Chokwe and Vambundu! They were there gathered around the table upon which was a loaf of bread and a cup of wine. They were gathered to show forth the Lord's death till He come. They had found Jesus Christ and they were living on Mount Calvary. No antipathy, no venom, can live there. You cannot be there if there is antipathy to your brethren, even tho' you sing,—"Dwelling on Mount Calvary." There is no hatred alas, like religious hatred, but there "dwelling on Mount Calvary" were the Ba-Chokwe and the Vambundu,—all hatred had been swept away. They had seen Christ, and their hearts had glowed, and had gone out to Him. I do not call you the children of God if you can bear animosity against a child of God,—even if you counterfeit the habit of claiming a "dwelling" on that green Hill.

You ask, "Is it worth while to pray?" Look on that company and see them worship God through faith in Christ Jesus. Day after day the conference went on till the three weeks were up, and then they went part of the way back with their brethren, so that now peace reigns in that land. And what did it? The Gospel of God's love,—nothing else. Pray that these poor Chokwe,—these former brigands, might be kept true.

THE LUBA.—Years ago there was slavery in Angola, but pressure was brought to bear upon the Portuguese and they sent out a proclamation that all slaves must be liberated. Among these slaves were many Luba people, who had been taken captives from Lubaland, but they had heard the Gospel in the land of their captivity and when they were set free they said to the missionaries, "We are going back home to our own country to preach to our own people." One day I heard some men singing and I went out and said to this company, "Who are you?" They answered, "We are Christians," and they handed me letters from Mr. Lane which said, "These are Christians who were once slaves and who have gone home to preach to their fellows." As I listened to them, I saw how the Devil had gone just a little too far. He had had these men carried away as slaves, but by that means they had heard the Gospel;

now they were going back to preach the good news to their own people, and I encouraged them.

One of these men came to me one day and said, "I want to go to my own village and tell my people the Gospel." He went with his wife and got a wonderful response. In the evening and in the morning he would call the people and preach to them. This man had been a slave in the far west. He was not a "professional missionary," but was living there in his own village with his wife and children. He was making cloth, and cultivating his field, thus earning his bread, and he has reaped a great rich harvest of souls in that land. And this is going on all through that country.

Another man took a journey to preach the Gospel, and when he came back he brought me a knotted string, every knot representing a Christian. "Come," he said, "and see them." We went and saw them, thirty in one village. They were his relations to whom he had preached and whom he had brought to Christ. These people would come in the early morning and say to us, "Tell us more." They were coming to hear the Word of God because they were believers. Then we climbed up higher among the hills, and found nomadic tribes upon the plateau, and we had a wonderful time with them. My wife was there with me, and so the women came out, and we had six weeks' meetings around the blazing fire. As we went on week after week these men heard the Gospel, and by the end of the meetings twenty-five had been saved. After that series of meetings we dammed up a little stream, and baptized these men and women early one Sunday morning. Under the shade of these trees, that which had never been known before was seen, when these men went down under the waters of baptism. My heart was thrilled away there in the forest-land, in the middle of Africa. After they came up out of the water we gathered under the oaks of God's forest, in the shade of the trees, and as we saw these men who a few months before had been wild savages now thrilled by the love of God, the story of Christ's grace, now bowing down and owning Him Lord and Master, partaking of the bread and drinking the wine, it was holy communion to my soul.

During the past ten years all through that land from Bie and down to Rhodesia hundreds of these Africans have been saved. Just recently on one Sunday morning forty-five were baptized. That should make you true laborers for the Lord Jesus Christ. I trust that what you have heard will stir your hearts. I am sure that if each of us were in the line of sympathy with the Lord Jesus Christ He would send us out to do mighty exploits in His blessed name. Listen to the throb of pain in this great city of Detroit. Not a man is satisfied. We have the antidote,—we have the Gospel. Do these men and women know us? Do they want to be with us or run from us? We should carry the Gospel to them. Not long ago a bunch of men came to me after a meeting and said, "Clarke, that is the first time we have heard the Gospel,"—and that would be true of thousands, did they but come to hear.

We should be channels of communication, but, alas, our lives are often like a blind alley, a cul-de-sac,—an entrance without an outlet. I used to think I knew London very well, but one day I was running to catch a train and I went into a blind alley and lost my train. As I waited for the next one I thought, "How like my life! Men and women come into contact with me. They grip my hand, and I lead them nowhere. They have to retrace their steps. I have but led them to a stone wall, and they have retreated." God intends our lives to be the means of blessing to other men, but only in the measure that we submit to Jesus Christ shall we be the medium of blessing. Just as these Africans go out to reach their fellows, we should do the same. If we get out amongst the lost and bring them to Christ we begin to forget our troubles. We have to administer this great redemption to our fellow men. Go on serving and may God prove you are true laborers,—those that are strenuous in their endeavors.

I commend this whole work to your prayers. I am out there serving as God's servant, and serving them as their servant for Christ's sake. The Gospel has been committed to His Church. Thank God it is one. Baptized into one body, the cementing power the Holy Ghost. You have been baptized one with me and I one with you. You must do your share and I must do mine. In this holy fellowship we are both indispensable to each other. Are you prepared to face this, and make it part of your work, and do it as you never did before? You must do it and as you do, you will have great blessing to yourselves. May this be the result of our meeting. I am glad to see you and I am grateful for your attention. I trust you have grasped in some measure the great work God is doing in that land, and the importance of your getting into touch with the hundred missionaries out there. Go on trusting, and go on praying, for in this way we should go forth laboring in the great harvest fields, and thus shall we get Christ's vision,—no longer looking upon hopeless conditions making us despondent but, in the words of our Master see in these conditions, "Fields ripe unto harvest." We shall not then enter His presence empty-handed, but bearing our sheaves with us. May God grant it for His Holy Name's sake!

A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS

A little talk with Jesus, how it smoothes the rugged road;
 How it seems to help me onward when I faint beneath my load.
 When my heart is crushed with sorrow, and my eyes with tears are
 dim,
 There's nought can yield me comfort like a little talk with Him.

I tell Him I am weary, and I fain would be at rest;
 That I am daily, hourly longing for a home upon His breast;
 And He answers me so sweetly, in tones of tenderest love,
 "I am coming soon to take thee to My happy home above."

Ah! this is what I'm wanting, His lovely face to see;
 And (I'm not afraid to say it) I know He's wanting me.
 He gave His life a ransom to make me all His own,
 And He can't forget His promise, to me His purchased one.

I know the way is dreary to yonder far-off clime,
 But a little talk with Jesus will while away the time;
 And yet the more I know Him, and all His grace explore,
 It only sets me longing to know Him more and more.

I can not live without Him, nor would I if I could;
 He is my daily portion, my medicine, and my food.
 He's "altogether lovely," none can with Him compare,
 The "chief among ten thousand," the fairest of the fair.

So I'll wait a little longer, till His appointed time,
 And glory in the knowledge that such a hope is mine;
 Then in my Father's dwelling, where "many mansions be."
 I'll sweetly talk with Jesus, and He shall talk with me.

IF "SHALL" MEANT "PERHAPS"

If all the "shalls" in Scripture meant "perhaps,"
 And all the "haths" meant simply "hope to have,"
 And all the "ares" depended on an "if,"

I well might doubt;

But since my Saviour-God means what He says,
 And cannot lie,

I trust His faithful Word, and know that I
 Shall surely dwell throughout eternity
 With Him, whose love led Him to die for me;

Even Christ, Himself!

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

OCTOBER, 1929

No. 10

AN OLD MESSAGE TO A YOUNG CHURCH

EQUALLY USEFUL TO ANY CHURCH TODAY.

Copy of Epistle of Donald Ross to the Church of Old Rayne, Scotland, which was read before said Church on Lord's Day, 14th January, 1872, by George Taylor.

Aberdeen, January 13, 1872.

My Dear Brother Taylor: It occurred to me that if a few words of exhortation were in the Holy Ghost given to you as a Church, they might not only be well received but also useful.

Let me, therefore, as the Lord's servant, address the young Church of Old Rayne briefly.

1st. Your existence as separate from the surrounding confusion is scarcely worth its room in God's earth, excepting in as far as you walk in the Spirit, in that case only do you walk with God and God walk with you, and you be enabled to look at your surroundings from God's standpoint.

2nd. In order to your spirituality, or walking with God, there must be communion with Jesus, and, as all you are, and all you need, is in Him only, so be taken up with Him; "They went and told Jesus" is said of others, let it be true of you also.

3rd. As a Church, "bear one another's burdens." It is different from bearing one another's faults; improper conduct in any one of your number rebuke sharply, lovingly, and honestly, "Hating the garment spotted by the flesh." When any one of your number confesses, forgive, as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you; but let not sin be by any means on a brother's head. Pride will be your greatest trial.

4th. It has been often said by wise people, "Consult the town clerk of Ephesus," who said, "Do nothing rashly" (Acts 19:36), and take heed you do not mistake mere natural fleshy excitement for the holy new calm joy and power of the Holy Ghost. All are, more or less, liable to this error, especially youth with strong tempers, passions, etc.

5th. Give to the people and to one another God's Word, and you will find it will be offensive enough without any human additions. Give them also the Cross, which cuts off everything. The offense of both Truth and Cross will be quite sufficient to make you a separate people without any other separating element.

6th. Beware of raillery. Read 2 Peter 2:10-11, and Jude 8:9.

Draw a distinction between enlightening one another and railing. Especially in preaching the Gospel to sinners, beware of what you say, for the Devil will take up the attention of the people with the out-of-place-things in your addresses, instead of with the truth you present. Have you noticed how careful the Lord was in making arrangements that there should be nothing peculiar in the serving priests, lest the people should be taken up with their malformations, instead of with the Lord Himself (Lev. 21:18).

7th. Let your young men specially take care of pride and conceit, "Let the younger submit to the elder" (1 Peter 5:3). If they are not in a spirit to receive advice, they are not in a state to preach, and when they do preach, let them beware of mere empty frothy volubility, which is of no use, but rather injurious to the hearers, and besides, raises up obstacles against others preaching. Many a meeting have I seen killed by young men. Let the young men study their Bibles and know the Truth they preach, and never preach other people's preaching. The person, whether old or young, who has no pleasure and joy in searching his Bible is not in a state to preach to anybody else, and much better he should not do it.

8th. Walk wisely towards them who are without. "Walk honestly towards them who are without" (Col. 4:5; 1 Thess. 4:12). And the Lord give you grace in all things. Your servant in the Gospel.—
Donald Ross.

THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING

If you aim to honor God in all you say and do, be assured that in due time, He will honor you; for He has said it. (1 Samuel 2:30.)

If men break their promises, there is all the greater reason that you should turn from man to the living God, who never breaks His. (2 Cor. 1:20.)

If you are wise, you will remember the power of little things; it is the littleness of man that sees no greatness in a trifle. A little stone in David's hand, guided to its mark by God's power, laid the proud giant low. (1 Sam. 17:49.)

If sin is indulged and excused, it will contract your heart to the narrow dimensions of a nut-shell, where there will be no room for aught but self and its desires and lusts. Walking with God in truth and soberness, enlarges the heart's capacity for more and more of Him, and makes these things in which the flesh delights, to seem unworthy of any place. With Israel we say, "What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard **Him**, and observed **Him**; I am like a green fir tree." And the Lord answers, "From **Me** is thy fruit found." (Hosea 14:8.)

HOMELY OCCUPATIONS

OR, THE HEDGE REPAIRER. 1 Chron. 4:23

W. J. McCLURE

(Concluded from September)

“Wanted, men to do hedge repairing; steady employment for good men.” As we read Ezekiel 22:30, we realize the need that existed for an “ad” like this, but while the job was open to the right men, so few wanted it, that there never was any occasion for God to put up a notice, such as is seen at factory doors, **“No help wanted.”** In the days of David, the men who looked after the hedges, “dwelt with the king for his work.” They evidently appreciated their necessary, if humble, occupation. When we dwell with the king, we too will appreciate the honor of doing the work that the “hedge” suggests.

The “hedge” in Scripture, speaks of practical separation to God. Israel in Psa. 80:8-18 is likened to a vine brought out of Egypt, and planted in Canaan. God’s Word and His ordinances were given them, that like an hedge or fence, they might preserve the people from mixing with the heathen around. Soon, however, this separation became irksome, and they began to mingle with the nations, to learn their ways and copy their institutions. They said to Samuel, “Make us a king to judge us **like all the nations**” (1 Sam. 8:5). That was the very thing which God did not want. But no longer satisfied with an unseen Jehovah in their midst, who had done wonders for them, they must have a king, whom they can see. But, their kings led them deeper and deeper into idolatry, and alliances with the heathen, the hedge became so broken down, with no one to repair it, that God removed it altogether, and allowed the enemy,—the “wild boar of the woods”—to break through, and the people to be scattered throughout the earth, as they are to this day.

Their history furnishes a very solemn lesson for the Church. The word rendered “church” (Ekklesia) signifies a “called out” company. Israel was that,—called out of Egypt, and the Church has been called out of the world. But just as we have seen the separation of Israel spoiled by Satan, so do we see the separation of the Church spoiled by him also. The name, Ekklesia, as applied to the professing church, is utterly without meaning, as Christendom is not a people called out of the world, but just the world in a religious garb.

All who are truly born of God, are responsible, therefore, to maintain the separation from the world, that should have been true to the Church, as such. And God looks for men, who will minister the truth, that like an hedge, or fence, will divide His people from the world. The state of separation that exists today, proclaims, alas, that He has not been much more successful with the Church than He was with Israel. Real believers are mixed up with the unconverted in

the sects. We find them marrying the unsaved; belonging to commercial, social, political, and philanthropic clubs; and partners with the unsaved in business. And the religious leaders of christendom, who look with indifference on this mingling of saved and unsaved, are industriously keeping up the denominational fences. Nor does the present tendency to merge a number of these in one bigger system, help, for the whole principle is unscriptural, a denial of "the unity of the Spirit" (Eph. 4:3, 4), and opposed to what Christ died to accomplish, **"Gather together in one, the children of God."** (John 11:52; 17:21.)

Denominational fences are bad, and to be deplored by all who wish to see the desire of the Lord, as expressed in John 17, granted. But we have seen sadder cases of fence building. About eighty years ago, some good and gifted men, in their zeal for what they considered truth, were yet so far out of the mind of God, as to divide and build a fence between companies of believers, who were equally godly and as devoted to Christ as they were themselves. For over fifty years this fence stood between such companies, apparently as solid as the Great Wall of China. From the ease with which many believers break through God's hedge of separation, and get into the world, one might indeed think their wall would prove a very flimsy affair. But to break through this barrier built by man some eighty years ago, was, as someone has said, like "trying to break through the Hindenburg Line," in the late world war. As to the spirit of the thing, and its effect on young Christians, the following is a specimen.

Few of the older christians but have met with something like this experience. A young believer was crossing the Atlantic. The vessel was crowded, and the worldlings were seeking to enjoy themselves with songs, etc. Hearing that there were two christian men on board, he set out to locate them, and to his great joy succeeded,—as he longed for fellowship with kindred spirits. They seemed, at first, very glad to meet him, and got on well while they spoke of the Lord, and the Word of God. Presently the older one of these two, a teacher, who had been a clergyman, asked this young christian where he came from, and where he was in fellowship? When told the city and the Hall he attended, he took a little book out of his pocket, and after looking through it and not finding this particular Hall noted there, his manner became frigid, and for the rest of the voyage, this teacher avoided that young christian, as if he had had the small-pox. There was absolutely no fellowship allowable! Such was the spirit of what was known as "Exclusivism."

One would have hoped their experience would have been a lesson for all, and be the last attempt to bring in division between companies of saints, but alas, the lesson, if known to some, has been unheeded,

and the attempt to isolate little gatherings, has been made,—and that where such companies did not begin in self will and division, but were the outcome of gospel effort, nor were they guilty of holding any vital error, or of receiving those who did hold it.

The attempt to do this, should stir both sorrow and indignation in the heart of everyone who loves the sheep of Christ, and it should be firmly and graciously opposed. It is well to read the lesson of that wall, which otherwise good and great men sought to build. The glamor of the great name of a leading man among them, kept it fairly firm for about fifty years, but since that one went to heaven, the "fence" so industriously preserved intact, has had many a gap put in it. And present-day attempts to build that sort of a "fence," is also foredoomed to failure, inasmuch as there is lacking both the gift and the godliness seen in those other men. The very poverty of gift and godly motive, will make such barriers now set up, short-lived affairs. But a sad reflection to thoughtful christians is, that though the "fence" may be a short-lived thing, the weakness, sorrow and reproach engendered will abide, when the builders have gone to heaven. Not only that, but if history repeats itself, which is likely, such mistaken efforts will produce an extreme of lawlessness among assemblies, which will be, if anything, worse than the unscriptural exclusiveness we have spoken about. Satan is very wily, and reminds us of the Irishman, who sought to get his pig to the market, by pretending to drive it in the opposite way! So, as "extremes beget extremes," we can perceive that by an unscriptural exclusiveness, a revolt is being provoked to the opposite direction, and this suits Satan well. For, while the energies of men have been expended in setting up "fences" of their own, God's "hedge" has been neglected. Even where much is made of ecclesiastical separation, worldliness is rampant, and christians go in for partnerships with the unsaved, and are active in the race for riches, and such like things condemned in the Scriptures of truth.

Well might such an "ad," therefore, be sent out now, **"Wanted, hedge repairers; good men will find steady employment and receive the best of wages."** God's "hedge,"—the truth that separates the Church from the world needs to be maintained. Companies of believers need safeguarding from all that would dishonor Christ, and do away with the distinctive character of their testimony for Him. Satan hates every child of God, but he seems to hate the assembly still more, and he will lose no chance to ruin its testimony. He does that in various ways. One way is to mix in the unsaved, and like the "mixed multitude," who went up out of Egypt with Israel, these folk will soon begin to want things more presentable to the world;—good talkers on the platform, who will "draw" the people,—instrumental

music,—lots of social doings,—a coming and going with the sects,—taking part in politics, more especially if the legislation is for the moral improvement of the masses; and a general getting away from the aloofness that in holier, happier days characterized the assemblies of believers. May the Lord, then, raise up men to repair His hedge of separation,—men who will “dwell with the king for His work,” any may He preserve us from the snare of mere “fence-building.”

THE HIGH PRIEST

His Garments, His Sons and Their Garments

Read Ex. 28:1-43 and 29:1-35.

J. F. SPINK

(Concluded from September)

Another reference to Christ's Priesthood is found in Hebrews 7:25, “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” The salvation spoken of here, is **from** sin. The great object of His intercession is that His people might be sustained, and kept from every evil during their earthly sojourn, and to this end, He ministers power to enable them to triumph over the whole realm, and mighty activity of the enemy, and furthermore, in the ninth chapter He is seen “in the presence of God for us.” (Verse 24.) This conveys the thought of representation, our names as it were are upon His heart, and shoulders, and God sees us in Him. Reverting to Exodus, we see that upon the hem of the robe there were **pomegranates** of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and **bells** of gold between them roundabout. (Ex. 28:33.) Mark the order, “A golden bell and a pomegranate.” First testimony, then fruit. His sound was heard when he went into the holy place. When the Lord Jesus our Great High Priest entered into Heaven His sound was heard when the Holy Spirit came down, and bore testimony concerning Him, the result was “much fruit.” For we read:—“And the same day there were added about three thousand souls.” (Acts 2:41.) Again, when He will come out as the Royal Priest, (Heb. 7.) “His sound” will once more be heard, for “all Isreal shall be saved,” (Rom. 11:26),—and that will be abundant fruit. **The plate of pure Gold** on his mitre, on which the words were engraven, “Holiness to the Lord (Verse 36) symbolizes the measure of Israel's acceptance before God. Aaron was responsible for all the iniquity committed during their sacred exercises, and Jehovah viewed Israel in him. All this will have its full accomplishment in the joyous day of the Kingdom when the standing of Israel will be according to God's estimate of their King-Priest.

The Broidered Coat may be regarded as typical of the righteous

character, as well as the glories and beauties of our Heavenly Priest. His Priestly service for us merits our deepest appreciation and gratitude; for without it we would "faint by the way," and 'become a prey to the enemy. His ever watchful care and loving sympathy cheer and help us in our pilgrimage. The "**Linen mitre**" points to "the crown of glory and honor" which now adorns the head of Christ. (Heb. 2:9.)

The garments of the Sons of Aaron are symbolical of practical righteousness, service and priestliness. (Verses 40-43.) It is noteworthy that Aaron and his sons, when seen together, are typical of believers now in their priestly relations. Before entering upon their Priestly career they were consecrated seven days. On the first day of their consecration they were brought to the door of the Tabernacle, and washed with water. (Eph. 5:26.) This washing is figurative of the new birth, (John 3:3). "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Peter 1:23.) Again, "Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3.) In the Ephesians 5:26, the Word of God is spoken of under the figure of water. Clearly, therefore, "born of water" means born of the Word of God. It cannot mean baptism, because Christian Baptism was not instituted until after Christ arose from the dead. Next, they were clothed in their Priestly garments by which they were distinguished from their brethren. Peter in his first epistle exhorts the new-born babes in Christ, to lay aside all malice, and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, and to desire the sincere milk of the Word in order to grow. Then, he adds, "Ye also as lively (living) stones, are built up a spiritual house an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:1-5.) Here we are taught in the most simple way that **all** believers are priests, the youngest as well as the eldest: this is not the result of attainment, but is rather our spiritual birthright. This disproves the assumption that only a certain class of the saints are Priests. The privilege belongs to everyone in the Church of God." Their sacrifices are of three kinds, namely, Praise, thanksgiving and worship. (1 Peter 2:5; Heb. 13:15.) Their substance, (Phil. 4:18), their Persons, (Rom. 12:1.) To these may be added, "The sacrifices of God" which "are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart." Psa. 51:17.

After the clothing of Aaron and his sons a bullock for a sin offering was brought to the door of the Tabernacle, on which they put their hands, (Ex. 29:10-14.) This action had a twofold significance. First, it expressed their identification, and secondly the transference of their guilt. This offering typified Him of whom it is written, "For He hath made Him to be sin (or a sin offering) for us, who know no

sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21.) The action was repeated in each case of the rams that were slain. The first ram gives us the death of Christ as the precious outcome of His devoted love to His Father, (John 10:17, 18), the second, its application to believers, and its consequent claims upon them. The one was wholly burnt as a sweet savour unto the Lord, but the blood of the other, with the anointing oil, was sprinkled upon them, thus shadowing the truth of the application of the Blood of Christ in the power of the Spirit to believers. (1 Peter 1:2, 11-13.) The flesh of the ram that was waved as a "wave offering" by the priests, implied that the whole value of the death of Christ has been imputed to believers. Its "flesh" was eaten with unleavened bread by Aaron and his sons in the holy place, within which they had to remain seven days. The divine presence is the place of all believers, and their proper food is Christ, the antitype of the consecrated Ram.

PRAYER

W. H. FERGUSON

Jno. 15:7—16:23

It is unlikely that many of us have learned the real lesson or value of prayer, and it is more unlikely that many of us pray sufficiently at all. Here lies a mighty weapon for us to use, yet how seldom it is used. Herein lies the secret of a truly successful life. We know it, so we say, yet we do not pray as we should, and we have much less success than we might have. At times we pray, and pray hard, but generally it is when we have been brought into difficulty and we pray to be delivered and that quickly. And when the Lord graciously answers our prayer and sends deliverance, instead of keeping on praying and thanking Him, we again fail, and weakness of life and testimony results.

In John 15:7, we have a definite promise brought before us, but it is necessary to note just where it occurs in ch. 15. Sometimes this is not noticed. In verse 1 of ch. 15 we have our link with Christ, the true Vine, inferred, and the fact of **Relationship** being established in verse 2 we have **Discipline**—tending to make the fruitful branch more fruitful, and causing to be removed from the sphere of service or testimony, the unfruitful branch. This would seem to be the meaning of "He taketh away" (lifting up and putting on the shelf), although the truth contained in 1 Cor. 11:30 can be included. God's dealings in chastisement drive us to the Word of God,—unless we fall under it,—and in turn this causes **Cleansing** as in verse 3. Then we are exhorted in v. 4 to "abide in Him" (not a fanciful or mysterious experience, but just learning by the lessons God teaches us in His school, and continuing under the cleansing influence of the Word

of God, and learning of Him). Now in verse 5 follows **Fruitfulness**. By this time the "will" of the believer has been more or less instructed by God's dealings with him, and it is in this connection that we have the definite promise of verse 7—"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."

The **will** in the believer is brought into subjection at conversion—(Rom. 10:9-Rom. 7:23-5), where "mind" is in reality the renewed "will" of the believer, but it needs to be instructed, and we need to benefit by being in God's school of instruction and learning of Christ, Matt. 11:29. Then and then only can we ask, according to John 15:7, and expect the promised answer. To counterbalance this truth we need the truth of Rom. 8:26, but it does not alter what has been mentioned in connection with this aspect of **Prayer**. We conclude in connection with this that in **Prayer** there must be an apprehension of His purpose, and that this can only come about through our benefitting by being in His school of discipline, and training, and "abiding in Him." Looking now at John 16:23, we read, "And **in that day** ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you." Their Lord and Master was going to leave them as He had told them, and this filled their hearts with sorrow. In verse 22 He says, "And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

Here we have His resurrection foretold, with the joy that would accompany it in their hearts, and it is in this connection that we have verse 23. This gives us another **essential** to true prayer, and that is "an apprehension of His resurrected and glorified person," the proof to us that God can and will answer the prayers of His children. The distinction should be thus noted between Jno. 15:7 and John 16:23. In the one case, as mentioned before, it is a matter of faithfulness and obedience linked with the apprehension of His purpose, and in the other (Jno. 16:25) it is a matter of faith laying hold of this glorious fact that we have a great High Priest at God's right hand in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the one hand God would have us to be exercised in regard to our walk and inner life and then ask "what ye will" (our will having been brought into line with His will) and on the other hand He would have us in faith to lift up our eyes and see the One Who is now alive for evermore, risen, exalted, glorified, and ask—in His Name. We fail to enter into the reality of **prayer**, if we do not apprehend in some measure these precious truths.

Misleading terminology, adhered to from a mistaken notion of its practical usefulness, works a lot of havoc. It is no exaggeration to say that much of the confusion existing in the church is the result of terms either wrong in themselves or wrongly applied.

IS THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED ETERNAL?

The present brief life of man does not comprise the whole of his existence. Unlike the beasts that perish, he has an existence after death. What and where that existence will be, God alone can tell. He has told, and the record is in the Holy Scriptures. It has been acknowledged in all ages, by those who have read God's Word to learn, that His testimony concerning the future destiny of man is twofold, and as follows:—

That the righteous, the regenerate—those who have by faith become the children of God, at death become “absent from the body,” to be “at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:6, R. V.); that they depart to be with Christ (Phil. 1. 23) in paradise (Luke 23:43); that at the coming of the Lord Jesus they shall be raised incorruptible, and together with those who are alive and changed, they shall be caught up in bodies fashioned like the Lord's (Phil. 3:21), to be with Him for ever (1 Thess. 4:17).

That the wicked, the unregenerate,—those who die in sin and unbelief, pass into punishment, and that their punishment is conscious torment,” (Luke 16:23-26) in hell, or hades, while their bodies are in the grave. At “the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:29) they will be raised, to be judged according to their works, before the great white throne, and from thence cast into “the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14-15). The wicked who are alive on the earth when the Son of Man returns, will be “punished with everlasting destruction” (2 Thess. 1:9), and this punishment is said to be “eternal punishment” (Matt. 25:46, R. V.) in “eternal fire” (vs. 41), and in this eternal fire they are to suffer torment for ever and ever (Rev. 14:10-11), with the Devil that deceived them (Rev. 20:10). Such is the solemn and awful doom of the wicked, pronounced by God, who cannot lie, and it is ours to receive His testimony.

But some refuse this.—Admitting the eternity of bliss for the saved, they reject God's testimony concerning the eternal doom of the lost. These objectors are divided into two classes. The one class say, that the words “everlasting” and “eternal” do not mean unceasing or never-ending; that punishment is not in conscious torment, but that those who die without having life in Christ are annihilated. This is the doctrine of the **Annihilationist**. The other class of objectors say, that God being a God of love, He shall ultimately save all men, and even the Devil and his angels. This is the doctrine of the **Universalist**. A single utterance of the Lord Jesus answers both these classes of objectors, and sweeps away their theories. It is this: “He that believeth not the Son **shall not see life** but the **wrath of God abideth on him**” (John 3:36). “**Shall not see life**” precludes the idea of universal salvation; “**The wrath of God abideth on him**” testifies against

annihilation. Divine wrath cannot "abide" on that which has ceased to be.

But what do the words "eternal," "everlasting," and "for ever and ever" mean?—words which are all used by God to describe the duration of the punishment. Let us see. The word "**aionios**" occurs 71 times in the New Testament. It is rendered "eternal" in the following passages:—"The Eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14), "Eternal life" (Rom. 6:23), "Eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9), "Eternal glory" (1 Pet. 5:10), "Eternal damnation" (Mark 3:29), "Eternal fire" (Jude 7). Here, the Spirit of God, the life, salvation, and glory of the saved, and the damnation of the lost, are described in exactly the same words. If the "fire" is not eternal, neither is the "life" nor the "glory," for the same word expresses the duration of them all.

Now let us take the word "everlasting." It is used in the following passages:—"The Everlasting God" (Rom. 16:26), "Everlasting life" (John 3:16), "Everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25:46), "Everlasting fire" (Matt. 18:8; 25:41). Here the existence of God, the life of the believer, the punishment of the lost, or the fire of Gehenna, are precisely of the same duration. To say the punishment will cease, or the fire go out, is to say that God will cease to be. The words "for ever and ever" are found as follows:—"God, who liveth for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:7), "They shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5), "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Rev. 14:11). The inevitable conclusion therefore is that God's Word declares the punishment of the wicked to be eternal, in conscious, endless torment, in which there is no cessation, from which there is no deliverance.

These are the true sayings of God; ours is to reverently receive them. The doctrine of the non-eternity of punishment is now spread far and wide. The main argument so often used by the advocates of this doctrine is, that an eternity of punishment for the wicked, would be inconsistent with the love of God to men. But let it be remembered, that the love of God to men has been already manifested in the Cross of Christ. To reject that Cross, is to despise the love that planned it, and to merit the "much sorer punishment" reserved for those who have "trodden under foot the Son of God" (Heb. 10:29). There is no reserve of mercy, no further probation for those who despise the Gospel and reject the Son of God. It is a theory of man's conception, void of Scripture authority. Yet the doctrine is popular:—it suits the carnal mind. It is held and taught by many professed ministers of the Gospel, who, notwithstanding this, make high pretensions to be "evangelical." But an "evangelism" that obscures God's character, denies His justice, and rejects His truth, is from the pit, and inasmuch as it ignores the character of sin, disparages the

atonement of Christ, and denies the truth of God, it must be regarded as "another Gospel," and those who hold and preach it ought to be eschewed, and treated as "the enemies of the Cross of Christ."—J. R.

SANCTIFIED BY THE GLORY

(Exodus 29:43.)

Perhaps no other thought has so fixed the attention of God's children in these days as that of "sanctification," until one almost fears the subtle temptation to put Christ's gift to the Church in the place which He alone should occupy; or of bringing one truth so exclusively to the front as necessarily, though unknowingly, to leave others, equally important, in the background. And yet the Divine instruction given to Paul is simple and clear as when he wrote it by the Spirit for us in his second epistle to the Corinthians. "We all beholding,"—by one continuous act of our redeemed lives—"are changed into the same image" (chapter 3:18). Let us remember it is the active particle of the verb, denoting one unfinished attitude of soul through all our blood-bought service. There is no pause allowed to look within at the work of the Spirit; for let us bear in mind it must ever be a reflected, because an untransferable, glory. "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

The work of the Holy Ghost is to shed into our dark hearts this living glory from the face of Jesus Christ; but only in one divinely-appointed way—"Reflecting as a mirror" (R. V.). When we turn our eyes away, the reflection is gone, for it was never ours. May the Spirit of God write it in letters of fire on our hearts, that it was never ours. Paul could give to Timothy no higher charge than to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; all ours to use in the blessed fellowship of His life, for it is written, "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them" (John 17:22). Ours, in its fulness by the will and gift of Christ; ours in our soul's experience only as we enter in and take possession in God's way. Blessed with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Alas, how much of our rich inheritance remains for ever uncoveted and unclaimed! Yet the grace of John 17:22, is as truly Christ's gift to His Church, under Divine conditions, as is the eternal life of chapter 10; and as the one life is our unbroken oneness in the presence of God, so the grace by which it is "made perfect" (verse 23) is the manifesting of this oneness to the world.

"Partakers of the Divine nature.—The Spirit of God has wrought in us, by the new birth, a new nature, in which the grace of Christ can be displayed, and into which the light of the knowledge of the glory of God can shine; but the riches of Divine provision, in which God

has left nothing lacking, has involved us in the deeper responsibility 5:9-10), as complete in God's purpose in the fellowship of Christ's life "lest we neglect so great salvation,"—a daily, hourly salvation (Heb. (Gal. 2:20), as is the salvation from wrath, finished for us by our fellowship in His death for our sin. In His own counsels, and by His beloved Son, God wrought out redemption for us, untouched by our foolishness or unbelief; and when He would enrich us with sanctification, He loved us too well to put it into our hands to use to our own hurt; and thus, in His manifold wisdom, instead of giving us each a portion, He put into Christ the infinite fulness of supply that it might flow out inexhaustibly, fresh from the heart of God,—as Israel in the wilderness drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. So that ever, as we drink it in the presence of such a glory, we might the more deeply learn our own emptiness and need. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33.)

The Shekinah Glory.—We trace foreshadowings of the same truth in the Old Testament Scriptures. When Moses had made all things after the pattern showed to him in the mount, and had literally followed out every instruction given him, still not the perfections of gold or of shittim wood sanctified the earthly sanctuary; but the presence of the God of glory. So that "Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle" (Ex. 40:33-35).

Again, in the ordering of the Temple, obedience to the Divine command was of such intense importance that God gave beforehand, by the Spirit, to David His servant, the "pattern" of all that Solomon his son was to do; and while the exact copying of the minutest detail was the one ground on which the promise of indwelling could be fulfilled, yet the obedience was not the glory, but the presence that revealed every outline, and searched our every precious thing by its uncreated light. "So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God" (2 Chron. 5:14).

"We shall be like Him."—Not only now is this God's way with His people, but when the image of Christ shall be perfected in His glorified saints, still shall He, and He alone, be "admired in all them that believe;" and when we reign with Him in His kingdom, the light that lightens the millennial earth shall be caught from Him who sits upon the throne. "Her light was like unto a stone most precious, **even like a jasper stone**" (Rev. 21:11). Compare chapter 4:3, "Clear as crystal." Still it is the immutable **law of reflection**, perfected when we see Him as He is, and never more turn these wandering eyes from off the wondrous vision. Perhaps we need more than we know, to

have quickened in our souls the love which is the first principle of our new nature, that in fellowship with God's unchanging purpose we may be willing to let Christ stand, not only first, but alone, in the glory of our separation,—our sanctification!—A. E. W.

THE PARSON, HIS GARDENER, AND THE PICTURE

He was a High Church clergyman, devoted to church architecture, music, and ritual; visited his parishioners weekly; did his utmost to get them to church, and to make good "Churchmen" of them. Speaking later of his experience he said:

"I remember that my thoughts dwelt very much on forgiveness and salvation, but I preached that these were to be had in and by the Church, which was as the ark in which Noah was saved . . . and all who were not inside were lost. . . . I had no idea that I was lost now. Far from that; I thought I was as safe as the Church herself, and that the gates of hell could not prevail against me."

But all the time he was a stranger to conversion, forgiveness, salvation, and the new birth. Often he said to himself, "What can this conversion be?" and God graciously showed him through his own servant. I give the account in his own words:

"My gardener, a good Churchman, and duly despised by his neighbor for attaching himself to me and my teaching, fell seriously ill. I sent him at once to the doctor, who pronounced him to be in 'consumption,' and gave no hope of his recovery. No sooner, however, did he realize his position, and see eternity before him, than all the Church teaching I had given him failed to console or satisfy, and his heart sank within him at the near prospect of death. In his distress of mind he did not send for me to come and pray with him, but actually sent for a converted man who lived in the next row of cottages. This man, instead of building him up as I had done, went to work in the opposite direction—to break him down! That was, to show my servant he was a lost sinner, and needed to come to Jesus just as he was for pardon and salvation. He was brought under deep conviction of sin and eventually found peace through the precious blood of Jesus.

"Immediately it spread over the parish 'that the parson's servant was converted.' The news soon reached me, but instead of giving joy, it brought the most bitter disappointment to my heart. Such was the profound ignorance I was in. Still I went on, hoping against hope, 'building from the top' without any foundation,—teaching people to live before they were born. God was speaking to me all this time about the Good Shepherd who gave His life for me; but I did not hear Him, nor suspect that I was lost.

"In those days, when building my new church, and talking about the tower and spire we were going to erect, an elderly Christian lady, who was sitting in her wheel-chair, calmly listening to our conversation, said, 'Will you begin to build your spire from the top?' It was a strange question: but she evidently meant something, and looked for an answer. I gave it, saying, 'No, madam, not from the top, but from the foundation.'" She replied, 'that is right! that is right!' and went on with her knitting. This question was not asked in jest or in ignorance,—it was a riddle. What did she mean? In a few years this lady passed away, but her enigmatic words remained. No doubt she thought to herself that I was beginning at the wrong end, while I went on talking of the choir, organ, happy worship, and all the things we were going to attempt in the new church; that I was aiming at sanctification without justification, intending to teach people to be holy before they were saved and pardoned.

"This is exactly what I was doing. I had planted the boards of my tabernacle of worship, not in silver sockets (the silver of which had been paid for redemption, Exod. 30:11-16), but in the sand of the wilderness. In other words, I was teaching people to worship God, who is a Spirit, not for love of Him who gave His Son to die for them, but in the fervor and enthusiasm of human nature. My superstructure was built on sand, and hence the continual disappointment. . . . No wonder that my life was a failure, and my labors ineffectual, inasmuch as my efforts were not put forth in faith. My work was not done as a thank-offering, but rather as a meritorious effort to obtain favor with God."

And is not this where thousands are today in highly privileged and responsible Christendom? They have a name to live, but they are "dead" and all their works are "dead works," from which they need cleansing by "the blood of Christ" to enable them "to serve the living God." (Heb. ix. 14.)

At this point our friend, the subject of my narrative, went on a visit to a truly saved and godly clergyman, who told him plainly he was "not converted," and showed him he was not, from the Scriptures, and then prayed for him. "What he prayed for," he says, "I do not know. I was completely overcome, and melted to tears. I sat down on the ground, sobbing, while he shouted aloud, praising God." A few days after this, he was truly converted to God whilst preaching from the searching question, "What think ye of Christ?" (Matt. 22:42.)

The news spread in all directions that "the parson was converted," and that by his own sermon, in his own pulpit. The church would not hold the crowds who came in the evening. He says, "I cannot exactly remember what I preached about on that occasion, but one thing I said was, 'That if I had died last week I should have been lost for ever.' I felt it was true. So clear and vivid was the conviction through which I had passed, and so distinct was the light into which the Lord had brought me, that I knew and was sure that He had 'brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and put a new song into my mouth.' (Ps. 40.) He had 'quickened' me who was before 'dead in trespasses and sins.'" (Eph. 2:1.)

I now turn to the "quaint old picture" and the inferences that the subject of this paper drew from it, which I will give in his own words.

"As I was sitting by the fire one wet afternoon, my eyes fell on a little colored picture on the mantelpiece, which had been the companion of my journeys . . . It was a quaint medieval illustration of Moses lifting up the Serpent in the Wilderness, —copied from a valuable manuscript in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford.

"As I looked at the engraving before me I began to suspect for the first time that there was a design in the arrangement of the figures, and that it was really intended to convey some particular teaching. I took it in my hand and studied it, when I observed that the cross or pole on which the serpent was elevated stood in the center, dividing two sets of characters; and that there were serpents on one side and none on the other.

"Behind the figure of Moses was a man standing with his arms crossed on his breast, looking at the brazen serpent. He evidently obtained life and healing by a look. On the other side I observed that there were four kinds of persons represented, who were not doing as this healed one did to obtain deliverance.

"First, there is one who is kneeling in front of the pole; but he is looking towards Moses, not at the serpent, and apparently confessing to him as if he were a priest.

"Next behind him is one lying on his back, as if he was perfectly safe, though he is in the midst of danger, for a serpent may be seen at his ear, possibly whispering, 'Peace, peace, when there is no peace.'

"Still further back from the pole there is a man with a sad face doing a work of mercy, binding up the wounds of a fellow-sufferer, and little suspecting that he himself is involved in the same danger.—

"Behind them all, on the background, is a valiant man, who is doing battle with the serpents, which may be seen rising against him in unabating persistency.

"I observed that none of these men were looking at the brazen serpent, as they were commanded to do. I cannot describe how excited and interested I became: for I saw in this illustration a picture of my own life. Here was the way of salvation clearly set forth, and four ways which are not the way of salvation, all of which I had tried and found unavailing. This was the silent but speaking testimony of some unknown monk, a denizen of a cloister who lived in the beginning of the fifteenth century, in the days of ignorance and superstition. But notwithstanding this darkness, he was brought out into the light, and to leave this marvelous record of his experience.

"Like him, I also had fought with the serpents; for I began in my own strength to combat with sin, and strove by my own resolutions to overcome it. From this I went on to do works of mercy, in the vain hope of thus obtaining the mercy of God for myself. Then I relied in the Church for salvation, as God's appointed ark of safety; but not feeling secure, I took another step beyond, and sought forgiveness through the power of the priest. This I found was as ineffectual as all my previous efforts. At last I was brought (by the Spirit of God) as a wounded and dying sinner to look at the crucified One. Then, and not till then, I found pardon and peace. Ever since that happy day it has been my joy and privilege (like Moses pointing to the serpent) to cry "Behold the Lamb of God; which taketh away the sin of the world, (John 1-29); "I have henceforth determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified; that is, to tell only of the person, office and finished work of Jesus Christ our Lord."

READER, are you "born again"?

WHEN?**When is the time to trust?**

Is it when all is calm,
 When waves the victor's palm,
 And life is one glad psalm
 Of joy and praise?
 Nay; but the time to trust
 Is when the waves beat high,
 When storm-clouds fill the sky,
 And prayer is one long cry,
 Oh, help and save!

When is the time to trust?

Is it when friends are true?
 Is it when comforts woo?
 And in all we say and do
 We meet but praise?
 Nay; but the time to trust
 Is when we stand alone,
 And summer birds have flown,
 And every prop is gone—
 All else but God.

When is the time to trust?

Is it some future day
 When you have tried your way,
 And learned to trust and pray,
 By bitter woe?
 Nay; but the time to trust
 Is in this moment's need;—
 Poor, broken, bruised reed,
 Poor, troubled soul, make speed
 To trust thy God!

There are three "whats" connected with the salvation of every believer. First, **What from?** Second, **What by?** Third, **What to?** What from? Believers are redeemed from hell and destruction. What by? By the precious blood of Christ. What to? To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

NOVEMBER, 1929

No. 11

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

THOS. D. W. MUIR

The testimony of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, is clear, that it is God's purpose to have His redeemed people separated unto Himself. It is equally clear that Satan, the arch-enemy of God and man, is determined to obliterate, as far as he can, the line of demarcation between them and that world of which they once formed a part. Thus, in reading the history of God's people, whether it be Israel or the Church, we find a continual conflict with the powers of evil, and a continual necessity for God's intervention, in order to preserve a clear testimony for Himself in the scene.

This principle of "Separation" we find illustrated in Genesis 1, when we are told "God divided the light from the darkness" (v. 4). In the New Testament the Spirit of God frequently refers to the people of God as "lights" in the world, while the unsaved are spoken of as "darkness." For instance: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness"—referring to Genesis I—"hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor., 4:6. Again we read, "Ye were some time (at one time) darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light." Eph., 5:8. For this reason we are commanded to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. 5:12. Thus does God, as in Genesis I,

Divide the Light From the Darkness.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth He spake of Himself as the "Light of the world." He declared that He had "come, a light into the world," that whosoever believed on Him "should not abide in darkness." The light with which He enlightened His own, being antagonistic to the darkness of which they had formed a part, made for itself a line of separation. Old things, of necessity, passed away, and all things became new. Old associations gave way to new ones. The old pursuits and pleasures could no longer gratify. That to which "no harm" attached in unconverted days was now abhorrent, because the light had "shone into their hearts." Translated from darkness to light, the path of the child of God is "in the light." If determined to walk with God, he **must** walk in the light, for that is where God is. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and **walk in darkness**, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we **walk in the**

light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." I Jno., 1:6, 7. That the world cannot walk in this path is evident, for "the way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble." Prov. 4:19.

Hence the force of the words in 2 Corinthians, 6, "What communion hath light with darkness? * * * wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate." The entrance of God's Word has given light to those who have received it (Ps. 119:130, and it is indeed "marvellous light" (I Pet., 2:9), as distinct from the darkness of this world, which is the direct result of sin, as the glory of the midday sun is from the darkness of midnight! Thus there can be no real fellowship between the children of God, and the children of this world, if the former are maintaining their true place among the latter. How "can two walk together except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3. They cannot in this case, unless the child of God hide his light, and walk in darkness with the worldling!

Jehoshaphat and Ahab.—In the story of the "fellowship" between Jehoshaphat, the godly king of Judah, and Ahab, the ungodly king of Israel, we have an illustration of our point. (Read I Chronicles, Chapters 17 and 18.)

Jehoshaphat was, on the whole, a good man, whose desire was to please God and walk according to His Word. He was also interested in getting the pure Word of God taught among the people, so he sent forth men throughout his kingdom to do this work. He also fortified his land and the cities thereof against the enemy which might at some time attack him with weapons of war. But Satan had other ways of attack, against which Jehoshaphat had not provided, and for a time the enemy succeeded, to Jehoshaphat's sorrow.

Jehoshaphat had a son, Jehoram. Of him it is said: "He walked in the ways of the king of Israel, as did the house of Ahab, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the Lord." 2 Kings, 8:18. This wife of Jehoram's was Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel, the two most wicked women known in Scripture. Through this ungodly alliance the royal house of David was later almost extinguished, and would have been by Athaliah were it not for the interposition of Jehoshabeath, a sister of Jehoram, who hid his son **Joash** in the Temple of the Lord. (Read 2 Chron., 22:10-12.)

It is to this alliance that the Spirit of God refers in 2 Chr., 18:1, when we are told that Jehoshaphat had "joined affinity with Ahab." It would seem that he had given his sanction to the marriage of his son with the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Probably considered it a "good match" to have him linked thus with the powerful northern kingdom of Israel. But it was Satan who was behind it all, and his object was to still further entrap Jehososhaphat, as we see.

Alas, the children who must be "settled in life," with husbands or wives, are often the snare that the enemy uses to cause the parents, whose path hitherto has been one of separation from the world, to tone down a bit, and go in for principles and practices which makes the line between light and darkness less distinct than they had hitherto dreamed of!

Fighting for a Good Cause.—Our chapter (2 Chr., 18) opens by telling us that "after certain years" Jehoshaphat paid a visit to Ahab, who treated him royally. He "killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance." It was while he was thus being feted and feasted that Jehoshaphat got the proposal from King Ahab that they go together to Ramoth-Gilead and take it from the Syrians. Now Ramoth-Gilead was one of the cities of Israel. It was also one that had a special sanctity attached to it, inasmuch as it was set apart as a city of refuge, (Josh. 20:7-9), and was one of the cities of the priests. (Joshua 21:34-40.) It certainly seemed a wrong thing to have such a city in the hands of the enemy and a "good cause" for which to work together, to take it from them. So Jehoshaphat consented to go, saying, "I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war." (Verse 3.)

So said poor Jehoshaphat. But was it true? It sounded very humble and very courteous and all that, to speak that way. But was it true? It was not. Jehoshaphat was a child of God and Ahab was a child of the Devil, thus it was the commingling of light and darkness,—which God seeks to keep separate,—for them to be associated thus together, however commendatory the object might seem to be.

This alliance almost cost Jehoshaphat his life, for Ahab cunningly disguised himself, while he induced the King of Judah to go out to battle in his royal robes. And had it not been for the gracious interposition of Jehovah, the reign of Jehoshaphat would have closed that day. For the Syrians surrounded him, and would have slain him had not God, in answer to the cry of His servant, caused them to depart from him; while a bow drawn at a venture by one of the Syrians sent an arrow between the joints of Ahab's armor, with which he had clothed himself. May the Lord help us to draw our lesson from this story of Jehoshaphat!

Satan knows well he cannot get many of God's dear people to go in for the world's **vile** ways. But he has ruined many of them as to their testimony by presenting the alluring bait of some "good cause," with which they might identify themselves. The world is ever ready to avail themselves of their aid and thus the unequal yoke is formed to the setting aside of God's Word, and the damage of both saint and sinner! Hear, then, the Word of the Lord, "Come out from among them and be ye separate,"—**and obey it!**

THE COMING OF THE LORD

Address by MR. W. J. McCLURE in Central Gospel Hall, Detroit. (From notes by Dr. H. A. Cameron)

Read Matthew 2:1-15; 21:5-11

We have two pictures of the coming of the Lord in the Gospel of Matthew, one in Chapter 2, the other in chapter 21. The first picture is from Micah 5; the second is from Zechariah 9. These two pictures give us two "stages" of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 21 we have that stage which we speak of as the "manifestation,"—when the Lord Jesus Christ will come to the earth, Jerusalem will be the objective and He will come then as King. For a little while, a gleam of that coming glory rested upon that scene as depicted in Matthew 21. Here the Lord Jesus Christ came riding upon an ass, upon a colt, the foal of an ass. The multitudes strewed His path with their garments and with branches from the trees, and made His coming a triumphant entrance. They cried "Hosannah to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosannah in the highest!" It did not last very long, but while it lasted it was a picture of the scene that we shall take part in by and by. Alas, how soon the same voices that cried "Hosannah," cried "Away with Him! Crucify Him!"

But in contrast to this picture of His coming to Jerusalem, in glory and splendor, there is another picture, not Christ's coming to Jerusalem, but **certain men led to Christ while Israel remained in darkness.** You remember that little word in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, "We beseech you brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him." That is the first stage, the event we are waiting for. That is what might take place tonight. If the Lord Jesus Christ comes tonight that verse will be fulfilled, "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering—our being led—unto Him." The Holy Spirit that led us unto Christ as Saviour, will not have finished His work until He leads us unto Him at His coming again. It is like what we have in the 24th of Genesis, Abraham's servant's task was accomplished only when he led Rebecca to Isaac.

May the Lord help us to see in these two portions the two aspects of the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps it is not necessary to point them out to you. I presume most, if not all here, know that the first stage of the coming of the Lord, will be His coming to the air, which will be separated from the second stage,—His coming to the earth,—by a period of probably seven years.

If you had gone to a Jewish rabbi at any time preceding our Lord's birth, and said to him, "To Whom does that word in Micah 5

apply? What does it mean?" "Oh," he would answer, "that refers to the coming of the Messiah." "Yes, but there is another passage in the prophecy of Zechariah, 'Behold thy King cometh unto thee, lowly and riding upon an ass.' Will you please tell me to whom that applies?" And he would answer, "That also applies to the coming of the Messiah." "At the same time?" "Yes, at the same time," he would answer. And yet the entire life of the Lord Jesus Christ comes in between the fulfillment of these two prophecies in Micah 5 and Zechariah 9:9. Micah speaks of His coming to Bethlehem, and Zechariah refers to His coming to Jerusalem. And so do we recognize the fact of the two aspects of His coming, which we must distinguish,—first His coming to the air, and later His coming to the earth. But you will meet Christians who think that every Scripture which refers to the "coming" of Christ speaks of the same time; whether it is the "coming" spoken of in 1 Thessalonians,—the coming for His saints, or the "coming" predicted in 2 Thessalonians, when He is to be revealed in flaming fire, or His "coming" described in Matthew 25 to judge the living nations; they say these all refer to the one event—the coming of Christ. They do, but in 1 Thessalonians He is coming to the air, and in 2 Thessalonians it is when He is manifested to the earth,—and our appearing then with Him, when He comes to establish His kingdom,—and in Matt. 25, His judgment of His own and His people's (Israel's) friends and enemies, during the period just closed, of "the great tribulation."

But there is something else in Matthew 2 that I would like you to look at. It is not only a picture of His coming again,—His coming to the air, and our being led to Him while yet Israel will be in darkness but there is something for the present. Here are Gentiles,—outside the pale of Israel,—and they come seeking for the Christ. **"Where is He that is born King of the Jews?"** they ask. They are coming to worship Him,—and for this purpose have come to Jerusalem. They have hitherto been guided by the star, but they seem to have gotten their eye off that beacon, in the meantime. They make inquiry there in Jerusalem, and thus they are brought to Herod the King, and he calls the scribes and asks of them where Christ should be born. The scribes are able to put their fingers upon that Scripture in Micah 5: "Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler of Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." These scribes knew the Scriptures, but they did not know Christ. Their knowledge of the Word of God only made them better tools in the hand of Satan, and, could it have happened, their knowledge would only have guided that murderer to the very cradle of the Child, but that of course could not be.

When the wise men left Jerusalem they saw the star again and they rejoiced, for that star came to a place directly over-head, shedding its beams upon a humble home. They could not make any mistake; the star indicated the very place. They came into the house and they saw—what? Mary? You know Mary is the one we see in pictures. Mary with a halo around her head, and made the center of attraction. Is that what they saw? Look how it reads, “When they were come into the house they saw the young Child, with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshipped **Him**.” It is **the Child** that occupies their attention,—“They fell down and worshipped Mary”?—No! **“They fell down and worshipped Him.”** Just notice how God puts it. A Child: to all human appearance, the Child of a poor woman, found in the most humble of circumstances,—without anything to indicate superiority in the kingdom. Yet they are not staggered, for we read, “They worshipped **Him**.” You get no hint that these men thought for a moment, “We must be wrong. This cannot be the place.” When they started from their far-distant home they wanted to see a King, and it is more than likely if you had met them on their way and said, “Where are you going?” they would have said, “We are going to see a King, the King of the Jews.” “And where will you find him?” “Oh, in a royal home, of course, in a palace surrounded with splendor!” But when they came they express no disappointment. Their faith was a divinely-given faith, and when they saw Him, instead of being stumbled at the poverty of the situation, and saying, “There is a mistake, there is nothing here to show Him as a King”—I say, instead of that, they gave Him the tribute of a King.

And is it not well that we who have been guided to Christ as God's Center,—in these days of apostacy and departure,—this day of division into sects and parties; is it not well, I say, that our faith be so grounded, that no matter what the circumstances we shall not hesitate? Here in Detroit it might be easy now to identify one's self and to gather with such a large company to His Name, but even here there are few, if any, of God's people who will not be tested at some time or other, so that they will ask, “Have I really been led by the Spirit of God unto **Him**?” The cause of this leading to Christ—whether in conversion at the first; in owning His Lordship now, or being led up to meet Him in the air—is all the work of the Holy Ghost. In Matthew 18:20, we read, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.” That word “gathered together” is exactly the same as the one in 2 Thessalonians 2:1. Christ is the **Center**; the Holy Ghost is the **Power**,—the One Who gathers to that Center,—and believers in Christ are the **subjects**,—the

ones that have been so gathered. Instead of this being a thing that we may or may not do, it is something that the Holy Ghost commands, and therefore, obedience is becoming on our part.

Those men saw "the star," and the star led them to Him, shedding its beams upon Him. And the Holy Spirit of God leads us now by the Word to Him as our Saviour God, who has come, and by and by He will lead us to Him in the air as the Coming One. It is well that every heart should have this clearly before God. It may be that you will be tested. Things may not go in the Assembly as you would like. There may be a poverty of gift that you did not expect, or things that perhaps nature may feel unable to bear. You may be tempted to think, "I made a mistake,—we are not any better than others." Of course that is true, but there is one thing that we do know, and that is that the Word of God led us to Christ, and no poverty of gift, or mistakes upon the part of some that are gathered to Him, or decrease in numbers, count for a moment, for we saw Him. "They saw the young Child and they worshipped **Him**."

Look now what their worship consisted of,—at least, how they expressed it. "When they had opened their treasures they presented unto Him, gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh." If He is a King, then He should have tributes from His kingdom; and I see these hoary-headed men,—men of wisdom in their own country,—men that have been led by God from these distant places,—I see them open their treasures, and as I do so, I see a picture of the Church giving Christ His place while as yet He is unknown to Israel,—Israel in unbelief, but the Church worshipping Him. "They worshipped Him and opened their treasures and gave Him gifts." I suppose there are none of us that are too well instructed as to worship. Every child of God here will say "It is a subject that I would like to know more about." How many of us know that in true worship we present the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to the Father?

They present to Him gold. What is suggested by the gold? No doubt His **deity**. As we are gathered to Him to worship on the Lord's Day morning, what do we give Him? Do we not thank God that "His goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity";—that it was He Who sat upon the throne between the Cherubim;—that it was He before Whom the Seraphim veiled their faces, and said, "Holy, holy, holy is Jêhovah of hosts"? We think of His "deity," as we meditate thus.

If there is one thing that I am more thankful for than anything else, it is this that if, in any of our assemblies (and I have been in many such companies around the world) one had said a word against the full deity of the Lord Jesus he would have been immediately challenged, and certainly would not be allowed to do it the second

time. In this day of apostacy the Lord Jesus Christ is brought down by many to the standing of a mere man, by men who think they are even better than He,—men who say that He was a man of limited intelligence, and that we have now avenues of information that were closed to Him, for, they say, He knew only what the rabbis of that day told Him. But is it not a cause for thanksgiving that, amidst all this departure, there are companies that present the **“gold”** to God,—that know that the One they present to God in worship, was in the bosom of the Father through all eternity; and that He who was **with** God, **was**, and **is God!** If we are spared till next Lord’s Day, I hope that when we come together this will be the first thought, that He is God from all eternity. That of course is not the only place of worship, but it is where we have the privilege of collective worship, as illustrated by these men from the **“East.”**

When God begins the Epistle to the Hebrews He begins with the **“gold,”**—before He mentions Christ’s work He tells us Who He was, when in the bosom of the Father,—**“His Son Whom he hath appointed Heir of all things, Who was the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power.”**

Look at the next thing—frankincense. Frankincense tells us of His holy Manhood. It tells us of that holy life which was ever a fragrant odor to God,—the graces of His holy Manhood. Thus, while, in the gold we have His **deity**, we have in the frankincense, His **incarnation**,—His sinless humanity. **“A body Thou hast prepared Me,”** He said, and God, the Father, looking down upon Him, breaks the silence of centuries and exclaims, **“This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased.”** He rejoices in the fragrance of that life?

Myrrh.—Myrrh was the principal spice used in making the ointment for embalming the dead, and myrrh would speak of **Christ’s death.** And what a wonderful thing this is,—the One Who was with God from all eternity, coming down to this earth and living a life of such moment that the Father twice breaks the silence, saying, **“This is My beloved Son,”**—and then that such a One should die! **“This is My Body broken for you,”** Christ says, and in 1 Corinthians 11 we read. **“As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till He come.”** Thus we have depicted in these offerings, Christ as God, Christ as Man, and Christ as the One that gave Himself for us. May the Lord help us to know what it is to worship. **“They presented unto Him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”**

There is another very precious thought. Joseph, Mary, and the babe are soon to take that long journey and that long sojourn in the land of Egypt. The necessity comes suddenly. You remember that Mary and Joseph were living in Nazareth, but, had they contin-

ued to live in Nazareth, how could the prophecy that our Lord was to come forth out of Bethlehem in Judah be fulfilled? He cannot be born in Nazareth; He must be born in Bethlehem; and God sees to it that this is brought about. He puts into the mind of the Emperor at Rome to take a census, and in order to do that, every man and woman must go to their native city. Now, Joseph and Mary had been born in Bethlehem, and they must go to their birthplace, to this very place, because the Emperor had so decreed. They go therefore to Bethlehem at just the right time, and "when the fulness of the time was come," Jesus is born in Bethlehem. God's will having been effected, what does it matter whether the Emperor's order as to the census is ever carried out? Indeed we understand it never was completed. But God's Word that Christ should be born in Bethlehem was literally fulfilled.

But now they must leave for Egypt, and leave very quickly. How shall they undertake that expensive journey? When Mary went to the temple she gave as an offering "two turtle doves," God's concession to poverty. (Lev. 12:8). Mary was just the soul that would have given God the very best she had, but the best she had was this offering of "two turtle doves." That spells poverty. When that dear woman took her offering to the temple, she took advantage of God's concession to those in her position,—and thus she gave what the law allowed the poor to give,—two turtle doves. But now what shall they do? They have to sojourn in Egypt, and that involves great expense. How shall they who are so poor meet this costly journey? God sees to that. There is a word in Psalm 22:9, 10, "Thou didst make Me trust when I was upon my mother's breast," and God will see to the carrying out of this prophecy. Here is One Who is to be an example of faith from first to last, and now on the eve of that journey to Egypt, God leads these men to offer gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and thus provides in their "worship" all that is needed.

At the bottom of much controversy are the fantastic standards existing in the minds of "crotchety" individuals, having no scriptural foundation, but cherished by them as if they were the very "archetypal ideas" of the Divine Intelligence.

A tear in the eye on account of sin, adorns a sinner far more than a jewel in the ear, especially if shed for the wrong done to God. Esau wept because he **lost** the blessing, not because he **sold** it.

Our good works are powerless and lifeless and worthless, unless they proceed naturally and spontaneously from our passion of thankfulness for what Christ has done for us and for all men.

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

WILLIAM ROBERTSON

(Concluded from September)

The fourth statement, "**preached unto the Gentiles,**" undoubtedly gives us the connecting link, as it were, between the first three statements which present Christ personally, and the last two statements, that bring before us, as we shall see, the Church in her association with Him as risen from the dead.

It might be well for the sake of clearness, to point out, that there are at least two distinctive words in the original for our English word "preach," which have two distinctive meanings. One of these words denotes that the gospel is preached, or brought to the unsaved, in a private way—that is, by **individual** testimony on the part of God's people. The other word denotes that the gospel is **proclaimed**, or announced, **publicly** to lost sinners, by the heralds of the cross. We give one example of the first meaning of the word.—In Acts 8:4 we read, "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere **preaching** the word." They "evangelized" sinners in a private way (see margin, Newberry.) And now for an example of the second meaning of the word "preach." This is to be found in the verse following (verse 5) where we read these words, "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and **preached** (or proclaimed as a herald) Christ unto them."

In passing we would mention that Acts 8:5 gives us the **first** use of the word "**preached**" in the sense we have just referred to it,—that is, to those **outside the pale of Israel**. The words, "preached unto the Gentiles," presupposes the great fact "that blindness in part is happened to Israel," (Roms. 11:25), because of her unbelief. On account of her "**fall**, salvation is come to the Gentiles" (v. 11) Israel had first to reject her God-sent "Messiah," ere "the gospel of the grace of God" could go out to the Gentile nations.

In the parable of "the vineyard and the husbandmen" (Matt. 21:33-40) we get God's dealings with Israel **before** the cross, but in the parable of "the marriage feast" (Matt. 22:1-14), we get in the clearest way, His dealings with that nation **after** the cross. Those who were first bidden to the feast (i. e., Israel) "would not come." Again "the King" sent forth "other servants" who entreated them to come, "but they made light" of the wondrous invitation to this "prepared" and sumptuous feast. Then we read, "the remnant took His **servants** (i. e., those after Pentecost), and treated them spitefully and slew them." When "the King heard thereof He was wroth: and He sent forth His armies (i. e., Titus and his Roman armies) and destroyed these murderers and burned up their city" (i. e., Jerusalem, A. D. 70). Is the wedding not to be "furnished with guests?" Yes, indeed. So we read, "the King" sent out His servants again, saying,

"Go out into the highways and hedges"; to the "streets and lanes of the city" and bring "the poor, and the maimed, and the halt and the blind" (see Luke 14:21); "both bad and good," (poor despised Gentiles) to the marriage feast, and having cleansed, and clothed each with a "wedding garment," befitting His august Presence, they sat down with him to enjoy the feast so richly provided. This beautiful parable, like the one preceding it, needs little comment, they are so Divinely simple. We only need remark that after the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7), the gospel goes out to the **Samaritans** whom the Jews despised (ch. 8); then follows the conversion of Saul, who became Paul—the "chosen vessel," to bear the Lord's Name "before the **Gentiles**, and Kings, and the **children of Israel**." (ch. 9:15). Note how the Gentiles come **before** Israel in this passage; as a rule it was the other way. In chapter 10, Peter is taught by the "vessel" coming down from Heaven, and going back again **into** Heaven, "wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth and **wild** beasts, and **creeping things**, and **fowls** of the air"—the truth, that the Jew and Gentile alike, if "cleansed" (v. 15) by the blood of Christ, are fitted thereby for God's Holy Heaven—it is, in brief, the Church, Heavenly as to its origin and Heavenly as to its **destiny** that is here revealed. "Lo Ammi"—"not my people," is in this age written over Israel by the finger of God, yet her "blindness" is but "**in part**." At "this present time," in His mercy towards them, "there is a **remnant** according to **the election of grace**," (Roms. 11:5) being saved from the once favored nation, but **pre-eminently** God's salvation is going out to the **Gentile nations** of the earth today, and when "the **fullness** of the Gentiles" is come in, that is, when "the full number" of such are brought in, and the Church is complete, **then** God will resume His dealings with **His** ancient people—"the elect, beloved for the **father's sakes**," and "Israel shall be saved" (Roms. 11:26) and enter into earthly blessing.—In short, it will be the "**fullness**" of Israel (see Roms. 11:12) during the Millennial Age.

In the meantime the gospel is being "preached unto the Gentiles," and in what follows, we shall see more fully the blessed results of such preaching, to lost and ruined sinners, world wide.

We shall now follow the results of the proclamation of the gospel to Jew and Gentile alike, as it is expressed in that exceedingly brief **statement, "believed on in the world."**

Ere a lost sinner can believe on Christ, and enter into the blessings that the gospel brings, he must first **hear** that gospel "**preached**" by the herald of the cross. In Roms. 12-17 we read, "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on

Him, in whom they have not believed? and **how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?** and how shall they hear without a preacher? So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the (spoken, Marg.) Word of God." It is clear then, that the statement, "preached unto the Gentiles," fills its proper place, as it **precedes** that which tells us Christ was "believed **on** in the world."

We would here likewise observe that the word "world" in our scripture is the same in the original as is found in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world," etc.

From all this we gather, that "the gospel of God . . . concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Roms. 1:1-3) is being preached to "every creature," as it is His will, "all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," (1 Tim. 2:3), and those who are thus being saved, "**out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation**" (Rev. 5:9—note the universal number), go to form that which Paul terms—"The Church of God" (1 Cors. 10:32).

The world is divided into three distinct circles, according to the last scripture, part of which we have quoted, namely, "Jews," "Gentiles," and the "Church of God." The last circle is composed of **saved** Jews and Gentiles, "the middle wall of partition" being "broken down," that was between them, and thus being "called **out** of" the first two circles and separated from them, they are no longer **of** the world" (John 17:14), although, for a season, **in** it. This is in keeping with what we read in Acts 15:14. "God did visit the Gentiles, to **take out** of them a people for **His** Name." It is, in brief, "the **ekkleesia** of God"—the entire community of all who are **called** by, and to Christ, "**out of** this present evil world." (Gals. 1:4.)

This "elect" company in association with the risen Christ, is elsewhere called "the One new Man" (Ephs. 2:15), and this again is termed "The Christ" (1 Cors. 12:12.) It embraces "the Head" in Heaven, and all "the members of His Body" on earth, and the whole combined—in the light of all we have learned from 1 Tim. 3:16—might be fitly termed "The Mystery of Godliness," as it bespeaks the eternal **unity** that exists, between Christ and that Church for which He died on Calvary.

The last statement "received up into glory," gives us, as it were, the grand finale of all we have said concerning "the Mystery of Godliness." It presents to our view the "hope" and destiny of the Church, even "that blessed Hope" (Titus 2:13) of seeing our Lord in all His glory, and being "**like** Him," and **with** Him forever in the "Father's house" above.

We take the first word, "received," and trace its use in the Scriptures so that we may learn its import in connection with the theme before us. The word in its original form is found some thirteen times in our New Testament, and while it is used of our Lord

being "taken up into heaven" (Acts 1:11), yet, as before said, we are convinced that in the scripture we are considering, its proper application is to the catching up of the Church at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The word is again fittingly used in Acts 10:16, in connection with "the vessel" seen by Peter in his vision, as being "**received up** into Heaven," and this speaks, in the clearest way, as we have already pointed out, to the **rapture** of the Church at the coming of the Lord.

It might be well, at this point, to give the import of this particular word. It simply means to "take **up**," or "take **unto**," and so we believe in this double sense, it has a direct reference to the Church, not only being taken up into Heaven at Christ's coming, but of that Church "as a chaste virgin" (2 Cor. 11:2), being presented "**to**" the Heavenly "Bridegroom"—"**glorious**, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5:27—Darby). Another renders this scripture thus, "That he might present the Church **to Himself** a **glorious Bride**, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such defect" (Weymouth). His Own words are, "I will come again and receive you (or take you) **unto Myself**; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). This, surely, is the language of the Bridegroom to His heavenly Bride, and Isaac-like, He must needs go out half way "to meet" her, as it is written, "For the Lord, **Himself** shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to **meet the Lord in the air**: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

All this is in perfect keeping with the statement "received up **into** (or **in**) glory," so that as said, we will not only be taken up into the **glory**, but our "changed" (1 Cor. 15:51) bodies, will be "**like unto His own glorious Body**" (Phil. 3:21), and like Moses and Elias on "the holy mount" (Luke 9:31), the very glory of the risen and exalted Christ of God, will be reflected in His "glorious" Bride, throughout the eternal ages—"world without end."

A Safe Resting Place.—My choicest seat is at the foot of the Cross. Nothing else can give me joy and comfort. I find the safest thing is to keep close to the Lord Jesus; and as I came at the first, so I come again and again; in this way the foe is defeated, and my soul is melted with love while He lifts upon me His heavenly countenance. . . . I feel my vileness, my unprofitableness, my woeful shortcomings, and am thankful if I can only creep to the foot of the Cross, and there repose my weary soul, refreshed by one look at the Lord Jesus, who died for my sins.

The "Old" and the "New Man."—The Ephesian saints as taught in Christ, and having received the truth "as in Him," put away concerning their former manner of life, the "old man;" and being renewed in the spirit of their mind, put on the "new man" which after God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth. This is the practical putting away of the "old" man, and the putting on of the "new," and is consequent on the reception of the truth as "in Jesus," that is, as subsisting in virtue of Him (Eph. 4:21-24). God has judicially dealt with "our old man" by means of the cross of Christ; our old man has been crucified with (not in) Him, and we (believers) being quickened and raised up, as we enter into our new condition "with" Him, become dead to the things which pertain to our old conditions. Concurrently we put off the old and put on the new man.

THE STORY OF A REDEEMED AFRICAN

J. ALEXANDER CLARKE—(Central Africa.)

It was just a scrap of paper that was pushed into my hand. It was from the far-off Garenganze land. It brought the saddest of sad messages, the kind which strikes right at the heart. It came from a colleague in that far-off land, writing against time, and with crowds of wailing natives climbing the hill and pressing against him. It contained five sad lines—"Kapekele passed away last night, faithful unto death. He sat up and talked to us yesterday afternoon, but at seven o'clock yesterday evening the relapse began, and soon he was in the presence of his Lord whom he loved and served so well."

So thus our friend in Christ,—won for the Master after long years of hard battle,—has gone triumphantly into the presence of the King. For many long years he was ever first and foremost for God in that dark and tragic land. And these later years are sharply in contrast to his former years, when he was first and foremost for the King Msidi. His long record of plunder and pillage, with the accompanying deeds of cruelty, won him a place at the right hand of a mighty chief on the border of the great Luba country, and made him the envy of the younger warriors. But that warrior spirit, Christ captured and redeemed. Sanctified, it carried him onward in the service of his new Chief, and in His name magnificent exploits were done. But what a victory grace won in him as day by day he responded to the claims of Christ and yielded his life thereto. That life became the veritable aperture through which God poured himself forth in great blessing on needy Africans. The strong warrior became gentle as a child, and his hard unflinching spirit became wondrously mellow under the transforming power of grace, as he sat at the feet of Him who said, "Come, learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." It was this that made his message so powerful, and himself the living exponent of our great Sanga word, Mutende (peace). Now he is at peace in the presence of his adorable Lord.

I.

Kapekele was partly of the Ba-Ushi tribe, which is found on the banks of the Luapula between lakes Bangweulu and Mweru. Like thousands of other young men, say of fifty years ago, he was irresistibly drawn to the great Garenganze capitol at Bunkeya, where Msidi reigned supreme. While here, his life was truly surrendered to his chief, who entrusted him with expedition upon expedition in the interests and for the extension of his vast kingdom. It was in the execution of these commands that his lower passions were let loose, causing him to commit crimes which in after days were to give him so much grief. This warrior's first direct contact with the white man was made in extraordinary circumstances, and in his King's own capitol on the banks of the Lufira, one of the many great tributaries of the mighty Congo River.

Our splendid pioneer and world-famous, intrepid explorer, Fred. Stanley Arnot, after a long and arduous journey along the hard-beaten slave trail from the Atlantic seaboard, had reached the then notorious city of KASHINDE (the Conqueror). Here, in his own quiet unassuming manner, he was peacefully penetrating the sordid darkness of the vast heathen town with the message of light.

On a certain day the calm of the early morn was disturbed by the apprehensive roll of war drums sweeping up to his little grass hut on the top of his lone hill,

and resounding in the valley beyond. It startled him—for well he knew that this was the prelude to still more blood-shedding and horrible cruelties beyond description. He was stirred to action, his heart thrilled with a great emotion: "Oh! to save these,—to perish for their saving!" So following the sound of the monster tom-toms down into the valley he rushed. But soon he was caught in the mad press of the blood-thirsty, frenzied crowds, hurrying along the highway, eager to reach the PAKUKINDA (the place of pleasure). There, thousands of war-like savages already thronged, all in gala dress and war paint. The notorious war dance had already begun—another notable victory was being celebrated. The King, with his chief queen, KITOMPA, sat on their thrones with many leopard skins carpeting the royal enclosure. Hundreds of important wives and concubines, and many great men surrounded their lord and chief, all elaborately and grotesquely clothed upon with skins of wild beasts, and yards of gaudy colored calicos, and ropes of common glass beads brought by Arab traders from the far distant coast.

The lone missionary was too late, for there in the center of the great circle was an enormous heap of human heads piled up in ghastly and revolting fashion. The King's enemies had been smitten; the trophies were being laid at his feet with wild shouts of triumph,—"KASHINDE! KASHINDE!! WI TU SHINDILA BONSO!!" (Conquerer! Conqueror! Thou hast conquered us all!!) With every shout a warrior approached with reeking blood and splashed it on the naked feet of the King and Queen.

The leader of this horrible orgy of blood-spilling was none other than this KAPEKELE. He led the dance, keeping time to the mad, intoxicating music by the rhythmic stamping of the feet and the strange, suggestive wriggling of his lithe body. A girdle of human skulls was around his loins, a bleeding head in each hand, and another held in his teeth by its long woolly hair.

Thus, then, was he first discovered by a white man, this warrior of all warriors, in whom and through whom God's sovereign electing grace was to be so mightily and so gloriously displayed in after days.

He was not only a warrior bold, but a hunter mighty in daring deeds. While in the Luba country, his hunting propensities were given full play, and he loved to gather a crowd of us around the blazing faggots after a long day's march, and relate his many thrilling encounters with lions, leopards, elephants, etc.

After Msidi's death and the subsequent dispersion, he came to us and built in the banana grove which ran from our Mwena station to the Lufra River. Here it was that we first gazed into the eyes of this remarkable African, and it was here that he first impressed us,—wellnigh twenty-six years ago. A dark night it was when three wild-looking men, each with a strip of oily cloth about his loins, pushed the rough door of our mud cabin right in on us and gave a startling shout, "Hodi?" (May we come in?). But already they were actually in, staring down on us. Mr. George, the best of all our good missionaries, bade them squat, and they squatted,—Kapekele, Kalala, and Kamfutu. The first was always first, so spokesman was he, and he told us all their heart, "The white man has brought us God's words and they are strong words. They are the words of the Great Father of Creation, for they have broken in on our hearts and lives. 'Tis true our sins killed the Son of God, but He is the Living One, so we want to be done with them and serve Him. Will He receive us?"

What a challenge to our glorious, all-powerful evangel, and grandly we take it up, making the darkness of the night resound with the Saviour's own blessed invitation, "Come." "This Man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." And there in that selfsame moment a light that is never on land or sea, broke in on the darkness of this dark African, and Kapekele was born anew!

II.

Many moons have passed away, and it is now the early morning of the Lord's day. For nearly an hour a steady stream of wondering, clamoring natives are climbing the hill and gathering on the banks of our small, wet-season river, near to a great pool, the drinking place of leopards and scores of baboons. But this pool has been claimed in the name of Christ, our Master, for the fulfilment of one of His blessed ordinances. Presently the chattering crowd is hushed by the strange strains of an old song falling from above, and slowly emerging from amongst the trees, a company of redeemed Africans descend to the water's brink, singing "Onward Christian Soldiers," in their own euphonic language. Hundreds have gathered to witness for the first time the great ordinance of baptism. When all have gathered, and a great silence settles down on the vast throng, our own warrior, Kapekele arises, and looking around upon his old companions, every face is uplifted to him in expectation. Says he, "My fellows, I have come here to be buried with Jesus, my Lord of Love. He died for me, he went down into the grave and he arose again, so,

having learned that Christ not only died for me, but that I also died with Him, I am here desiring in your presence to confess Him and to declare that I accept His death as my death. The new Kapekele will rise before you to walk in the newness of a new life." The whole vast company was thrilled and solemnized, as these African waters broke forth with a splash of a man daring to identify himself with his Lord in death, and rise again to walk in the power of a new life. From that most blessed day and right onward, we all do testify that this African, redeemed unto God, followed his "Lord of Love" unswervingly and devotedly, in the newness of life.

III.

His power and liberty in prayer were wonderful. Oftentimes he found his retreat in our little prayer meeting. On one occasion his prayer was an outburst of a soul in conflict, then came a pause, during which a new light surely broke in upon him, "Oh, Thou art my Father. Just go on beating me, Thy child." The vision was powerful—the rod in the hand of a loving Father—and so he gloried in affliction. Again he is overwhelmed by the greatness of the love of his Saviour bearing the cross for him, and in earnest longing his heart cries out, "Oh, to deeply enter into the meaning of those wound prints in the hands of our adorable Lord at thy right hand." This, breaking from the heart of a man who had long been in the blackest night of heathenism, is truly a remarkable proof of Christ's power to save, and impart new life and bring into the clear shining of the light of God.

The great, far-spreading Luba country has for forty long years—ever since Mr. Arnot's entry into the Garenganze land, persistently and perpetually challenged the Church of the Living God, and today is more insistent than ever in its deep heart beseechings. Kapekele long ago heard the call of this wild, unconquerable land, for Msidi never really subjugated it, and its call drove him out into its lone highways and byways to render sacrificial service. He was bound by ties the nearest and dearest to our great Lufra District, yet Bu-Luba claimed him her debtor for many years of life crammed full with her honors, victories and joys. So he would pay her what he owed, not in earth's currency, but in pure golden coin of the Kingdom of God. Away he went, therefore, leaving wife and child in our care. He had seen the mighty works of the Lord down in the deeps of the forests, and there had received his message for a people far-off. Thus long moons passed ere we saw him again. He burst in on us one afternoon, lean and wearied with his long journey. His coat and loin cloth had long worn out, traversing plains and thorn-scrub country, but his spirit was joyous and triumphant, as he told his strange experiences in the gospel of God in a new land. Over his old hunting fields he had passed once again, but not now in quest of ivory or in a desire to bring captives to the feet of some earthly king, but with the Word of the Cross on his lips and the love of God in his heart. On he went from village to village with the life-giving message, and everywhere they pressed upon him, listening for the first time to "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Who can tell the harvest yet to be reaped from this faithful wayside scattering of the precious seed? We listened to the old warrior and, listening, bowed in adoration for such manifestation of grace, and then together we praised our God. When pressed to accept some little expression of practical oneness with him in his great gospel journey, the dear fellow let us into the secret of his heart. "The other month I was pushing my way home through the forest, with Christ and His dying love filling my thoughts, when the mighty truth of it all almost overcame me, and I said, 'All this for me, and what have I given in return?' So all this journey is for Him and for Him alone, and I know it will gladden His heart." His old face shone with heavenly light. He had already received an hundredfold.

Kapekele has entered into life in a grander and fuller sense than is possible here, and, with his entering, comes the clarion call to the assemblies of God to follow after and possess the land claimed in Christ's name by this valiant soldier of the cross.

"Oft when the word is on me to deliver,
Lifts the illusion and the truth lies bare,
Desert or throng, the city or the river
Melts in a lucid Paradise of air.

"Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings,
Having their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented in a show of things.

"Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers through me like a trumpet call;
Oh to save these; to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all."

OUR RECORD

Vol. XLII

DECEMBER, 1929

No. 12

"HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL"

Address by Mr. W. J. McClure at the Detroit Conference, September, 1929.
(From notes of Dr. H. A. Cameron.)

Tonight I would like to speak a word in the Gospel, but in such a way that it will also interest the Lord's people.

Please turn to Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of Peace." I want you to notice particularly the first of these five names, "Wonderful."

Next read with me at Judges 13:17: "And Manoah said unto the Angel of the Lord, 'What is thy name?' . . . and the Angel of the Lord said unto him, 'Why askest thou thus after My name, seeing it is Wonderful?' So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord: and the Angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the Angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on, and fell on their faces to the ground. . . . And Manoah said unto his wife, 'We shall surely die, because we have seen God,' but his wife said unto him, 'If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would He have showed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these.'"

For my last scripture please turn to II Samuel 1:26: "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful."

We thank God as we read such a scripture as Isaiah 9:6 in these days when on all hands men are seeking to lower the Lord Jesus Christ to the level of a mere man, indeed, according to their teaching, a man not quite as smart as our theological leaders, for all they see in Him is a man of limited intelligence. It does our hearts good, I say, to turn to such a scripture and read, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and His name shall be called Wonderful." He was the **Child born** at Bethlehem, but the **Son eternal** in the bosom of the Father. And notice the names by which He is called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of Peace." Dear unsaved one, if He were just the son of Joseph, He

would be of no use to you or me. He would be just a sinner that needed to die for His own sins, but thank God He was the eternal Son of God, as the angel Gabriel, sent from God, said to Mary, "that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." And the men that preach that our Lord Jesus Christ was just a man, are condemning themselves to exclusion from heaven for all eternity, for He has said, "If ye believe not that **I am** (not "I am He") ye shall die in your sins." The words "I am" are meant to carry us back to the third chapter of Exodus where God said unto Moses, "I AM that I AM, and thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel 'I AM hath sent me unto you.'" And "I am" is just the equivalent and from the same root as "Jehovah." Thank God, the One that died upon Calvary was not a mere man; the One that died there did not have His beginning at Bethlehem. At Bethlehem He came as the Babe, the Child born, the Word become flesh, and, as we think of that blessed name, Wonderful, the first of the five given in Isaiah, we declare that we have in Him a wonderful Savior for you tonight.

Look at the picture in Judges 13. God has communicated to Manoah and his wife that He is going to give a deliverer to Israel, that Samson is to be born, and Manoah asks the angel, "What is thy name?" and in reply the Angel said unto him, "Why askest thou after My name, seeing it is Wonderful?" The One that spake to Manoah that day was the Lord Jesus Christ, the same one referred to in Isaiah 9:7. And when Manoah offered a kid with a meat offering the Angel "did wondrously." What He did we are not told, but we are told that Manoah and his wife looked on. While the Angel did wondrously they just stood with their hands behind their backs and looked on. And that is what we would like you to do tonight, dear unsaved one. We would like you to go by faith to the place called Calvary, and there you will see the Man of Isaiah 9, and, as you look upon Him there, you will see Him do wondrously, satisfying God's claims on your account. What is your part in the transaction? Just to stand and look by faith at that Cross and behold God's holy Son yield up His life, and, as His head falls upon His bosom, hear Him say "It is finished" and see that He has done wondrously!

But notice another thing in Judges 13: "The angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar." What does that tell me? That the Lord Jesus Christ, the Wonderful Worker, has gone back to heaven,—from the Cross back to the glory. The Man upon the Cross is the Sin-bearer. What did Manoah and his wife do? They looked on, and fell upon their faces to the ground. And think of it—that the Lord Jesus Christ should stoop to the shame of the Cross. Is it not enough to make each one of us fall upon our face to the ground?

Then look at the interesting conversation between Manoah and

his wife after the Angel had departed to heaven. Manóah said, "We shall surely die because we have seen God." What does she answer? My, but she is a wonderful case. Listen to what she says: "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received an offering at our hands." Is not that grand reasoning? "We shall surely die." No, we cannot die, because God has accepted our offering. That was precisely how Abel knew that he was righteous. He would reason, "If God sends the fire upon my offering, it will not fall upon me. If God accepts the offering He accepts me." And that was what the woman said, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us He would not have received an offering at our hands nor would He have told us such things as these." And that is what **we** do: we look back to the Cross and see our Lord Jesus Christ dying in our stead, and, as we see Him go back to heaven, that tells us that God has accepted Him on our behalf. And the fact that He has made known to us the blessed truth of these things is assurance that there is no condemnation, there is no hell for us.

But the scripture in II Samuel is very touching. It is part of David's funeral oration over Jonáthán after Jonathan's sad and tragic end. David says, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful." As David uttered these words there would come before his heart the many times that dear Jonathan gave him proofs of his love, his wonderful love. But of all the times, I think there was one that would stand out above the others. You will read of it in I Samuel 18. There David has just come from the fight with Goliath and he has now to go into the presence of King Saul, but look at him. David is clad like a shepherd. Jonathan is clad in garments befitting the presence of royalty, and Jonathan sees that David must be fitted for his father's presence. Now if Jonathan had said, "We shall go to the best clothier in Israel and get for you his costliest garments," that would have been great kindness upon Jonathan's part. But, merely to look upon that peasant and fit him thus for his father's presence would not have been a picture of the Gospel. No, Jonathan strips himself of the robe that was upon him and gave it to David, and his garments, his sword, his bow, and his girdle, and when he thus arrays David in all that belonged to himself as the son of the king, he says, "Now, David, you are fit to go into my father's presence." What does all this tell us? "Ye know the gace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich." When was He rich? These words take us away back to a past eternity. He was not rich when He was born in Bethlehem, born in a stable and cradled in a manger. He was not rich when His mother had to take advantage of the offering permitted

to the poor and sacrificed two turtle doves instead of a lamb. He was not rich when He said, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." He was not rich when He said, "Show Me a penny." When was He rich? Away back in that eternity of bliss with His Father. What did He do? He did like Jonathan, He stripped Himself, laying aside His glory. He came into this poor, blighted scene; He was known as the Man of sorrows in His life, and at the end of His life He was willing to die upon a felon's cross, and contented to be buried in a borrowed grave. Yes, He stripped Himself.

And what do we get through His poverty? Why did Jonathan strip himself? In order that he might clothe David, and years afterwards, as David looks back upon it, he says, "Oh, Jonathan, thy love to me was wonderful." And I think the apostle Paul must have felt the same affection to our Lord Jesus Christ but in a far higher degree when he said, "The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me." It was great love for the son of Saul to strip himself and clothe David. It was infinitely greater love for the Son of God to strip Himself on Calvary to save such as you and me.

Can you say, "Thank God, I am saved and all is well. I know that all is well for eternity. "He hath done wondrously!" He hath saved my soul and fitted me for the presence of God, praise His blessed name forever. Amen!"

FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

The Deity of Christ.—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1.

The Incarnation of the Lord Jesus.—"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth." Jno. 1:14.

The Holy Life of Christ.—He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Heb. 7:26.

The Atoning Death of Christ.—"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." 1 Pet. 3:18.

The Resurrection of Christ.—"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. 15:20.

The Glorification of Christ.—"After the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." Mark 16:19.

The Second Coming of Christ.—"This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11. "Surely I come quickly." Rev. 22:20.

WHOLE-HEARTED OBEDIENCE

The only safe and happy path for the believer, is that of whole-hearted obedience to whatsoever the Lord has commanded. In the days before conversion, self-will, insubjection to God, and neglect of His Word characterized the sinner, but now, as a new creature in Christ Jesus, he is set apart unto "obedience" (1 Pet. 1:2). He has been brought from his self-chosen path as a "sheep going astray," unto Him who is "the Shepherd and Bishop," as well as the Lord and Master of His people. His life now as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, is to be one of obedience in all that his Lord and Master has commanded. This he is to be taught, and having learned the will of the Lord, he is to obey it. Thus he shows his love to Christ, by keeping His commandments (John 14:21).

The only spirituality acknowledged by God, is that which manifests itself in obedience to the truth (1 Cor. 14:37). There may be a great deal of high talk, and much apparent zeal, but God takes no account of this, if His Word is set aside, or disobeyed. Activity in service, or even giving up one's life, professedly for Christ, is not acknowledged to be of any value whatever by the Court of heaven, unless it be done by the "commandment of the Lord." God's word to King Saul, who had turned from the plain commandment of the Lord, to offer sacrifice, is very searching in a day like ours, when many of God's commands are frittered away, or ignored, to allow some service, that may command the attention of the multitude to be done professedly for Him. Said the Lord to the king:—"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord?" (1 Sam. 15:21-22.) Obedience is that which pleases God, and is of great value in His sight. "I have no greater joy than to hear that My children walk in truth" (3 John 4).

Has my reader learned from God the value of thus obeying the truth? Do you seek to make it your daily business to know what the will of the Lord is, and having learned it, to **do** it? Such a course will never be a popular path on earth,—it will rouse the ire, and win the sneer of the enemy. For the Devil hates obedience to God, and seeks by every possible means to prevent it,—he will hinder **you** from obeying God if he can. Not always by outward opposition, for he will often **smooth** the path of disobedience before you, strew it with things pleasing to the flesh, and pampering to pride, while he points out the perils and persecutions of the path of obedience to God. For instance, one of his favorite devices is, to point to men of high esteem in the religious world,—and it may be men who have many gifts and personal graces, but who do not walk as the Scripture

plainly commands the saint to walk,—as though their gifts and graces excused their disobedience.

Sad it is that true Christians should thus be found giving their support to that of which God disapproves, and bids His people be separate from; but such things should not hinder in any wise the true-hearted believer from obeying the commandments of his God. The word of the Master to His servant and disciple is,—“What is that to thee? Follow thou Me” (John 21:11). And blessed it is to know, that however little such obedience may be esteemed on earth, it will have its reward in the day of Christ’s judgment seat, where not the **quantity** but the quality of our service will be the test;—not our success, but our faithfulness to Him and His Word will have the Master’s “well done,” and our full reward.—J. R.

“ONE THING”

“One thing have I desired,” (Psa. 27:4—not many, but **one**. Oh, the blessing of an undivided heart! Paul had it when he said that he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. He was a man of one idea. Many a heart is torn with numberless distractions. It wearies itself in the vain attempt to serve two masters, to blend things which never will blend—in short, to make the best of both worlds. When this is the case there is no fixity of purpose, no singleness of eye, no pursuing with holy diligence those things which are God’s. No wonder there is no growth, and where there is no growth there is barrenness and stagnation. Instead of the life being like a river, fresh and flowing, it resembles stagnant waters, over which Death spreads his dark wing and holds undisputed sway.

“One thing have I desired of the Lord.” Emphasize these last four words. When anything is earnestly desired, when the longing after it burns like a fire, we soon begin to pray about it; that is, if the object of our desire be right. It is happy indeed when our most earnest prayers are for progress in divine things, when the heart yearns for an enlarged understanding of those spiritual blessings with which God has blessed us. The two wonderful prayers of Paul in Ephesians are of this order. 1:16-23; 3:14-21.) Do you pray after the same fashion? “If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hidden treasures; then thou shalt understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” So said the Holy Spirit by the mouth of Solomon, and those words still hold good.

Because some of us object to “playing second fiddle,” we spoil countless harmonies in life’s orchestra.

THE USE OF THE WORD OF GOD

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye **do** them." (John 13:17). "If," notice. The happiness here is a conditional one. The mere admiration of a meal does not satisfy hunger. Acquaintance with the Bible will sour in the soul if its precepts are not put into practice. Is this not one explanation of the low condition of soul so prevalent, and of the impractical nature of so much that we prize as truth? It is in the **doing** that the knowledge of the Word of God is turned into blessed communion, and that fruit abounds to His glory. May we go in for this!

But there cannot be the doing of the Lord's will if it is not known,—and we are certainly responsible to **know** His will. And for this we must learn to abstract ourselves from the busy scene around us by a studied avoidance of even some of the seemingly "innocent" occupations of life. For even lawful occupations, in a day such as the present, may consume all too much of our time, to the exclusion of the "one thing needful." There is today a rapidity of motion and action such as has not been known since the world began. Where once we sauntered we now scamper. The newspaper which some of us remember as in many cases but a four-page affair is now forty pages in the morning and sixty at night. And then we are expected to read extras so as to know what happened in Europe little more than twenty minutes ago. Even that once quiet retreat, the home, where, if nowhere else, we could at one time collect our thoughts for a little quiet meditation, has in many cases been invaded by the radio, thus bringing the clamor of the world right to our hearth-sides, and occupying us with those very theatricals which once we adjured as among things most hurtful to true spirituality. The result of all this is only too apparent, in the lowered spiritual vitality, the vitiated moral tone even, among Christians today.

But is it necessary for us to give way to all this? Are we bound to know all that is going on in the world around us? Must we keep pace with all its movements? Will nothing do but that we too "keep up with the Joneses"? Far be the thought. The world cannot properly press its claims upon us. We must resist its advances. We must spurn its restless bustle. We must wrest from under its influence that time of quiet so necessary, so vital, to us. We must again learn to sit down, with a sense of leisure, in His presence, to feed undisturbed upon His Word, therein to hear His voice. If we do not, there can be only one result: we shall become "like them that go down into the pit." Instead of the happiness of knowing and doing His will, ours will be the sorrow of spiritual stagnation, if not of complete moral collapse. Some of us, perhaps, are already feeling these things creeping in upon us. If so, may God in grace restore us!—Adapted.

THE WILDERNESS

One word, and it is not a strained word: I have often thought of the wilderness through which God brought Israel. His eye was on the wilderness. He prepared it. "I have made the place for a particular purpose in connection with my people. I have arranged it long ago." The wilderness was no accident, it was the very place He had prepared. No resources to nature; absolute dependence on God there. And God has made and marked out your circumstances, and has made them that you cannot go through them without Himself. Some may say in reference to their path, "This thing came upon me through the sin of someone else." Never mind that, it came from God. Neither divine wisdom nor power could have added anything to the wilderness to have made it more impassable to nature or more easy to God. He allows a quantity of things in our circumstances to make us feel we cannot go through them without Him. What an immense difference in saying, "This thing comes from God; He has put it there;" and, "All this is against me." If it is I and God, there is no difficulty; if we leave out Him, the way is impossible. Which would you rather have, a life without difficulty, or a life so full of difficulty that the blessed Lord Jesus is obliged to show His face every day, yes, every minute, obliged to keep close to me all day long? God so ordered the course of the apostle that it was impossible to get on without the Lord Jesus who raiseth the dead; and this does not merely apply to moral difficulties, but to everything. There is someone sick in the house; who do you turn to first, God or the doctor? When the doctor thinks it a serious case you take it as a decision; but the question is not what the doctor says, but what is God's purpose? Means may be used; but the Christian is not to use anything apart from God: the Lord first in everything. I don't think praise ever comes forth from us so purely as in connection with what is disagreeable. When we give thanks for mercies, it is not so pure as when able to praise for what we do not like: we should be dropping the sweet into the disagreeable. When we think of the Lord's love in it, it sweetens what is bitter. A man is thus taken up into heaven to show him every step of his way down here, from first to last—weakness in himself, but Christ's strength perfected in weakness—death and resurrection. The life of Paul was a wonderful life. "To me to live is Christ." The way he did run his course brought out the fellowship of the life of Christ; he had in Caesar's court the very life the Lord Jesus had on the Father's throne. It is wonderful, and all on the principle, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

G. V. W.

While self-preservation is the first law of Nature, self-effacement is the first requirement of Grace.

“AS PANTS THE HART”—Ps. 42:1

An eastern caravan was overtaken once by failure of the water supply. The accustomed fountains were all dried,—the oasis had become a desert. They halted an hour before sunset to find, after a day of scorching heat, that they were likely to perish for lack of water. Vainly they explored the usual wells, for all were dry.

Dismay was upon all faces, and despair in all hearts, when one of the wise men approached the sheik, and counselled him to unloose two beautiful harts that he was taking home as a present to his bride, and let them scour the desert in search of water. Their tongues were protruding with thirst, and their bosoms heaving with distress. But, as they were led out to the borders of the camp, and there set free on the boundless plain, they lifted up their heads on high, and sniffed the air with disturbed nostrils,—and then, with unerring instinct, with course as straight as an arrow and speed as swift as the wind, they darted off across the desert.

Swift horsemen followed, and in an hour or two hastened back with the glad tidings that water had been found; and the camp moved forward with shouts of rejoicing to the happily discovered fountains!

Dear believer, have you discovered that “this world is a wilderness wide”? Are you athirst and unsatisfied with all the world can and does supply? Does your thirsting soul long for God? Alas, how our every hope is a disappointment,—the springs which used to satisfy are dry or brackish now. Then learn that He alone is the “fountain of living waters,” and as the hart pants for the cooling streams, so may our souls yearn for Him, and find their satisfaction in Him, for He alone can satisfy the deep yearnings of the soul awakened by grace. He says,—

“When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and dry land springs of water.” (Isa. 41:17-18).

Idleness.—Some temptations come to the industrious, but **all** temptations attack the idle. Idle Christians are not tempted of the devil so much as they do tempt the devil to tempt them. Idleness sets the door of the heart ajar, and asks Satan to come in; but if we are occupied from morning till night, should Satan get in, he must break through the door. Under sovereign grace, and next to faith, there is no better shield against temptation than obedience to the precept, that ye be, “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”—Selected.

THE POVERTY OF THE LORD JESUS

"Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though **He was rich**, yet for your sake **He became poor**, that ye through His poverty **might be rich.**" 2 Corinthians 8:9.

Imaginative reverence tends to soften the sharp angles of truth, and make us forget that the Lord was poor while here. He had nothing that He could call His own, and when He died, He left nothing behind Him but His seamless robe. (John 19:23-24). He had said, "Lay not up for yourselves," and He obeyed His own precepts. There was no secret hoard hidden from the keen eye of Judas the treasurer.

He was hungry, and He sought to feed Himself—from a fig-tree by the way. He was tired, and He slept in the fishing-boat. He had nothing wherewith to pay His tribute. And when He replied to the captious question of the Pharisee, He said, "Bring me a penny." He had nowhere to lay His head, in life or in death. It was a borrowed grave in which He took His short sleep. Had He been as other men, He would have been plied incessantly with the temptation to make Himself rich amidst all those treasures which a word from His lips could have unlocked. But He never did this!

In His poverty, He did not cease to be God. The very examples of His poverty which we have quoted, have definite and strange marks of His deity. He stilled the storm from the boat where He had been sleeping with a wooden pillow beneath His head. He burst the bonds of death, and came out of the borrowed grave a conqueror over the last enemy. But, provide for Himself He did not, and would not. As a commander in a famine-stricken city refuses exemption from the lot of his fellow-soldiers, so our Leader and Commander refused to listen to the solicitudes of His need, and lived and died poor! He was tempted in all points as we are,—sin apart. A great judge, we are told, was especially pitiful to those who sinned from the pangs of poverty and hunger. Such sin might be excused if any sin could be. We could understand that, and the more easily in the case of one who had once been rich. The Lord Jesus was once rich,—with an amplitude of wealth we cannot comprehend. He needed not to have been poor. Stones would have turned into bread at a word from Him. But, for our sakes, "He became poor that we, thro' His poverty, might be rich"! And oh, how rich He was,—how poor He became. Again, how poor, in our sins, we were, but by His grace, thro' His poverty, how rich we have been made! Let us ponder it and praise Him!

The path ordained for us has, no doubt, its roughness, and the cloud hangs over it; but He makes the cloud His tabernacle, and just in the very night it brightens into manifest glory.

AND WHAT THEN?

An old Christian once asked a bright, intelligent lad what he intended to do on his leaving school.

"Why, I am going to college to study for the bar."

"And what then?"

"Why, then, in time I expect to be made a judge."

"And what then?"

"Why, of course, I shall be married, and be surrounded by a large circle of friends."

"And what then?"

"Then I hope to enjoy myself many a long year at the head of my profession."

"And what then?"

"Then I shall retire, and spend the rest of my years in comfort and quietness."

"And what then?"

"Then, of course, I can't expect to live for ever, and I must die?"

"And what then?"

"Why, then, I shall be buried with a grand funeral, and mourned over by all my friends."

"And what then?" again solemnly asked the old man.

"Why, then;—why, then," said the young man, **"I cannot tell what then?"**

The course this young man intended to pursue seemed a very praiseworthy one, but the all-important matter had no place in his purposes, and the Lord Jesus Christ asks the solemn question, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36-37.) And, oh! how many there are like this young man, who plot and devise means whereby they may prosper in this world, but, alas! the momentous question, "Where shall I spend Eternity?" has never had fifteen minutes' consideration from them.

May the Lord here, and now, cause you to ponder the realities of Death, Judgment and Eternity, in the light of Calvary's cross, with the untold agonies of God's Son, when His soul was made an offering for sin, and to remember that, all this will be of no avail to you unless you receive His salvation from His hand. "Behold now is the accepted time; Behold now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6-2.)

The Bible is a mine of wealth; but no mine will yield its treasure without labor.

THE TRUE SOURCE OF BLESSING

This chapter (1 Cor. 3), teaches us that **God is the true source of blessing**, and that there is no other. "I have planted, Apollos wanted; but **God** gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but **God** that giveth the increase." "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" "And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Well might the apostle inquire of the Corinthians, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" Well might he say, "Therefore let no man glory in men, for all things are yours." Paul could not speak to the Corinthians "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." His letter finds them in the same state, hence he adds, "For ye are yet carnal."

When the glory filled the Tabernacle and the Temple, there was no room for anything else (Ex. xl. 34; 2 Chron. v. 14); ; no place for the flesh; no room for glory, save the glory that filled the place. The Corinthians, by setting up man and human headships, delighting in elements foreign to the Cross, became carnal. To be spiritual is to be a debtor to God for everything, to hold all in subjection to Him. Then the bondage, and terror of man cease, and those fleshy elements of his, that captivate the senses, lose their enticing power. This is our high calling, to honor the Cross at any cost; to acknowledge no teaching but that of the Spirit of God; and no other source of divine power but that of the living God. Such is the substance of the apostle's teaching in the first three chapters of this epistle; and such is the instruction needed now, as well as then, to save the saints from those things which charm their senses and exclude God. Our only safeguard is to keep our eyes so fixed on Jesus as to be able to say with godlike liberty of soul,

"We ask not, need not, aught beside—
So safe, so calm, so satisfied!"

His Last Message, and Last Convert.—Four years after the "Titanic" went down, a young Scotchman rose in a meeting in Hamilton, Can., and said, "I am a survivor of the Titanic. When I was drifting alone on a spar on that awful night, the tide brought Mr. John Harper, of Glasgow, also on a piece of wreck, near me. 'Man,' he said, 'are you saved?' 'No,' I said, 'I am not.' He replied, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' The waves bore him away; but, strange to say, brought him back a little later, and he said, 'Are you saved now?' 'No,' I said, 'I cannot honestly say that I am.' He said again, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' and shortly after he went down; and there, alone in the

night, and with two miles of water under me, I believed. I am John Harper's last convert."

THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN HIS WORD

Whatever the World is, it is because of its relation to Christ. Is the Word of God quick—that is, living? (Heb. 4:12). It is because Christ is "the Life." Is it powerful? It is because "Christ is the Power" of God. Is it sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow? It is because Christ is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, (Luke 2:34), and because Christ divides between Peter who confesses Him as the Son of God, and Peter who surveys the things of men. (Mat. 16:17-23). Is it a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart? It is, because Christ knows what is in man; (Jno. 3:25); because He sees Nathaniel under the fig-tree, and the Pharisees, who think evil in their hearts. (Jno. 1:47-49). Is it said of the Word, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do"? It is because the spoken and written Word is identified with the Lord Himself, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, even the Son of man, unto whom the Father hath committed all judgment. (Jno. 5:22). Is the Word spoken of as "the sincere milk," the nourishing food to our souls? It is because Christ is the "Bread of Life." (Jno. 6:33). Is it commended as light shining into darkness? It is because Christ is Wisdom. The very essence of Scripture is that Saviour in whom are all things that pertain unto life and godliness. The soul that has found Jesus Christ sees Him in Scripture, always and throughout. Jesus is the door by which alone we can enter the sanctuary of the Word; and when we come to Jesus we really enter into possession of the Word, for He has the words of eternal life. They are His, and He only can give the Word. (John 7:16-17). And as we have the Word through Him and in Him, so we find Him in every portion of Scripture.

The prophetic Scriptures are good for me in sadness, for they are full of encouragement; in doubt, for they are full of promise; in carelessness, for they are full of warning; in contrition, for they are full of mercy; nay, they are good for me in every case, for they are full of Christ. We are most earnestly engaged in watching for the coming of the Lord, when every moment as it passes bears up to the throne a record of faithful service.

.. "With gentle swiftness lead me on, my God, to see Thy face;
And meanwhile in my narrow heart make for Thyself more space."

THE SIN-BEARER

"My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46.)

What was it wrung that cry from the soul of the spotless Son of God? See Him in the garden of Gethsemane, prostrate, saying: "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (Matt. 26:39.) Follow him to Pilate's bar, see them mock Him with a crown of thorns, and a purple robe. (John 19:1-3.) Roman soldiers take Him to Calvary's hill, where they extend him between heaven and earth on a cross of wood; and, there, on that cross He cried: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is to say, "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me!"

Ah! dear sinner, it was your sins and mine that drew forth that bitter cry. He was forsaken by God, when He became our sin-bearer. Jesus died, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. (1 Peter 3:18.) God is holy, and sin must be punished, either in the person of the sinner, or his substitute.

Now, have you ever thought of the depth of love God had for you, when He gave His only begotten Son to die such a cruel death in order that you might be saved? If not, then for a few minutes stop and think of it. He shed His precious blood to cleanse you from sin, for **"without shedding of blood there is no remission."** (Hebrews 9:22.)

Take your place then as a sinner, lost and unable to save yourself; accept Christ, the willing sacrifice for your sins, and you shall be saved; for God says: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1:15.) "Believe," therefore, "on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31.)—R. M.

THE HEAVENLY AND THE EARTHLY

In the Coming Day of Glory

The golden city shines in splendour from afar,
 In heaven's fair firmament, like a new burnished star;
 Eternal Love reigns there, no din, no strife, no jar;
 For all of every clime its pearly gates unbar;
 Peace treads its golden street, hushed every sound of war.

The curse is gone! The blessing comes instead;
 And then where'er we go, on hallowed ground we tread.
 The canopy of love is stretched above our head;
 The soil no longer cursed is like a garden spread;
 The wilderness now blooms with verdure overlaid.

What we are, is of far more consequence than anything we have done.

A PLAIN QUESTION AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR

Friend!

We earnestly desire, as those who value and love your precious soul, to impress upon you the solemn fact, that

You Are Travelling

—whether you realize it or not—with rapid strides, each moment you live, each step you take, nearer and nearer

To Eternity!

Time, with its trifles, unrealities, and so-called pleasures, will soon pass away; and **Eternity**, solemn and real, will begin. Were you called to enter it **now**, would you go

To an Everlasting Heaven

to sing, forever, the praises of the Lamb of God, who was slain, and has redeemed all who will be there, by His own precious blood, shed on Calvary;

Or to an Endless Hell!

there to mourn your folly in rejecting Christ, God's promised Saviour for poor sinners. Friend, be true to your own eternal interests. Your soul is of infinite value. It is at this moment saved or lost—

Which?

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3.) "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:36.)

T. D. W. M.

The Little Girl and the Leper.—A little girl was one day reading the story of the leper who, coming to Jesus, besought Him to make him clean (Mark 1:40-45). The story interested her greatly, but she waxed indignant at the leper's prayer. He said to Jesus, "If thou wilt, Thou canst make me whole," and she declared that he ought not to have said "if" to Jesus at all, certainly he ought to have left the "if" out, and said, "Thou wilt, Thou canst." And the little girl was right, for Jesus was just as willing as He was able to do for that poor wretch what he so much needed. But that leper was not singular in his doubt. How often we also put the "ifs" in our prayers, when we come to the Lord questioning His willingness if not His power to do all for us that we need Him to be. But such questioning is totally without warrant, and He has never given us any cause for it. His interest in us is as great as His love for us, and that is without measure or end. Oh, ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt?

Christians are the Lord's property,—dearly bought, lawfully acquired, and carefully preserved.

LOOKING UP

Look outward, my brother, around thee behold
 The signs of the times which appear,
 Proclaiming as Scripture has plainly foretold,
 The coming of Christ draweth near.—Jas. 5:8.

God's Word is by "critics" condemned and confounded,—
 Those leaders deluded and blind,
 Whose fables of fancy are glibly propounded,
 While simple ones follow behind.—2 Pet. 2:1-3.

Look upward, my brother, lay hold of the hope
 That Jesus is coming again,
 In doubt and in darkness the nations still grope,—
 But Jesus is coming to reign.—Phil. 3:20-21.

The marks, all predicted, around us now crowd;
 In "perilous times" we now dwell:
 For men are "blasphemers," and "boasters," and "proud,"
 And "lovers of pleasure" as well.—2 Tim. 3:1-5.

The day of contention and conflict's at hand,
 The "masses" arise like a flood;
 The tide of democracy sweeps o'er the land,
 Where landmarks for ages have stood.—2 Pet. 2:10.

My brother, be faithful, the Scriptures hold fast;
 Be diligent, watchful and wise,
 Until we are called by His trumpet's loud blast,
 Our Saviour to meet in the skies!—1 Thess. 4:13.

T. R.

"A Little While, and Ye Shall See Me."—Would that the eye of faith might be kept more intently fixed on "that glorious appearing"! How the world with its fascinations tries to dim and obscure this blessed hope! How the heart is prone to throw out its fibres here, and get them rooted in some perishable object! Let us seek to dwell more habitually on the grand consummation to which we are hastening. "Stand on the edge of thy nest, pluming thy wings for flight."

"Today the great territory of scripture is like a modern continent. Extreme and unhealthy congestion of certain well-known centres, and vast tracts of country uncultivated and unknown."