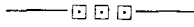


A New Year Message.



He Leadeth, He Careth, He Keepeth.



He Leadeth. Psalm 23. 2.

HE who knows the end from the beginning is the One who leads and can thus guide us.

He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4. 15). How shall He not . . . freely give us all things (Rom. 8. 32).

He passed through sorrows, sadness, suffering and want, so we can place our fullest trust in that One who leads. He is MY Shepherd, **I shall not want.** Be not over anxious.

He Careth.

1 Peter 5. 7.

A little girl sat at the feet of her mother, knitting. Her mother, who was an expert knitter, was watching her little daughter as she struggled to do her work aright. Several times she was on the point of giving her assistance, but the child seemed determined not to ask for assistance. After several attempts at trying to pick up the dropped stitches, the child turned her face upwards, and with tears in her eyes, said, "It's no use, I cannot do it." Her mother, needless to say, soon put her right and told her how she had been watching, and waiting to help, but wanted her little girl to appeal to her.

How often in life we think we know, and try to do things in our own strength, and feel we are alone, but He cares and is ever watching over us, waiting for us to look up to Him.

He knows, He loves, He cares;
Nothing this truth can dim:
He gives the very best to those
Who leave the choice to Him.

He Keepeth. Psa. 121. 3.

Kept by the power of God through faith (1 Peter, 1. 5). The Tower of London contains some of the crowns and precious

jewels belonging to England. These are carefully guarded by soldiers besides being in a strong cage of iron bars. They are kept and guarded. Thus the child of God is precious in God's sight, and is kept and guarded by His power.

We think of the power of God as revealed in His Word. The deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt's bondage. The answer to Elijah's prayer when he called on God to send fire from Heaven

to consume the sacrifice. How the Lord Jesus fed the multitudes in the wilderness with five small loaves and two fishes. How He raised the dead son at Nain, and gave a sorrowing mother joy. How He raised Lazarus from among the dead, and gave those two sisters fulness of joy. So, beloved, we at the outset of another year of time, can say with full confidence,

I will Trust.

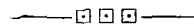
Isaiah 12. 2.

If the Lord of life and glory Leadeth
And He, the Almighty One, Careth
Surely He is able to Keep.

And in response to His faithfulness, let us commit our way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass (Psa. 37. 5).

"Behold, God is **my salvation: I will trust,** and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is **my strength and my song:** He also is become **my Salvation**" (Isaiah 12. 2).

J. J. V.



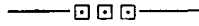
Three possible things.

1. Out of Christ. In a state of nature.
2. In Christ. In a state of grace.
3. With Christ. In a state of glory.

1. Neglect and be lost (Heb. 2. 3).
2. Reject and be judged (John 12. 48).
3. Despise and perish (Acts 13. 41).

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



BARNABAS.

Our calendars are in error in dating Christianity from the birth of the Lord Jesus. Properly speaking, Christianity opened neither with the manger nor the cross, but with the descent of the Holy Ghost from heaven ten days after the Saviour's ascension. Both the incarnation and the crucifixion of Christ belong, as events, to the Mosaic era. It was as a last test for man under the regime of responsibility that God said: "What shall I do? I will send My beloved Son; it may be they will reverence Him when they see Him" (Luke xx. 13). Man's answer was murder. The crucifixion of Christ was at once the greatest crime that was ever committed under the old economy, and the completion and winding up of the economy itself. The resurrection was God's reversal of man's judgment of His Son, and the coming of the Holy Ghost was the inauguration of a new era. This we call Christianity.

What mighty results have been wrought in the souls of men during this most privileged period! The Spirit's testimony to Christ has not only saved those who have received it from eternal ruin, but it has attached them in heart and mind to the absent Lord, and to the glory—as yet invisible to mortal eyes—in which He dwells. It has brought heaven down in practical power to earth.

Leaving the apostles aside, the first Christian named in Scripture is Joseph Barnabas, a Levite, born in Cyprus (Acts iv. 36). He is introduced to us at an interesting moment in the history of the Church. A great wave of devotedness was passing over the infant community. Under the influence of the new and heavenly blessings which they had received through grace, the Christians of Jerusalem renounced all their property, and laid the proceeds thereof at the apostles' feet. Amongst those who did this Barnabas is expressly named, doubtless because of the part which he was destined to play later in the great work of evangelising the heathen world. No demand was laid upon Barnabas and his friends, thus to part with their earthly all; they were prompted in their action by simple love to Christ. This made their sacrifice as acceptable as the pretended sacrifice of Ananias and Sapphira was offensive.

The character of Barnabas is divinely given in Acts xi. 24. "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." These marks are discernible in all his actions save two. Thus, when the newly-converted Saul of Tarsus experienced difficulty in obtaining a footing amongst the Christians in Jerusalem (for they were not sure whether he was a wolf or a sheep), it was Barnabas who led him before the apostles, and related his meeting with the Lord Jesus near Damascus, and his bold preaching of the Gospel in that city (Acts ix. 26-27). It was just such a kindly deed as might be expected from Barnabas.

Again, when tidings reached Jerusalem that a great work of grace had begun at Antioch, whereby multitudes of Gentiles had been won for Christ, it was Barnabas who was selected to go down and inquire into it. •Who more morally suitable? His kindly heart was

glad when he saw what God had wrought, and he "exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts xi. 22-24). Remaining awhile, and the good work still expanding, Barnabas presently invited the co-operation of Saul. This he did because he felt that the saints needed the ministrations of a teacher. Saul was indeed a teacher of the highest order; Barnabas was an exhorter only. Together they ministered a whole year in the Syrian city.

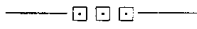
During that period a great famine arose, which specially affected Judea. The Antioch brethren, recognising the divine bond between themselves and the sufferers, determined to send them relief. Barnabas and Saul were the chosen messengers for this service. Another gracious ministry quite characteristic of a "good man" (Acts xi. 27-30).

Presently God's time arrived to send the Gospel into "the regions beyond." Saul (soon known as Paul) was the chief instrument employed by the Spirit, but who more fit to be his yokefellow than Barnabas? A man so large-hearted could not but find delight in carrying the glad tidings of the grace of God to sinners far and near. Acts xiii., xiv., describe the first missionary tour of these devoted labourers. First visiting the island of Cyprus, they next crossed to the mainland of Asia Minor, traversing Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Iconium, leaving a trail of blessing behind them everywhere.

On their return to Antioch, Paul and Barnabas found themselves face to face with the first attempt to place Gentile Christians under law. After a season of fierce disputation, the Antioch brethren desired them (with certain others of their own number) to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question. This resulted in the decree, so sadly ignored in Christendom, whereby Gentiles stand exonerated for ever from the law of Moses. To be permitted to convey so emancipating a message to his brethren would be service most congenial to such a heart as that of Barnabas (Acts xv.).

"A good man" is, alas! apt to be a weak man. His softness of character would dispose him to be yielding, and his kindness would make him prone to belittle the shortcomings of others. We see all this in Barnabas. When Peter dissimulated at Antioch, and compromised the whole principle of the Gospel, through fear of some of his Jewish friends, Barnabas dissimulated also, and was obliged to share the strong rebuke which Paul publicly administered to the erring apostle (Gal. ii. 11-16). Then when it became desirable to make a second missionary tour, Barnabas wished to take his nephew Mark, who shirked the work of their former journey. Paul sternly refused to have such a helper, and a total breach resulted. Silas succeeded Barnabas as companion to Paul, and Barnabas sailed with Mark to Cyprus—apparently in sheer self-will (Acts xv. 36-41). A dismal finish, assuredly; but God has had but one perfect servant in this world—His beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The record of all others is blotted and marred in a greater or less degree.

Casual Notes on II. Timothy.



WORDS OF WISDOM FOR THE LAST DAYS.

By O. SPEARE.

THE apostle Paul was evidently in prison awaiting his martyrdom, when his thoughts turned to his beloved child in the faith, Timothy. Doubtless he thought of the times when Timothy was with him, and realising that the perilous times which had then begun might possibly adversely affect this young believer, he sends him words of wisdom which were intended to strengthen him in connection with (a) his walk or conduct, (b) his warfare, (c) his work or testimony. It must, however, be clearly understood that while the apostle's thoughts were more particularly directed to the needs of a solitary child of God, this message also comes from God to His people in these last days.

The following notes are not intended to be a complete analysis or exposition of this letter, but merely observations concerning some of the statements which it is hoped might prove to be of real spiritual blessing to those who read them.

CHAPTER 1.

Verse 1. "The Promise of Life."

This is a very remarkable statement, as will be confirmed by a perusal of Titus 1. verse 2.

"The promises of God" constitute a very instructive and helpful theme for Bible study.

One cannot think of this subject without thinking also of that outstanding character of Old Testament times, Abraham, for it will be remembered that some of the greatest promises ever made by God were to him.

In the early chapters of the Book of Genesis it is recorded how God, having called Abraham, made definite promises to him regarding his seed and future inheritance. These promises were repeated frequently, and also confirmed to Abraham's posterity. If you will please read Hebrews 6, **verses 13-20**, you will find that "when God made promise to Abraham . . . He confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things—the Promise and the Oath—in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us," etc. This

very clearly indicates that the promises which God made to Abraham have a very direct bearing upon ourselves, for the apostle Paul, when writing to the Galatians, makes it clear that the promises made to Abraham found their fulfilment in the appearing and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He further states when writing to the Galatians, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Very definitely, therefore, can we glory in the fact that God had us in mind when he made those promises to Abraham, and this surely should be a source of real encouragement to us who now trust in Christ.

It is, however, almost amazing to discover that God had us in mind long years before Abraham, yea, before man was created, yea, even before the ages of time, and not only had He thoughts concerning us, but also made a definite promise, which promise was concerning the inestimable gift of everlasting life. This is plainly declared in the verse already referred to, Titus 1. verse 2, where it states "In hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began," or before the ages of time.

"Before Thy hands had made
The sun to rule the day,
Or earth's foundations laid,
Or fashioned Adam's clay:
What thoughts of peace and mercy flowed
From Thine own bosom, O my God.

A monument of grace,
A sinner saved by blood.
The streams of love I trace
Up to their source O God,
And in Thy sacred bosom see
Eternal thoughts of love to me."

Verse 3. "With Pure Conscience."

The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that the work of Christ was very definitely completed in order to put the conscience right. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews stresses this aspect of the work of Christ repeatedly. Ch. 9. v. 13 and 14, states "If the blood of bulls and 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 with-

out spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve—or worship—the living God.”

Please notice also that in the 9th verse of that chapter it states that the first tabernacle “was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience.” Also chapter 10, verses 1 and 2 state that “The Law . . . could never . . . make the comers thereunto perfect,” for if it could, “the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.” How blessed therefore to know that the sinner, whose sins are purged by the blood of Christ, has no more conscience of sins. It is obviously on this ground alone that the writer proceeds to outline the lofty privileges of the believer, in that he is able to “enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . having the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience,” etc. The believer in Christ is, therefore, purged from an evil conscience and this being so, it is enjoined upon him to keep on the watch-tower in order that the conscience may be kept right before God continually. To this end the apostle, when writing to Timothy, has much to say about conscience. In his first letter to Timothy, chapter 1, verse 5, he states that “the end of that which is enjoined is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” Read also verse 19; chapter 3, verse 9; chapter 4, verse 2.

The reader is urged to further consider this most important subject as revealed in the Word of God.

Verses 5 and 6. It is interesting to notice in connection with the messages to the seven churches in the opening passages of the book of Revelation that the Lord graciously enumerates those features which are first of all commendable to Him before denouncing the unworthy characteristics. It seems that the apostle adopted this method when writing to Timothy, by first of all reminding him of the faith of his mother and grandmother. This would doubtless touch a tender spot in the heart of Timothy, but the apostle takes the matter a step further by adding, “and I am persuaded that in thee also.” One can almost hear him saying “Timothy, I can well remember the great faith of your dear mother, and I am convinced that deep down in your heart somewhere, you possess this same faith also.” Such words almost indicate just a small measure of doubt, but submitted in such a kindly fashion that Timothy would be stirred to respond to any further message. So the apostle adds “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the

gift of God which is in thee,” etc. The words “stir up” occur also in Gen. 45, 27. “The spirit of Jacob, their father, **revived**”; also 2 Kings 8, 1 and 5, “**restored to life.**” By this we can well understand the force of the apostle’s words as he seeks to disclose to Timothy that the “gift of God” which was in him required to be stirred up. May the Lord cause the reader to search his, or her, own heart so that the same thing may take place to the glory of God. We will now close this chapter by pointing out the occurrence of the word “ashamed” which appears three times as follows:—verses 8, 12 and 16.

Verse 8. “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord.” I have no doubt that most of us realize that it is comparatively an easy matter when in company with God’s people to join with them in singing “I’m not ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend His cause, maintain the honour of His Word, the glory of His cross,” etc. But this becomes a more difficult matter when we are pursuing our course in the company of the ungodly. It is then the real test comes. May the Lord graciously strengthen us in these last days that we may not be ashamed at all times to faithfully testify for Him.

Verse 12. We here find the apostle explaining that he was suffering on account of his ministry, but realizing the truth that “all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” could add “Nevertheless, **I am not ashamed** for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” It appears to be a scriptural principle that service for Christ, coupled with suffering on account of such service, will never cause shame to the believer. An important safeguard being to keep the end in view—“that day.”

Verse 16. “Onesiphorus . . . was not ashamed of my chain.” The last three verses of this chapter close with some very touching details concerning this worthy servant of the Lord, Onesiphorus. When he was in Rome he made it his business to seek out and find the beloved apostle. This undoubtedly at considerable risk of persecution. One could imagine how he would be informed that Paul was in prison, and that he would be well advised not to get involved, but the dear man who had a love for the Lord’s servant, and a large heart of sympathy and kindness, found the prison, and the mighty man of God in chains therein. May the Lord give each one of us large hearts of sympathy and love, with a readiness at all times to be a means of refreshment, of joy and blessing to others.

(To be continued).

Bible Studies in Genesis.

ROBERT LEE.



Good Beginnings.

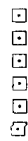
“In the beginning . . . God”

Study No. 1.

Genesis 1. 1.

GOD AS THE AUTHOR OF :—

- (1) CREATION
- (2) REDEMPTION
- (3) SALVATION
- (4) CHRISTIAN LIVING
- (5) CHRISTIAN SERVICE



GOD AS :—

- (1) THE ETERNAL ONE.
- (2) THE SEEKING ONE.
- (3) THE SAVING ONE.
- (4) THE SANCTIFYING ONE
- (5) THE PLANNING ONE.

SUBLIME. This beginning of the book of Genesis is profoundly sublime. Right away we are ushered into the presence of the Almighty.

ASSUMPTION. The Bible makes no attempt to prove the existence of God—it assumes it. It opens without an apology or explanation.

DIFFICULT. A thinker has declared: “I do not know anything more difficult to believe than the first verse of the Bible. If we master this verse, anything else that happened in the Heavens or in the earth which God created will not stumble us.” And again: “This verse lifts us above all the poor childish myths of the nations, some of them disgusting; all of them unworthy.”

ITS SUPREMACY AND EXCLUSIVENESS. It excludes ATHEISM, for GOD created; POLYTHEISM, for the Hebrew verb attests that ONE created; the ETERNITY OF MATTER, for all things began in God,—and the Word clearly implies to make out of nothing (Heb. 11. 3); PANTHEISM, for God, the builder of all, must clearly be DISTINCT from the work of His hands. And yet faith quite easily accepts this statement. “Through faith (not understanding) we understand” (Heb. 11. 3). **NOT BY UNDERSTANDING DO WE BELIEVE, BUT BELIEVING WE UNDERSTAND.**

BEGINNINGS. Genesis is the book of beginnings. Yet no beginning is ascribed to God. All else had a beginning. He is the great Eternal One.

SOME BEGINNINGS. “In the beginning—God.” This is the Key to all the rest of Genesis, and indeed of the Bible.

- (a) **GOD AS CREATOR.** God created. Here is the first lesson of the Bible—that at the root and origin of all this vast universe there abides a living conscious Personality, who wills, and knows, and fashions all things.
- (b) **GOD AS WORKER.** It is a special feature of the Christian revelation that throughout it exhibits God as a Worker. Other religious systems represent Him as being eternally at rest. He is pictured as an infinite Dreamer, wrapped up in profound introspective contemplation, and to impart anything like disinterested action is considered derogatory. But the book of Genesis, and indeed the rest of the Holy Book, portrays Him otherwise: He is not a Dreamer, or a mere Spectator, but an active Worker.
- (c) **GOD AS REDEEMER.** One of the striking peculiarities of our Christian faith is this: it is the only religion among men that has ever represented God as seeking man; other faiths represent man as seeking God, or gods unwilling to be found. The latter view, though flattering to man is not true to fact, history, or experience. Sad, yet true, the natural man when left to himself desires not his Creator: “There is none that seeketh after God.” It is the seeking Saviour who kindles within the human breast longings after better things.

“Well Water; Welling Water; Well Watered.”

—□□□—
MARK H. PRIOR, Chichester.

“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the Wells of Salvation.”—Is. 12. 3.

PART I. WELL WATER.

IT is interesting to observe that well water is drawn from the depths, and that welling water springs up from the depths, and yet both of them originate from the rain that cometh down from above. There could be no fountains abounding with water without the rain that filleth the pools, turning the Valley of Bacca into a well, and the barren wilderness into a fertile and well watered land. The simile is obvious; for is it not true in the spiritual life that the Living Streams come down from God through Christ, Who is the fountain of Living Waters, to us, and become wells of Living Waters springing up into everlasting life, and rivers of Living Water flowing out from the inmost being of the believer.

Moreover, it may be observed that God's purpose to bless Gentiles, by making these Living Waters available to them, is intimated in the earliest days of Genesis. Hagar, the Egyptian, is met by an angel by a “fountain” of water and discovers the two-fold truth that God sees and God hears—just as the Samaritan woman at Sychar's well discovered the same two things (compare Gen. 16. 11 and 13 and John 4. 10 and 19). Ishmael would have died had not God opened Hagar's eyes to see a well of water—while it was the Plain of Jordan that is first mentioned as being “well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah” (Gen. 13. 10). Neither Hagar, nor Ishmael (Gal. 4. 30), nor the inhabitants of Sodom derived more than temporal blessings from their experiences—in fact it is not till we come to Gen. 22. 19 that the full blessing of dwelling by the “Well of the Oath” could be really enjoyed. What a wonderful unfolding we have in Genesis 22, for through this scripture “God . . . preached . . . the gospel unto Abraham.” Consequently we find it to be a beautiful typical lesson of Christ's death and resurrection—thus can the word of God's oath, spoken from the opened heavens, be sounded out to “all nations” and the wells of Salvation become freely available to whosoever will take

of the Water of Life. So Abraham dwells at Beersheba (the well of the oath). Thenceforth the well side takes on a new significance, and the record of scenes thereat is a history of blessing to Jew and Gentile alike.

In close sequence, Abraham's servant finds Rebekah by the well; Jacob, too, meets Rachel at the well; Joseph was a fruitful vine by a well whose branches ran over the Jewish wall* and his fruit thus became available to Gentiles. Moses, the man of God, found his Gentile bride by a well, and Ruth was enjoined by Boaz to drink of the water that the young men had drawn from the Well of Bethlehem—and what water can compare with that which can be drawn from its depths!

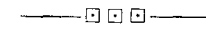
David longed for a drink of water from this well and three young men went in jeopardy of their lives to obtain it for him. David would not drink of it, but poured it out before the Lord as a drink offering, and as an expression of what those young men had done. Was not the apostle Paul of a similar mind? Had he not done the work of an Evangelist, and made full proof of his ministry? He was ready “to be offered up” (compare also Phil. 2. 7) or “poured out as a drink offering.” Many others have not counted their lives dear unto themselves, but have been ready to lay down their necks out of devotedness of heart to Christ. Scripture, and history, tell us of those who have had trial of mockings, scourging, bonds and imprisonment. “They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain . . . being destitute, afflicted, tormented.” Some have left house, parents, brethren, wife, and children for the Kingdom of God's sake. Wealth, health and life itself have all been put on the altar. Such is the result of the Grace of God in the heart. Thus it is evident that it costs something to draw waters for those that are thirsty. Moses watered the flock in spite of the opposition of the “shepherds!” Jacob rolled away the stone from the well's mouth for the benefit of others. Joseph was solely grieved by the archers who shot at, and hated, him.

* Christ has done more than this for He “has broken down the middle wall of partition” and the fruits of His sufferings have become available to earth's remote bounds.

The young men of Boaz had drawn water, so that harvesters and gleaners alike could drink. Above all—the Lord Jesus, “wearied with his journey,” was ready to supply those Living Waters by the Well of Sychar, and to make those Waters available for us He went to the Glory by way of the Cross, and has given gifts unto men.

The points of practical utility for us are as follows: Can we say “Therefore **with joy**” are we drawing “water out of the Wells of Salvation”—water which will give joy to Him Who is far greater than David; which will refresh our own souls and which will become available for others to drink. Are we prepared to pay the cost? We have already mentioned something of the cost, and we daily hear of the price some have to pay, even now, in different parts of the world. We challenge ourselves as to how we should stand the test, should such come upon us. The answer to that challenge is found in the hymn:—

“ In Thy presence we are happy,
 In Thy presence we’re secure,
 In Thy presence all affliction
 We can easily endure.
 In Thy presence we can suffer,
 We can conquer, we can die,
 Wandering from Thee we are helpless,
 Let Thy grace then keep us nigh.”
 (To be continued.)



Paradoxes.

“ He that findeth his life shall lose it : but he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.”
 Matt. 10 : 39.

There is a joy that’s born in sorrow,
 There is a peace that springs from pain,
 There is a hope that sees to-morrow,
 And sings in darkness sweetest strain.

There is a comfort found in mourning,
 There is a rest that comes from work,
 A wealth the souls of poor adorning,
 A purity e’en in the dirt.

There is a mercy guiding judgment,
 There is a love that looks like hate
 A virtue ’midst vile vice resplendent,
 A lowliness that makes men great.

There is a faith that stands undaunted,
 Tho foes and fears line every side,
 There is a strength in weakness mounted,
 A life with Christ that’s crucified.

There is great loss, that true gain seemeth
 To those who shun the rugged cross ;
 But when delight without pain beameth,
 Eternal gain shall be for loss.

Some Things “Thy Word” Does.

Psalm 119.

Verse 9.

Cleanses our ways (desires and deeds) if we heed it’s revealed doctrines, and righteous demands.

Verse 11.

Saves from sinning, when we take the precaution to put it on the throne of our affections.

Verse 16.

Fills the memory, when we delight (skip for joy) in its statutes. Meditation develops memory.

Verse 25.

Restores the soul, it liberates lives which are cleaving (adhering, or glued) to earthly things.

Verse 28

Strengthens us when our spirits are melting under the heaviness that overcomes us when we are enduring manifold trials.

Verse 41.

Begets desires to be saved (delivered and kept) as God would have us saved. We are maintained by His mercies.

Verse 49.

Causes us to hope. For it is the Source and Sustainer of hope.

Verse 50.

Comforts those it quickens—even in the dark hours of affliction.

Verse 74.

It can so fill us with hopefulness that those who fear the Lord will be filled with gladness, when they meet us.

Verse 101.

It can develop such a strong desire to obey it, that we will fetter our feet lest evil should divert our devotion.

Verse 105.

It can shew us the next step we should take, also the path through life that will please God.

Verse 130.

Gives illumination and discernment to the child-like.

Verse 140.

Makes serving ones love it because of its purity. It’s purity begets pure love.

Verse 148.

Makes study more to be desired than needful slumber.

Verse 158.

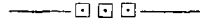
Reveals the transgressors, and begets grief in saints who see them disregard the will of God.

Verse 162.

It can fill the heart with joy, as one who findeth treasures of surpassing worth.

QUARTUS.

“Thy Brother . . . for whom Christ Died.”



S. L. JACOB (Col. R.E.)

LET us say to ourselves, softly and tenderly as such a name requires, “My brother . . . for whom Christ died.” (See Rom. xiv. 15). “My weak brother . . . for whom Christ died” (See I. Cor. vii. 11). I may destroy him, I may cause him to perish; I who am to love him as Christ loves me, and be willing to lay down my life for him.

Am I my brother’s keeper? Assuredly. And where is my brother? Where is he not? Do not I meet him daily, in the train, or in the ’bus, in mart or street, in private houses and in public places? Do I watch for him, do I long for the opportunity to minister to him as the Lord enables?

We shall not soon forget how in Edinburgh in 1902 a beloved Persian brother stood up before some three hundred of us assembled for prayer in that city, and spoke to us with tears and broken utterances on the words “Even thou wast as one of them” (Obadiah 11). As he read:

“But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity . . . as thou hast done it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head!”

And as he owned how guilty he felt himself, surely many of us who heard, felt very guilty too.

The sectarian spirit is so subtle, so universal, it is by no means easy to be clear of it. How readily do we think, and speak, of **our** fellowship, **our** company, applying these terms to a few only of God’s children, and knowing nothing of really priestly service on behalf of all those for whom Christ died. If Christ died for them, how dear they must be to Christ; does not this cause the divine nature in us to yearn after them with deepest longings? For whatever there is of Christ in them, shall we not unfeignedly rejoice, delighted to recognise the common bonds we have together in Christ? If, on the other hand we see any defect (and who

has not many) shall we not lay ourselves out to do anything we can to help them, lovingly and graciously, with tenderest care; not harshly or in a spirit of superiority, but in a spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted?

How terrible it is that we can destroy, or cause to perish, our brother. Do not say, this does not mean this or that; think of what it does mean, rather than the reverse. Surely it means this much, if not more; a wasted life, that might have been fragrant with Christ—a missing of the mark which God desired for him, a grieving of the heart of the Christ Who died for him. Who can measure all this? And perhaps I caused it, without meaning it, for I was unheeding, and thought only of what pleased myself, so I did what I wished, and did not consider my brother for whom Christ died.

But this is not the spirit of Christ. He would not offend His Jewish brethren though He Himself was free (Matt. xvii. 27); He would bear the storm Himself that His disciples might be spared (John xviii. 8). Blessed Lord, who is like Thee? Grant to us of Thy spirit. Let us be willing to give up anything of our own, if we can by so doing help, or prevent from stumbling one for whom Christ died. “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way” (Rom. xiv. 13). As we pass through this world, and behold its dainties, let us put a knife to our throats seeing we are men given to appetite (see Prov. xxiii. 2), for surely we would not for our own gratification do aught that might stumble our brother. Moreover, seeing that if one member of Christ suffer, all the members suffer with it: or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it: surely we should have the deepest care one for another that, at all events as far as in us lies, we should prevent schism in the body.

We cannot dissociate ourselves from the whole that bears Christ’s name—we are part and parcel of it, and must share in the honour or the shame, the sorrow or the loss. If we were in a ship that was going on to shipwreck, could we save even ourselves by locking ourselves up in the little cabin and taking great

pains to try and keep that in order? To whom God has committed much, from them He will ask the more; and what He has given, He has given for the blessing of all. Great is the loss in the present day, because seldom is the truth taken by those, who have it, to those who have it not.

Freely we have received, freely we must give, and everyone who has is a debtor to him that hath not. God loved, and so God gave. He gave His all.

Christ loved, and this love brought Him down to a sin-defiled world to seek for those whom the Father gave Him out of the world.

Paul loved, so he was made all things to all men that by any means he might save some, though the more he loved the less he was loved.

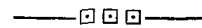
Is it easy. No, it means a path far more narrow than the legal separatist ever dreamed of, and no one can tread that path save he who is gripped with the almighty constraining love of Christ, and being thus set free, is compelled by that same love to deny himself, to lose his life for Christ's sake, and to yearn after others in some little measure as his Master did before him. Let our brother be whom he may, let him be called by whatsoever name, be he morally well or spritually diseased, let us ever remember that he is our brother for whom Christ died, and as such is entitled to our deepest regard, our fondest love. If this be not, where is that proof that we are disciples of Christ?

Many and diverse are the conditions of our beloved brethren for whom Christ died; many are young and tender; many ignorant and ill-instructed; many sick and sorry, weary and heavy-laden; many lame, halting and stumbled. Oh! do not say they are wilful. Have we tried to help them, have we with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing with them in love, not in a patronizing way, nor in a spirit of superiority, sought to heal and restore, to teach and to build up, that we may keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

Mark the tenderness of that man of God, Paul: "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse (nursing mother) cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted to you . . . our own souls, because ye were dear unto us . . . Ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged everyone of you, as a father doth his children . . . When Timotheus came from you to us and brought us good tidings . . . brethren, we were comforted over you in our affliction and distress by your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." Do read these two chapters (1 Thess. ii. and iii.), they are so

beautiful. Read 2 Cor. vii., and see his exultation in a single point of obedience by some of his naughty children, though much was still wrong. Read his address in Acts xx., his remarks in Phil. iii. 18. 20. and mark his tears even for the enemies of the Cross. Are we contemptuously to dismiss the thought of our brother with the remark, "He is in system" (very few of us are out of system, if not something worse). They are our brethren for whom Christ died.

O! God, melt these stony hearts of ours. Cause us (while indeed we seek to be disciples in the sense of Luke xiv., because we have tasted Thy love in Christ, in the great supper that Thou hast spread), in our dealings with our brethren, who in spite of evident defect may still be more Christ-like than we are, to reflect some tiny portion of the tender grace which Christ shows every day to us, ever remembering that Christ died for them, and loves them as He loves us,



Notes worth Noting.

The FIRST time that the word "church" or assembly occurs in the New Testament is in Matt. xvi. 18—"I will build my church," and is there regarded as a future thing—Christ the Builder.

The fulness of time (Gal. iv. 4) refers to the INCARNATION; the fulness of times (Eph. i. 10) refers to the MILLENNIUM.

Christ as the Apostle (Heb. iii. 1) came from God to speak TO us; Christ as the High Priest (Heb. viii. 1) has gone to God to speak FOR us.

The gift of Jesus was the declaration of God's LOVE (John iii. 16); the death of Jesus was the necessity of God's RIGHTEOUSNESS John iii. 14.

Aaron is styled "High Priest," but Jesus "GREAT High Priest" (Heb. iv. 14).

The latter times (1 Tim. iv. 1) delineate PAPAL Apostasy; the last days (2 Tim. iii. 1) describes CHRISTENDOM'S Apostasy.

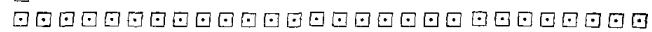
Christ's present Priesthood is exercised according to the PATTERN of Aaron (Heb. ix.), but according to the ORDER of Melchizedek. (Heb. vii.).

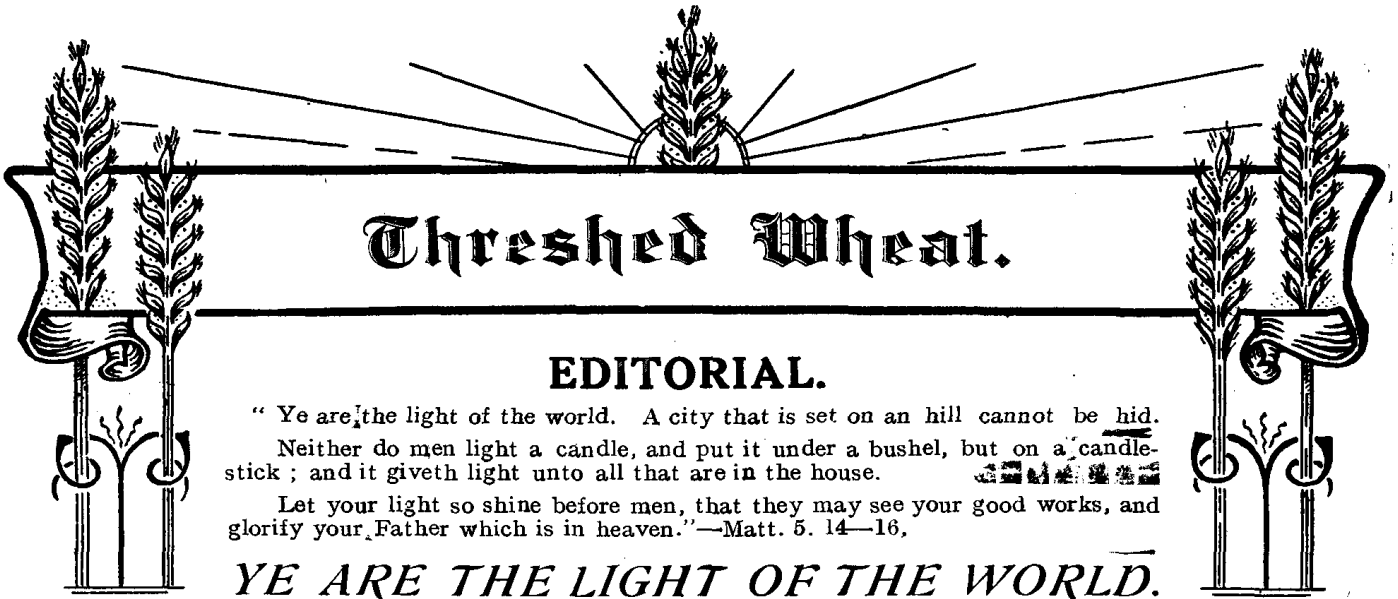
Jesus was raised from the dead by the POWER of God (Eph. i. 19, 20) and by the GLORY of the Father (Rom. vi. 4).

God willed our salvation; Christ effected it; The Holy Ghost testifies of it (Heb. x. 7-15).

Christ once APPEARED to put away sin, and now APPEARS in God's presence for us, and soon will APPEAR in glory with us (Heb. ix. 24-28).

WALTER SCOTT.



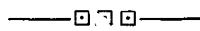


Threshed Wheat.

EDITORIAL.

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”—Matt. 5. 14—16,

YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.



PART II.

But, says my reader, why all this detail and referring to creation's history when your text is from the New Testament, referring to believers and not creation at all? For the simple reason that the Lord Jesus Christ had all this before Him when He uttered these words, “Ye are the Light of the World.” Creation was the background to illustrate His spiritual application; the type of a far greater anti-type, the panorama of God's masterpiece of creation—the believer.

Having therefore reminded ourselves somewhat of the background and the type, we are now equipped to consider the spiritual application and anti-type, and our minds immediately turn to 2 Cor. 4. 6. “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” And we bow in adoring worship at the love of God, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

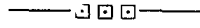
When God created man, He created him, like all His other works, perfect, but the enemy marred His handiwork and man became a lost soul, dead in sin and in a condition of spiritual DARKNESS. This darkness has continued from the Fall right on to the present time. As at creation God entered and commanded Light to shine, so in man's history God intervened and brought life to dead souls and light to those in darkness. The Son of God, the Light of the world, became a man born of a virgin, and at His Birth we see the first indication of the light shining. Simeon speaks of Him as “a light to lighten the Gentiles” (Luke 2. 32) and John tells us, chap. 1. 4, “In Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not.” Again referring to 2 Cor. 4, Paul tells us in v. 4 that the means whereby this “Light

from on high” enters man's spiritual darkness is “the gospel of the glory of Christ.” God's “Good News” to mankind brings light and liberty. It becomes my own by faith in Christ, in a way very similar to the introduction of Light at creation. There we find first, the Spirit of God in operation—“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” and secondly, the Word of God commanded light to be. So in the salvation which God has provided for His creatures: First, His Spirit strives with man convicting him of sin, righteousness and judgment for “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” and again “Ye must be born again” so we learn that both the Spirit of God and the Word of God are essential ere light enters where darkness abounds. Peter confirms this to us in his first Epistle 1. 23. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

The Saviour tells us in John 12. 46, “I am come a light into the world, that WHOSOEVER believeth on Me, should not abide in darkness.” and again “I am the Light of the World: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Believing this message of salvation brought to us by the Word and Spirit of God we have the light of life, and then it is, that our text comes to us full of meaning and power “Ye are the light of the World.” Prior to the creation of the sun, moon and stars, God Himself was the Light of Creation, but when these were formed and fashioned God set them as “lights in the firmament of the heaven” (Gen. 1. 15). So when Christ was here He said “As long as I am in the world I am the Light of the World,” but now He has gone, God has set you and me as His lights in a

Crucified Through Weakness.

(2 Cor. 13. 4).



By P. WILSON, Holland.

WE all long for results in our service for the Master. The way to be assured of fruit that will stand the test of the judgment seat of Christ is to be imitators of Him. The Holy Spirit found Him a willing instrument and the multitudes on high prove that now as then there is no lack of power for those who are prepared to follow in His steps.

Behold my Servant, whom I have chosen . . . A bruised reed shall He not break . . . And all the multitudes were amazed (Matt. 12. 18-23). What gentleness and yet what power! Peter, who cut off an ear, was chosen of the Spirit to tell us that, when He was reviled, He reviled not again (1 Peter 2. 23). His power lay in His weakness.

We marvel at sinners resisting the Holy Spirit with such eternal consequences; but are less concerned when we ourselves grieve or quench that same Holy Person and so prevent Him using us to bring blessing to saint and sinner as well as eternal glory to God.

Paul was in the secret of the Lord, when he wrote to the saints at Corinth: "God hath chosen the weak things of the world" (1. 27). Or to the Romans: "For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (8. 36).

Comparing Old and New Testaments, we see that God's principles do not change. Where the Holy Spirit has wrought a sense of weakness, He is also there to manifest His power. It was when Isaiah cried: Woe is me, that the heavenly messenger flew to the rescue and exalted the Cross of Christ (6. 5-7). It was when Job had compared himself with God, that he exclaimed: I abhor myself, and became the recipient of God's double portion; while the adversary had to retire discomfited (Job 42. 6).

Turning to the New Testament for a moment, it is when the sinner is without strength that God saves him (Rom. 5. 6). It was when Peter cried: Lord, save me, that the hand of omni-

potence was stretched out to save him (Matt. 14. 30).

Israel was the fewest people and Amalek the first of the nations, but study now their latter end. The one to be the head of the nations and the other to perish for ever (Deut. 7. 7. Num. 24. 20).

Israel again proved the difference between "The great shout" and "The sucking lamb" (1 Sam. 4. 5. and 7. 9). They had returned to God's first principles. God's expedition against Pharaoh, consisting of a man, his wife, their two boys and an ass, defeated the enemy and delivered about 2,000,000 captives through the death of a lamb (Ex. 12, 1 Cor. 5. 7).

The wise man, Solomon, knew the secret when he said: A soft answer turneth away wrath, and again: A soft tongue breaketh the bone (Prov. 15. 1 and 25. 15).

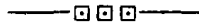
Gideon's faith rose to the occasion when he heard the Lord say: By the three hundred men will I save you (Judges 7. 7).

Turning to angelic ministry: we read that they excel in strength (Psa. 103. 20), but are as dependent as we are on the power of God. Service is preceded by waiting on God in the temple (Rev. 15. 6). What tremendous results in chapter 16. It was in the Sanctuary that Asaph learned the latter end of the ungodly and the present as well as the eternal profit of the saint, who waits on God in the Holy Place (Psa. 73. 17-20). How we delight to gaze upon the dependent Man as He trod this scene.

The Father is seeking for worshippers (John 4. 23). The Son, the Good Shepherd, is seeking for lost sheep (Luke 15). And the Holy Spirit is seeking for empty vessels to fill them for service—even empty vessels (2 Kings 4. 3). We have much that is unholy to empty out and make room for the power of God, if we will have fellowship with Him in bringing many sons unto glory. This is not the way of nature, but where nature is restrained, the Spirit works.

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



II. STEPHEN.

AS the first of "the noble army of (Christian) martyrs," Stephen is necessarily an interesting figure. The stream of blood which commenced to flow in his day has not yet ceased, nor will it do so until Jesus our Lord returns and sets righteousness in the place of power.

Stephen is first introduced to us in connection with the money affairs of the Church in Jerusalem. The Jews of foreign birth complained that their widows were being neglected. As numbers increased, the work increased, and the apostles now judged it wise to hand over the distribution of the funds to others. Accordingly seven men were chosen by the assembly, and were then set apart by the apostles to attend to this business. Remarkably, they all bore Greek names, which means that they were selected from the grumbling section of the community. This surely shows the working of grace in the hearts of those against whom complaints had been directed (Acts vi.). The qualifications for this service were not merely intellectual and commercial. They must be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." It is a grievous sin against Christ that church funds should ever have been handled by men lacking these high qualities.

Stephen personally is described as "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and also as "full of grace and power." The latter couplet is the result of the former. How long he continued to dispense money is not recorded, but the next thing stated in the inspired record is that he became the central figure in the testimony of God in Jerusalem. Peter had been this; now abruptly the attention of all becomes fixed upon Stephen. Herein we may see the sovereignty of the Spirit of God, acting as He pleases, and making use of whomsoever He will. Appointed by his brethren to distribute alms to widows, Stephen was soon divinely called to be the chief preacher in Jerusalem. His apostolic appointment had nothing to do with preaching. Indeed, human appointment for the ministry of the Word is nowhere found in Scripture; on the contrary, it is sternly reprobated in Gal. 1. 1 and other passages.

The earnest preacher was soon made to drink of his Master's cup. Like the Lord before him, Stephen was accused by hired witnesses, and the charge was blasphemy (Acts vi. 11; Mark xiv. 55-65). Amongst other things they said of him, "This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us." When men are powerless to dispute, they often slander. Stephen had doubtless been expounding the new order of things which we call

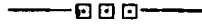
Christianity, with added warnings of judgment upon Jerusalem if the Jewish people persisted in their unbelief; this testimony his antagonists perverted as in the verses just quoted.

Finding himself presently before the Sanhedrin, Stephen took not the place of a prisoner pleading for his life; he became accuser and judge of the ecclesiastics before him. Tracing the history of the nation from Abraham downwards, he pressed home Israel's persistent unbelief and rejection of every witness and saviour God had given them, whether it were Joseph, Moses, the Lord Jesus, or any other. They had also violated the law, and killed the prophets. The facts were undeniable; but instead of falling upon their faces in humiliation before God, the haughty priests dragged the faithful witness outside the walls of Jerusalem and foully murdered him. The earth has never known anything so cruel and bloody as religion! Awful truth!

The death of Stephen marked an epoch in the history of the ways of God. It was Israel's definite refusal of the offer of divine grace as given in Acts iii. 19-21. The martyr was, as it were, the nation's messenger sent after the rejected Christ, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke xix. 14). The Saviour, seen by the dying man standing on the right hand of God, forthwith took His seat, divine relations with Israel being from that moment suspended until Christianity is no more.

It was a wonderful death. Faith's vision saw the glory of God and Jesus therein. Full of the Holy Ghost, the soul of the martyr was supremely happy. Christ was manifested in him. Like his Master, he prayed for his enemies, and committed his spirit to the divine keeping (Acts vii. 54-60). He was "strengthened with all might, according to the power of His glory, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness" (Col. i. 11). In Stephen we see illustrated the contrast between the old order and the new. The old order, which began at Sinai, engaged the people of God with an earthly portion and an earthly sanctuary, with promises of a visible Messiah reigning in Zion in the midst of a prosperous people. The new order, inaugurated at Pentecost, calls men apart from the world to find their interests in heaven, and their delight in Christ known as seated there. To Christians the earth is simply a place of reproach and loss, but under the mighty influence of the Holy Ghost hearts are enabled to say farewell to all things here, because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. But Satan has ever been hostile to the heavenly aspect of Christianity, and to this hour many who truly love the Saviour's name have but little conception of it. How is it with the reader of these lines?

“Well Water; Welling Water; Well Watered.”



MARK H. PRIOR, *Chichester.*

“I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way . . . and their soul shall be as a watered garden.”—Jer. 31. 9.12.

PART III. WELL WATERED.

WE have already seen that the earliest reference to a district being “well watered” was in connection with the Plains of Jordan before God destroyed the Cities of the Plain. This solemn fact is strikingly exemplified by the Apostle in Hebrews 6. where a certain class of person is likened to “earth . . . which beareth thorns and briers . . . nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.” In fact, just as a fiery judgment overtook Sodom, so also will it overtake this evil world (See 2 Peter 3).

We have also seen that “well water” and “welling water” (i.e., in a spiritual sense) became available to man solely as a result of the death, resurrection and session of Christ to the Right Hand of God—so, too, with the spiritual rain that cometh down from heaven. Our minds at once turn to that never-to-be-forgotten scene on Mount Carmel, where we have such a marvellous word picture of the death of Christ, the beautiful answer of God to the acceptable Sacrifice offered to Him, followed by Elijah’s retirement to the mountain top, and the subsequent opening of heaven with the abundant rain.

Moreover, there seems a special blessing in the “rain,” for it suggests a direct communication by God Himself of the spiritual blessings that He has stored in His treasures for the believing soul. The man truly in touch with God becomes like a watered garden (Jer. 31. 12). The hymn inadequately expresses the mind of God in saying,

“Mercy drops round us are falling,
But for the showers we plead.”

The truth is that “there was a **great** rain” (1 Kings 18. 45).

Lot had very confused ideas when he saw the district of Sodom “like the garden of the Lord, as the land of Egypt”—for these two are far from being similar. In fact, Moses, in comparing Egypt with God’s Land, distinguished them by saying that Egypt must be watered “by waters of the foot”—i.e., is dependent upon artificial irrigation—whereas God’s Land “drinketh of the water of the **rain of heaven**; the people that dwell therein are like the **stars of heaven**” (that is, a heavenly company visible at night—compare Matt. 13. 43), and

their days are said to be “as the **days of heaven** upon the earth” (Deut. 10. 22 and 11. 11 and 21).

There is, however, another aspect of the matter. Sometimes Scripture likens the dark clouds to the sorrow and discipline that come into our lives. Blessed is the man who, passing through Baca’s Valley, has learned the happy secret of making it a well, and the drops that come down from those clouds serve only to fill the pools. “The wind passeth and cleanseth them and fair weather cometh” (Job. 37. 21. 22). The Psalmist can then rejoice that the Lord is a **Sun** and Shield, the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from him that walketh uprightly—“O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee” (Psalm 84) Who can tell us better than Elihu, that these “thick clouds come for correction, or for His land, or for mercy,” and who can tell us, as Job, of the immense spiritual value to his soul of the experiences he had to undergo?

In closing, we may remind ourselves that he that watereth shall himself also be watered. Apollos was an eloquent man and he used his eloquence for God. He also was “mighty in the Scriptures.” He was meek enough to learn the way of God more perfectly from Aquila and Priscilla. Maybe some of us are not “weak” enough to be mighty in the Scriptures. It is a lovely expression, and it implies a man so in touch with God that he can be used effectively. So it was with Apollos, and his special mission seems to have been “watering.” Similarly Paul says, “He that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles” (Gal. 2. 8). Jude, however, tells us of some who are clouds without water, carried about of winds.

In Christian ministry of every kind it is of the greatest value to the soul to realize that, through grace, we have been placed into direct communication with God Himself on the Throne, and that He loves to pour down to us, through Christ glorified, those spiritual blessings which are ministered to us by the Holy Spirit come down (See Eph. 4. 7-13).

Unity.

By A. C. ROSE (Madras).

"In these days, when all, and sundry, are talking of "Unity" and uniting; both in the church, and in the world, this timely article by our brother beloved, away in India, will be welcomed and appreciated by all true Christians. EDITOR.

OUR Indian air is full of talk of Unity. Various denominations are composing their historic differences in an attempt to present a united front to the massed forces of Hinduism and Mohammedanism. A missionary who attended the recent Conference was asked for his opinion regarding the proposals. He replied, "It will be

Union without Unity.'

If such a travesty is ever perpetuated, as seems too probable, principle must be sacrificed, casuistry practised, and thousands forced into compromise or out into the wilderness.

It is a relief to turn from such makeshift confederacy to the spiritual ideal. The rarity of the word Unity in Scripture is arresting, but such rarity is a component of value. The noun actually occurs only once in the Old Testament, but the verb twice.

Psalm 86.11. "Teach me Thy way O Lord; I will walk in Thy Truth. UNITE my heart to fear Thy name."

A united assembly cannot be obtained unless it is composed of united hearts, knit together in allegiance and devotion to God. Then whatever differences may exist, they are not permitted to separate; rather like the assorted elements which make up iron, in the white heat of divine love, they weld into one strong band of unbreakable strength. But, as in iron, an excess of carbon makes amalgamation difficult, if not impossible, so any exaggeration or disproportion becomes a cause of disunion. The chemist's number for a carbon atom is 6, which is the number of man. The same flesh which would foster a false unity is responsible for division. The only remedy for such an incorrigible schismatic is death. Therefore, the Psalmist goes on to say in deep humility condemning self and justifying God: "Great is Thy mercy towards me and Thou hast delivered me from the lowest hell!" That is the attitude of spirit, produced by an experience of resurrection. That is the language of a broken and contrite heart, eager to pay the price of an answer to its prayer for unity. The man who remembers his deliverance from the lowest hell will never be guilty of schism.

**"Simeon and Levi are brethren;
Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.
O my soul, come not thou into their secret conference.
Unto their assembly mine honour, be not thou
UNITED . . .
I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.
(Gen. 49. 5.7.)**

The very first use of the word is dark with warning and describes a union which is to be shunned like the plague, for judgment will prove it to be a refuge of lies; a house of straw on a foundation of sand. Simeon and Levi were partners in an enterprise which had brought dishonour upon their father's name, and which not all the grace of his dying bed could overlook. As they had combined, so they should be scattered. Levi to be sown amongst all the tribes, and Simeon to be given a second-rate parcel of land out of Judah, far to the southward, where he would writhe under the first thrust of the invaders' spearhead. The Philistine was his fierce neighbour and the desert of Paran crouched hungrily at his gates. When all the other ten tribes had their borders clearly defined, Simeon and Levi were omitted. Their sin was still in remembrance 300 years afterwards, when Joshua carried out Jacob's sentence to the letter.

But against such a gloomy background behold the

Rainbow of Mercy!

If the folly of the flesh is unsparingly condemned, the wisdom of God is correspondingly magnified. Levi's name means "joining," and his mother's earthly hope was given a heavenly meaning, when he was joined to every tribe by substitutionary decree and sacrificial ministry. His was the high privilege of a special covenant. "My covenant was with him of life and peace, and I gave it to him that he might fear and He feared Me and stood in awe of My name. The law of truth was in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness and did turn many from iniquity" (Mal. 2. 5-6). *How gracious are the judgments of our God!*

No such gleam shines on the earthly path of Simeon. But looking forward we see the same unearthly splendour, for out of Simeon are sealed twelve thousand bondservants of the Most High. Sovereign grace will not be denied, even at the hands of Simeon, for lo! on that

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



III. PHILIP.

ANOTHER of the chosen seven, expressly called "the Evangelist" in Acts xxi. 8 to distinguish him from Philip the Apostle (Matt. x. 3). In the divine dealings with him, as with Stephen, we see the sovereignty of the Spirit of God. Set apart by his brethren to care for widows, he was soon called to a preaching service of no ordinary character.

It happened on this wise. The enemy having tasted blood in Stephen's case, immediately thirsted for more: accordingly a general persecution of Christians ensued, Saul of Tarsus constituting himself Satan's chief inquisitor. This led to a great scattering, which, though apparently a break-up of the work of God, really led to a considerable extension thereof. "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts viii. 4). This is a most interesting statement. The courage of these early Christians was clearly not daunted by their sufferings; for wherever they went they confessed their Lord. Not only those specially gifted as preachers; but the Christians as a whole evangelised the people amongst whom they moved. It is one of Christendom's most injurious fictions that some sort of official authorisation from man is needed ere the sacred office of preaching should be taken up. In truth, no further authorisation is needed than that which is found in 2 Cor. iv. 13: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, 'I believed, and therefore have I spoken'; we also believe, and therefore speak." How any man can believe that the Eternal Son became man, and died upon the cross for his salvation, and not proclaim the mighty fact to as many persons as his circumstances and abilities will allow, is a marvel which might well excite the wonder of the whole angelic host. The football enthusiast and the political partisan wax eloquent to all comers concerning the matters which fill their minds; how much more ready of speech should be the sinner saved by grace, especially when we remember that what every Christian knows every other man needs to know if he is to escape eternal ruin. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. xii. 34).

Driven from Jerusalem by persecution, "Philip went down to a city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" (Acts viii. 5), thus fulfilling the third part of the ascending Lord's commission, as given in Acts i. 8. The preaching was backed by miracles, of which God graciously granted many while Christianity was but a new thing in the earth. The need for such divine interpositions, of necessity passed away when the testimony became established. A great work was wrought in Samaria. Not only were the people struck with the miracles, but they "gave heed unto those things which Philip spake." It is not miracles that convert the soul, but the Word of God. God's message to men concerning His Son, when received in faith, at once brings pardon

and salvation, full and free. "Great joy" filled the city of Philip's labours. Samaria, which Judaism could never subdue, had now yielded to the gospel of Christ. We do not wonder at this. Law repels: but grace attracts.

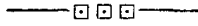
Philip, however, got one bad fish into his net—a very bad fish indeed. A magician called Simon had for some time bewitched the people with his Satanic marvels to his own advantage. Observing in Philip a power operating which was greater than that which he possessed, he attached himself to him, and was baptised (with many others) as a professed believer in the Lord Jesus. His hypocrisy was manifested by the coming upon the scene of Peter, and John. These apostles visited the city as the representatives of the twelve who still continued in Jerusalem, spite of the scattering which had taken place. It pleased God to withhold the gift of the Holy Spirit from the Samaritans until Peter and John came down, and prayed for them. This unusual order had in view the religious rivalry which had so long existed between Jerusalem and Samaria, referred to by the woman at the well in John iv. 20. This God would not allow to be transferred to Christianity. Accordingly Samaria was not granted a separate outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but instead shared in the Jerusalem outpouring through the instrumentality of the two visiting apostles. The unity of the Church was thus proclaimed and safeguarded. To quote the incident as furnishing a warrant for modern episcopal confirmation is ignorance indeed.

Peter the conservative, who regarded all outside of Israel as unclean, and John the firebrand, who once desired to call down fire from heaven upon Samaritans, are now seen welcoming as brethren these strangers whose hearts God had touched (Acts x. 28; Luke ix. 51). So marvellously had divine grace wrought in their souls.

Philip's next piece of work was of a different character altogether. Not to a city full of people, but to an individual was he next commissioned by the Lord.

The last notice of Philip in Scripture is in Acts xxi. 8-9. There we find him residing in Cæsarea, and entertaining Paul and his friends on their way to Jerusalem. The interesting fact is stated that he "had four daughters which did prophecy." A glimpse into a godly household is a delight, especially when the head thereof is a public servant of the Lord Jesus. For how frequently has His holy name been scandalised by the unruly behaviour of the sons and daughters of those who preach His word. With what face can any man demand submission to the will of the Lord from others if he is lax in his government of those nearest and dearest to himself?

“Well Water; Welling Water; Well Watered.”



MARK H. PRIOR, Chichester.

“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God.”—Ps. 46. 4.

Part II. WELLING WATER.

A VARIETY of thoughts pass through our minds as we meditate upon the many beautiful references in Scripture to those Springs of Living Water, which set before us the present gracious ministry of Christ by the Holy Spirit of God. The Third Person in the Trinity has come down to this world since Christ died, rose again, and ascended to the right hand of God, and His operations are of great diversity, and are world-wide in their scope. His great delight is to take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us.

When God gave the people bread from Heaven to eat, then He again set before them the truth concerning the Sabbath (Ex. 16). Thus “the Bread of Life” and “God’s rest” are closely connected. But in Exodus 17 we have the “Water of Life,” and immediately we find the declaration of perpetual warfare with Amalek (type of the flesh, and Satan working through it). Almost invariably in Scripture the Water of Life is connected with strife. This illustrates the truth set forth in Galatians 5. 17, “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other.” Remarkable exceptions to this fact are found in Ezekiel 47 and Revelation 21 and 22. The River of Life in Ezekiel depicts the full tide of spiritual blessings on earth during the Millennial reign of Christ, while in Revelation 22 we see a similar river, but it is a scene of heavenly blessings that is set before us. In both cases the strife is over—the victory is complete, and the saints enjoy “God’s Rest.”

“To-day the noise of battle,
The next the victor’s song.”

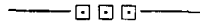
The river of life in Ezekiel, while connected with earthly millennial blessings, also sets before us that which is true in principle of every spiritual blessing. The waters issued out from under the threshold of God’s sanctuary and

“came down” at the south side of the Altar, bringing life and blessing wherever they flowed. That is to say, the source is God Himself, and the Water of Life comes down to us by way of the crucified, risen and glorified Lord (Compare John 7. 37-39 and Eph. 4. 7-13).

Exodus 17 illustrates to us further remarkable truths in regard to the Water of Life. Moses was told to take the rod of God, by means of which the waters of Egypt had been turned to blood, and to smite the rock in Horeb. That rock, says the Apostle, is Christ. The Water of Life could only become available for the thirsty sons of men as a result of the judgment of God falling upon Christ. We deserved the rod, but the stroke fell upon Him. The moment the judgment fell, the pent up waters “gushed out,” and “flowed like rivers” in the wilderness. Moses, Aaron and Hur (prophet, priest and prince) go up the mountain (our Lord ascended into heaven itself), and that same rod of judgment is now extended in the “hand” of Moses **against the foes**, while the “hands” of Moses are stretched out over Israel, **but in blessing**. The Rock that followed them was Christ. Jehovah Nissi (the Lord my banner) **went before** them (see Ps. 114 which is most interesting in this connection). The Altar is erected, for it is only through Calvary that the victory can come, and the perpetual warfare against the flesh is begun. The final result is not in doubt, for it is the Lord Who wages that war—but we shall see to it that we seek to please Him Who hath chosen us to be soldiers.

In Numbers 21 we have another similar illustration, but remarkable in that the warfare there mentioned is waged particularly against Satan and his myrmidons. The Serpent, transfixed on a pole in the wilderness, sets forth that aspect of the Cross wherein our blessed Lord triumphed over Satan, and the powers of

The Children of God.



Four Aspects of their Life.

By T. ROBINSON.

PART I.

These four aspects of the believer's life are set forth in the first Epistle of Peter, as follows:—

Chapter 1. In relation to **God**.

Chapter 2. In relation to the **World**.

Chapter 3 and 4. In relation to **Home and Social Life**.

Chapter 5. In relation to **Assembly Life**.

I. IN RELATION TO GOD.

(1) They are "the elect of God" (vers 2). "Their Redeemer was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world" (verse 20). The "Living Stone" of the "spiritual house," now being built of "living stones," was "chosen of God and precious" (2. 4, 5). This profound and sublime truth is disclosed by our Lord in many places. Of His sheep He says; "My Father Who gave them Me" (Jno. 10. 29). "Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me" (Jno. 17. 6). "Foreknown," "predestinated," "called," "justified," "glorified" (Ro. 8. 30). Five deep doctrines of Divine grace, too deep for finite minds to fathom, but which "precious faith" receives in all humility, wonder and thankfulness.

(2) By birth we become, actually, the children of God. "Born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jno. 1. 13). For "that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Jno. 3. 6). The instrument to effect this is the Spirit of God, through the Word of God. "Being born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God that liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1. 23).

No art of man, no human plan,
 Man's sinful flesh could change;
 To cultivate and educate
 Forms all within his range...
 The living seed performs the deed,
 Incomprehensible;
 The holy Word by faith is heard,
 Seed incorruptible.
 The living Word of God believed,
 Eternal life is then received.

Then notice, this new spiritual birth is linked with the "resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (verse 3). Redemption is by the "precious blood of Christ." Regeneration is by our identification with Christ in His resurrection. God has joined the members and the Head together in His death and in His resurrection. Thus, the believer is seen by God beyond His doom, in the risen Christ, and "if any man be in Christ, there is a **new creation!**" (2 Cor. 5. 17).

(3) Then see what this new Divine birth involves. Born again to a "living hope," by the living Seed of the Word and by union with Him Who is called the "Living Stone." Men of the world have hopes in "this life only." When they die their hopes die with them. The saint's hope never dies. Nay, death is a conquered foe and is made a subordinate to usher the departing spirit of the believer into the presence of Christ; as we see in the dying Stephen, who saw Him and said: "Lord Jesus receive my spirit" (Acts 7. 59). But death is not the full realisation of the believer's hope, but rather the "redemption of the body," its resurrection and the rapture in the "twinkling of an eye," with all—both the living and the dead—who believe, to meet the descending Lord in the air and to be like Him and with Him for ever (1 Thes. 4. 13).

(4) The bright inheritance of saints is here shown to be their **birthright**. "Born to." It is the children's right to inherit. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Ro. 8. 17). The title is valid; it is bequeathed by an eternal covenant, secured by the blood of Calvary's Lamb. The honour and dignity of the heirs far exceed that of Angels; they look on in wonder at the work of grace God is doing in this poor sinful world (1 Peter 1. 12).

The inheritance is here described negatively, rather as what it is not, than as what it is. It is "incorruptible," i.e. **permanent**, not like corruptible gold, the most enduring of precious metals. "Undeiled," **pure**, no spot, no sin, nothing to soil or mar it. "Fadeth not away." "**Perennial**," so unlike the fading, withering flowers of earth. "All flesh" and all the "glory of man" vanish away.

“The path of glory leads but to the grave.”

“Wherein ye greatly rejoice.” Joy filled the heart of Peter, though he knew that a cruel death awaited him. The “many waters” cannot quench joy any more than love! In “heaviness for a season, if need be.” The Father sees the need, puts “precious faith” into the “fining pot” as silver and into the “furnace” as gold (Pro. 27. 21), that the purified one may get “praise, honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (verse 6. 7). God loves His children too well to neglect their education.

(5) **The responsibility of the Heirs.** “wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation (unveiling) of Jesus Christ” (13).

The thoughts need curbing, girding. “Keep thy heart with all diligence” (Prov. 4. 23). “Keep yourselves in the love of God” (Jude 21). The inheritance is reserved in Heaven.” “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3. 2). The Lord is coming in “grace” to consummate our salvation. His “grace has called us to His eternal glory” (Chap. 5. 10).

Three reasons are given by the Apostle for our obedience:—

(1) Your Father is holy. Be ye also holy. Bear His likeness (verse 15).

(2) Your Father is judging you, therefore “pass the time of your sojourning here in fear” (verse 17). His eye is upon His children.

(3) “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation . . . but with the precious blood of Christ.” Incorruptible Blood! What a Ransom! Incorruptible Seed! “Incorruptible inheritance!” How unearthly are these!

Redeemed from sin’s **penalty** we **have** been; from its **power** we **may** be; from its **presence** we **shall** be, at the advent of our Lord. Redemption in its threefold fulness is through the “blood of Christ,” God’s spotless, foreordained Lamb.

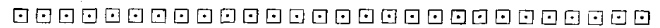
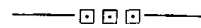
Children of God by Election, Redemption, Regeneration and soon to be in Resurrection with and like the Firstborn among many brethren.

Next Month: **The children of God in relation to the world.**

“Nothing but the Bible.”

“I READ nothing but the Bible.” If a brother sees fit to come to such a conclusion, we have no objections, especially when we remember how little desire is manifested for the sincere milk of the word. Yet there is an extreme in this, which we must guard against. To read nothing but the Bible is not a thing which could be taught to the saints. God has set in the Church teachers; and if it is right for me to hear a teacher speaking God’s mind, how would it be wrong to read that teacher’s words if committed to writing? It may be argued that his words would lose their power; but you might as well say that Paul’s epistles lost their power by being in writing. We must remember that God has not only given us His Word, but He has given us Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, for the edifying of the body of Christ (Eph. chap. iv.); and, in rejecting any of these, we reject our own mercies. If one of such teachers delivers a message in the power of the Spirit to ten persons, on what principle would you prevent me writing down his message and sending it to ten thousand of the saints? Are these ten thousand to be denied the privilege of having such a message, simply because they could not be on the spot to hear it spoken? By all means let us take heed what we read, as well as what we hear; but don’t let us get into bondage by making vows which the Lord does not ask us to make, and vows, withal, which we might find it very hard to keep.

WM. SHAW.



Notes worth Noting.

The TIMES of the Gentiles (Luke xxi. 24) refer to rule and government on earth exercised by Gentiles having been transferred from Judah at the epoch of the Babylonian captivity. The FULLNESS of the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 25) denotes God’s gracious visitation of the Gentiles and their ingathering in grace consequent upon the judicial setting aside of Israel in meantime.

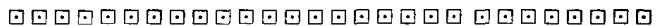
“Redeeming the time BECAUSE the days are evil” (Eph. v. 16). Here the point is the energy of Christian walk and the solemnity of Christian motive. “Redeeming the time” (Col. iv. 5). Here the exhortation is to embrace every moment and seize every opportunity of commending the truth to those “without”—i.e., the world.

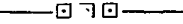
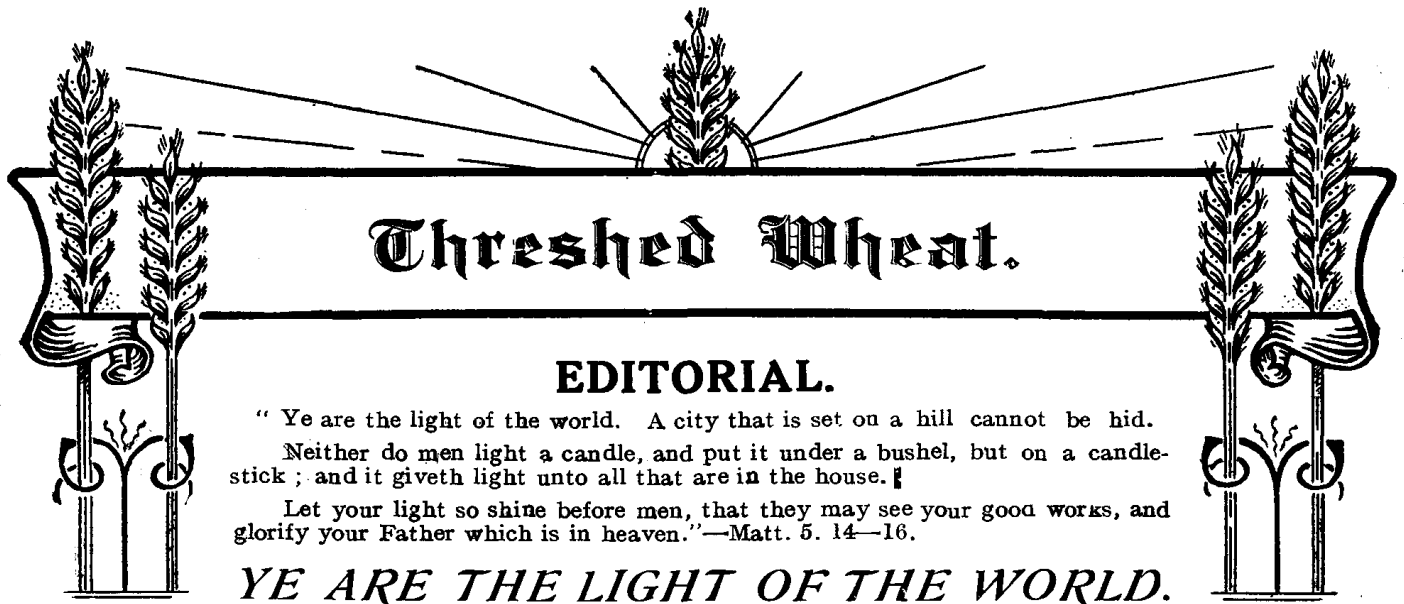
“Kingdom of heaven,” a phrase peculiar to the first Gospel, and of which there are about 30 occurrences, is a DISPENSATIONAL term. “Kingdom of God” is a favourite expression in the third Gospel, occurring also about 30 times, and is of MORAL, besides dispensational, application.

We ARE saved (Eph. ii. 5); also working OUT our own salvation (Phil. ii. 12); and our salvation is NEARING (Rom. xiii. 11). Thus salvation is already accomplished as to the soul; yet progressive as to practical life and conduct; while undoubtedly future as to the redemption of the body.

Peace WITH God is the common blessing of the redeemed (Rom. v. 1); Peace OF God is conditional upon the burdened heart emptying itself before God (Phil. iv. 7).

WALTER SCOTT.





PART III.

IF I AM a true child of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then I have a light which it is impossible to hide, a light which must shine—either dimly or brightly, and therefore the question for me now is:

HOW does my light shine?

We notice first that it is “on a Candlestick (or lampstand as the margin better reads) and giveth light to all that are in the house.”

The thought of a Lamp upon a Lampstand, as the margin of Newberry or the text of J.N.D.’s New Translation gives, is the correct one and better than the idea of a Candle upon a Candlestick. As a Lamp there is the necessity for the constant flow of oil. This the believer has in the Holy Spirit indwelling him. We have no sufficiency of ourselves to keep the Lamp shining brightly, but the Holy Spirit is all sufficient.

There are two places mentioned for our light to shine:—

- (a) In the House.
- (b) Before Men.

Do we not see in the latter our testimony to the outside world, whilst in the former our behaviour in “The House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3. 15), is in mind. Coming to v. 16 of our chapter we find some of the most important, as well as the most interesting, teaching. “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works.” We are not told here to do good works, in fact the Christian who attempts such often ends in disaster. What we are exhorted to do is to LET (or allow) the light which is in us to SO shine. Note it is nothing of ourselves here, but rather Christ who dwells in our heart by faith being allowed His way with us and being seen in our acts and deeds.

It is another way of putting Phil. 2. 12, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling FOR IT IS GOD WHICH WORKETH IN YOU” Expressed by the same writer in yet other language in Gal. 2. 20, “I live, yet NOT I, but Christ liveth in me.” Let your light so shine, my dear reader, not forced by human aid, but energised by Divine Power, and the blessed result will be that men all around will see your good works. Good works are the necessary outcome of a life lived in fellowship with God, and not the result of human effort to alleviate man’s need. How often we lamentably fail when we attempt to do some specific “Good Work.” How much better it is for us to be more occupied with allowing Christ to have His way with us, allowing the light which is in to shine out, than mere good works. The outflow of the Christ-life is the best living example of good works possible. He who was the Good Samaritan knows who is our neighbour and will lead, guide and control us in such a way as to make even the smallest thing we do for Him to redound to His glory for the blessing of our fellow men.

The Christian who does the best “good works” is the one least conscious of it.

At this juncture we must refer back again to 2 Cor. 4. 6, 7, where we before read concerning God “shining into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” and I wonder if we have ever noticed that the very next verse is that one which says, “But we have this treasure IN EARTHEN VESSELS, THAT the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

How this confirms in a beautiful manner, peculiar to the Scriptures, all that we have been saying. All the praise and glory is for God who, in His infinite knowledge and grace

has placed His own light in these frail human bodies of ours—these "earthen vessels." Then the apostle, in the subsequent verses, goes on to tell us how God takes the earthen vessels and deals with them in order that the light may shine out to the fullest degree.

"Troubled on every side—yet not distressed. Perplexed — but not in despair. Persecuted—but not forsaken. Cast down—but not destroyed.

That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

And as we read these words can we not say "Broken but not castaway."

We almost, of necessity, must link this with the Old Testament record of Gideon and his three hundred men, each of whom carried an empty pitcher with a lamp within. Victory was theirs when they followed Gideon, and his example, and broke their pitchers so that their light could shine. We have this treasure in earthen vessels and by means of trouble, perplexity, persecution, and casting down, God seeks to break the vessel in order that the light may shine forth, but blessed be His name, though broken, we shall never be destroyed. Broken material is most useful to our God and Father. If then, dear reader, any of these trials, common to man, have been your portion, may you, like the apostle, be able to say "Yet not distressed," "not in despair," "neither forsaken nor destroyed," but broken, that the light may shine the brighter.

In closing, let us note a few examples of light shining and their purpose. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle (Newberry—Lamp) and sweep the house, and seek diligently til' she find it?" The woman here, typical of the Holy Spirit, shows us how that we are **saved to be used** by the Holy Spirit **to seek and find other lost souls.** Prov. 11. 30 tells us that "he that winneth souls is wise" whilst Daniel 12. 3 says that "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Paul's exhortation is "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom **ye shine as lights in the world**" (Phil. 2. 14-15).

One important result from this study is found in 2 Cor. 6. 14: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?"

If I am of the light there can be no association with darkness, either by marriage, busi-

ness ties, worldly clubs, unions or associations, or in any other way. Just as light and darkness never unite, so the Children of God and the Children of the Wicked One can never really be yoked together. God enable any one of us who may be thus ensnared to obey His divine injunction to "Come out from among them and be ye separate" for "Ye are the light of the World." Let your light so shine.

G.F.V.

EDITORIAL REQUEST.

The Editor has in hand two new volumes. One a book of "Outline Addresses," comprising **Gospel Subjects** and Addresses to Christians. Any reader having **ORIGINAL** headings or outlines, desirous of helping in this work, may submit MSS. for consideration. Brevity rather than lengthy MSS preferred. The other Volume is one of "**Object Addresses & Blackboard Talks,**" for Children. MSS. of these can be longer and more in detail. Length about 250/400 words. Submit to **Editor,** "Threshed Wheat," 2, Broomhill Road, Goodmayes, Essex.

Concerning "Threshed Wheat."

The Editor desires to express his deep gratitude to the many readers who are commending the Magazine to others. This service is greatly valued. In order to show practical appreciation, he will send

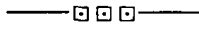
ENTIRELY FREE

a copy of the 1/6 Edition of "**The Faith of the Gospel**" by A. E. Knight, to any reader who forwards 2/- for an extra copy of "Threshed Wheat" March—December, 1930, either for themselves or to some other address. (Add 2d. Postage on free gift).

There is a magnificent collection of MSS. in hand for future use, and papers suitable are always welcomed. Letters telling of help received come in almost every mail. A few taken at random are noted—

- F. R., France** (Missionary).—"I wish to tell you how much I have enjoyed its thoughtful reading and edifying matter."
- R. E., Northants.**—"I said that I would take 'Threshed Wheat' if I liked it. I do not know who would not like it. Its a very good paper."
- A. S., Shetland.**—"I wish to say I enjoy it and would not be without it each month."
- W. H., Ireland.**—"I must again say that I have enjoyed the helpful articles in 'Threshed Wheat,' and have recommended to others."
- J. H. G., Perth.**—"It is really a wonderful magazine and of great help."
- J. R. B., Buenos Aires.**—"Writes very honestly and we thank him for his word that it has made its own way. "I must say when I first saw it, I thought there was little or no room for it, as the market seemed to be full of Magazines of christian literature. However, it has won a way for itself and I quite look forward to receiving it month by month as the articles are sound and fresh. Wishing you the Lord's rich blessing on your efforts."

Is This Not True?



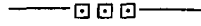
THE MOST IMPORTANT ARTICLE IN THIS ISSUE (Editor).

By WM. SHAW. MAYBOLE.

THE question has been asked, How is it, with so much light on God's truth, and so much profession of blessing received through reading or hearing certain addresses, that nevertheless the results are so small? So-and-so enjoyed such a meeting, or such an article so much; it was so much to the point and so much needed. But, strange to tell, So-and-so just remained the same as ever. The address made no change in him. There was no renewed consecration; no confession of past unfaithfulness; no appearance of a deepened spirituality. And the question has been asked, How is this? The question is certainly as practical a one as could well be asked. It lays the axe to the root of the tree. But in this, as in all similar questions, God's Book has a ready answer. The question is not at all a hard one. The explanation is simply this, that there is all the difference in the world between knowing truth and obeying it. This is the key to the whole matter. In the present day, the greater part of the spare time of very many is spent in hearing truth. They believe in a good feast from some brother who can open up the Word and bring out the subject in "such a wonderful way." Yet, strange to tell, they never seem to get any fatter. Like the lean kine in Pharaoh's dream, which swallowed up the seven well-favoured and were nothing better, so do many dear children of God swallow up believers' addresses without number, and still remain lean. Good feeding, and plenty of it, should make fat sheep. But that does not seem to be a law of God's kingdom; and for the very simple reason that He has marked a great distinction between hearing and doing. Many, alas! are piling up knowledge, as if the great aim was, "How much can I know?" forgetting that knowledge by itself merely "puffeth up," if it does anything else, it is this, that it increases our responsibility, in that we know our Lord's will and do it not. Beloved, this matter of knowing God's truth and failing to do it, is a solemn one. We attend, let us suppose, some believers' meeting—some gathering for getting at the mind of God about us, and also getting filled with Himself. Some brother delivers a message from God in the power of the Holy Ghost; and we say "Amen;" we enjoy it so much; and off we go, and perhaps we don't obey a twentieth part of it. And we wonder how it

is we are so lean, and so "out of sorts." But surely the wonder would be if it were otherwise. Or it may be, when reading God's Word for ourselves, we find things in it which He calls on us to do; but we don't do them. We get conscience soothed asleep with some excuse or another; and then when we fall in with some one full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, we wonder how he has got so far up; when the long and the short of it is just this, that God is as ready to fill us if we would just come so far down as to do what He says, and let Him look after the consequences. O these terrible consequences! They seem to be a stock-in-trade excuse for making the Word of God of none effect. As if the Lord did not see the consequences! But we are persuaded better things of you, beloved. Whatever you know of God's truth, do it. That is what the disciples were told, you remember in John 2. 5—"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." And it is just what the king of Egypt said respecting Joseph: "What he saith to you, do" (Genesis 41. 55). But, above all, it is what the Lord Jesus Himself says: "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15. 14). "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it" (Luke 11. 28). We never read of purifying our souls in hearing the truth, but we read of those who have purified their souls in obeying the truth (1 Peter 1. 22). "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me" (John 14. 21). Obedience, you see, is the test of love. God has joined the two together; and they cannot be put asunder. If we would know the extent of our devotion to Christ, it is the exact measure of our obedience to His Word. Beloved, how is it to be with us? Are we going to allow His Word to search us and try our ways? In a word, are we prepared to obey the Lord in whatever He says in His Word? It will bring reproach—it will bring suffering (if it did not, where were the offence of the cross?). But are we ready to count reproach for Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt? (Heb. 11. 26). If so, in keeping His statutes you will find great reward (Ps. 119. 11). Then, indeed, you shall be able to say, "I rejoice at Thy Word, as one that findeth great spoil" (Psa. 119. 162). If we know these things, happy are ye if ye do them (John 13. 17).

Homeward Bound.



J. B. STONEY.

“THE path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” A great man among men has said, “Youth is a dream; manhood a struggle; old age a regret.”

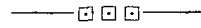
Through grace we can say, our youth (as believers) is faith in God; our manhood is His power that worketh in us; and the delights of His house are nearer and brighter as we terminate our journey here.

When you were converted, you were like one wandering over a desolate waste in thick darkness. Suddenly a beautiful light shone across the dreary plain; and while it disclosed to you on the one hand the deep precipice and interminable abyss which you were on the verge of, it, to the unspeakable delight of your heart, ...revealed Jesus your Saviour to your heart. “He poured oil and wine into your wounds” (Luke x.), and set you “on His own beast.” You received divine life in the power of the Spirit of God, and being brought to the caravan,—the travelling company—you were taken care of “in the inn,” where there was a wonderful refreshment-room; where you heard great things of your Saviour; past, present and to come. A living voice declaring to you; at one time, “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” At another time,—the gospels,—what His life was down here; and again—the nature and fulness of His grace to the Church; and lastly,—what is to come. All this has been, as I might say, portrayed before your eyes—the eyes of your soul, in this great refreshment-room. There you rested, as lying down in green pastures, and led by still waters. Invigorated there, you pursued your journey home.

He never leaves you, nor forsakes you. You have His sympathy along the road. The light which first saluted you in your misery and desolation keeps steadily increasing. It comes from the Father’s house, and it not only increases, but as you journey towards it everything changes. Things naturally attractive are sup- planted; visions of the coming glory are brighter and more numerous, like messengers welcoming you home. In the company of the Lord, and upheld by the Holy Ghost, you are like the

Queen of Sheba, no more spirit in you, because so entranced with His things; as He said, “He will take of mine, and shew it unto you.” Thus the last day, like Elijah’s, is the brightest here. What a comfort to our hearts to know that the ray of light which reached us in our desolation in the vast howling desert of this world, came from the Father’s house and that the more we approach to it, the better we know our Saviour, Who has saved us, and the new power in which He has set us; and the delight of His Father, and our Father, to have us in His house for ever. Therefore He has sent messages of His love to us along the road, more numerous and touching, the nearer we come to it; the ray of light which first reached us, expanding into the heavenly glory from which it emanated.

May all this be fully realised by you.



His Own.

NO eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard,
No finite mind hath spanned,
The glories which the risen Lord
For His blest bride hath planned.

For her His glory laid aside.
He trod a desert here;
Through cruel cross and shameful death
He won His bride so dear.

Her comeliness is all His own,
In her His glories gleam;
Yet veiled on earth, the mystic bride
In lonely guise is seen.

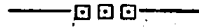
Yet not alone, unseen her guide
Her yearning heart entrances,
With Him who fills that scene with light
And glory all enhances.

And as she walks the dreary waste,
A cry is borne above:
“Come, quickly come, Oh blessed Lord!”
He could not slight her love.

“I quickly come,” the promise is
“In Him Amen and Yea!”
For soon He’ll rend the clouds and call
His waiting Saints away.

A.W.B.

“Well Water; Welling Water; Well Watered.”



MARK H. PRIOR, Chichester.

“I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way . . . and their soul shall be as a watered garden.”—Jer. 31. 9.12.

PART III. WELL WATERED.

WE have already seen that the earliest reference to a district being “well watered” was in connection with the Plains of Jordan before God destroyed the Cities of the Plain. This solemn fact is strikingly exemplified by the Apostle in Hebrews 6. where a certain class of person is likened to “earth . . . which beareth thorns and briers . . . nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.” In fact, just as a fiery judgment overtook Sodom, so also will it overtake this evil world (See 2 Peter 3).

We have also seen that “well water” and “welling water” (i.e., in a spiritual sense) became available to man solely as a result of the death, resurrection and session of Christ to the Right Hand of God—so, too, with the spiritual rain that cometh down from heaven. Our minds at once turn to that never-to-be-forgotten scene on Mount Carmel, where we have such a marvellous word picture of the death of Christ, the beautiful answer of God to the acceptable Sacrifice offered to Him, followed by Elijah’s retirement to the mountain top, and the subsequent opening of heaven with the abundant rain.

Moreover, there seems a special blessing in the “rain,” for it suggests a direct communication by God Himself of the spiritual blessings that He has stored in His treasuries for the believing soul. The man truly in touch with God becomes like a watered garden (Jer. 31. 12). The hymn inadequately expresses the mind of God in saying,

“Mercy drops round us are falling,

But for the showers we plead.”

The truth is that “there was a **great** rain” (1 Kings 18. 45).

Lot had very confused ideas when he saw the district of Sodom “like the garden of the Lord, as the land of Egypt”—for these two are far from being similar. In fact, Moses, in comparing Egypt with God’s Land, distinguished them by saying that Egypt must be watered “by waters of the foot”—i.e., is dependent upon artificial irrigation—whereas God’s Land “drinketh of the water of the **rain of heaven**; the people that dwell therein are like the **stars of heaven**” (that is, a heavenly company visible at night—compare Matt. 13. 43), and

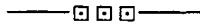
their days are said to be “as the **days of heaven** upon the earth” (Deut. 10. 22 and 11. 11 and 21).

There is, however, another aspect of the matter. Sometimes Scripture likens the dark clouds to the sorrow and discipline that come into our lives. Blessed is the man who, passing through Baca’s Valley, has learned the happy secret of making it a well, and the drops that come down from those clouds serve only to fill the pools. “The wind passeth and cleanseth them and fair weather cometh” (Job. 37. 21. 22). The Psalmist can then rejoice that the Lord is a **Sun** and Shield, the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from him that walketh uprightly—“O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee” (Psalm 84) Who can tell us better than Elihu, that these “thick clouds come for correction, or for His land, or for mercy,” and who can tell us, as Job, of the immense spiritual value to his soul of the experiences he had to undergo?

In closing, we may remind ourselves that he that watereth shall himself also be watered. Apollos was an eloquent man and he used his eloquence for God. He also was “mighty in the Scriptures.” He was meek enough to learn the way of God more perfectly from Aquila and Priscilla. Maybe some of us are not “weak” enough to be mighty in the Scriptures. It is a lovely expression, and it implies a man so in touch with God that he can be used effectively. So it was with Apollos, and his special mission seems to have been “watering.” Similarly Paul says, “He that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles” (Gal. 2. 8). Jude, however, tells us of some who are clouds without water, carried about of winds.

In Christian ministry of every kind it is of the greatest value to the soul to realize that, through grace, we have been placed into direct communication with God Himself on the Throne, and that He loves to pour down to us, through Christ glorified, those spiritual blessings which are ministered to us by the Holy Spirit come down (See Eph. 4. 7-13).

Unity.



By **A. C. ROSE (Madras).**

"In these days, when all, and sundry, are talking of "Unity" and uniting; both in the church, and in the world, this timely article by our brother beloved, away in India, will be welcomed and appreciated by all true Christians. EDITOR.

OUR Indian air is full of talk of Unity. Various denominations are composing their historic differences in an attempt to present a united front to the massed forces of Hinduism and Mohammedanism. A missionary who attended the recent Conference was asked for his opinion regarding the proposals. He replied, "It will be

Union without Unity.'

If such a travesty is ever perpetuated, as seems too probable, principle must be sacrificed, casuistry practised, and thousands forced into compromise or out into the wilderness.

It is a relief to turn from such makeshift confederacy to the spiritual ideal. The rarity of the word Unity in Scripture is arresting, but such rarity is a component of value. The noun actually occurs only once in the Old Testament, but the verb twice.

Psalm 86.11. "Teach me Thy way O Lord; I will walk in Thy Truth. UNITE my heart to fear Thy name."

A united assembly cannot be obtained unless it is composed of united hearts, knit together in allegiance and devotion to God. Then whatever differences may exist, they are not permitted to separate; rather like the assorted elements which make up iron, in the white heat of divine love, they weld into one strong band of unbreakable strength. But, as in iron, an excess of carbon makes amalgamation difficult, if not impossible, so any exaggeration or disproportion becomes a cause of disunion. The chemist's number for a carbon atom is 6, which is the number of man. The same flesh which would foster a false unity is responsible for division. The only remedy for such an incorrigible schismatic is death. Therefore, the Psalmist goes on to say in deep humility condemning self and justifying God: "Great is Thy mercy towards me and Thou hast delivered me from the lowest hell!" That is the attitude of spirit, produced by an experience of resurrection. That is the language of a broken and contrite heart, eager to pay the price of an answer to its prayer for unity. The man who remembers his deliverance from the lowest hell will never be guilty of schism.

**"Simeon and Levi are brethren;
Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.
O my soul, come not thou into their secret conference.
Unto their assembly mine honour, be not thou
UNITED . . .
I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.
(Gen. 49. 5.7.)**

The very first use of the word is dark with warning and describes a union which is to be shunned like the plague, for judgment will prove it to be a refuge of lies; a house of straw on a foundation of sand. Simeon and Levi were partners in an enterprise which had brought dishonour upon their father's name, and which not all the grace of his dying bed could overlook. As they had combined, so they should be scattered. Levi to be sown amongst all the tribes, and Simeon to be given a second-rate parcel of land out of Judah, far to the southward, where he would writhe under the first thrust of the invaders' spearhead. The Philistine was his fierce neighbour and the desert of Paran crouched hungrily at his gates. When all the other ten tribes had their borders clearly defined, Simeon and Levi were omitted. Their sin was still in remembrance 300 years afterwards, when Joshua carried out Jacob's sentence to the letter.

But against such a gloomy background behold the

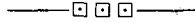
Rainbow of Mercy!

If the folly of the flesh is unsparingly condemned, the wisdom of God is correspondingly magnified. Levi's name means "joining," and his mother's earthly hope was given a heavenly meaning, when he was joined to every tribe by substitutionary decree and sacrificial ministry. His was the high privilege of a special covenant. "My covenant was with him of life and peace, and I gave it to him that he might fear and He feared Me and stood in awe of My name. The law of truth was in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness and did turn many from iniquity" (Mal. 2. 5-6). How gracious are the judgments of our God!

No such gleam shines on the earthly path of Simeon. But looking forward we see the same unearthly splendour, for out of Simeon are sealed twelve thousand bondservants of the Most High. Sovereign grace will not be denied, even at the hands of Simeon, for lo! on that

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



III. PHILIP.

ANOTHER of the chosen seven, expressly called "the Evangelist" in Acts xxi. 8 to distinguish him from Philip the Apostle (Matt. x. 3). In the divine dealings with him, as with Stephen, we see the sovereignty of the Spirit of God. Set apart by his brethren to care for widows, he was soon called to a preaching service of no ordinary character.

It happened on this wise. The enemy having tasted blood in Stephen's case, immediately thirsted for more: accordingly a general persecution of Christians ensued, Saul of Tarsus constituting himself Satan's chief inquisitor. This led to a great scattering, which, though apparently a break-up of the work of God, really led to a considerable extension thereof. "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts viii. 4). This is a most interesting statement. The courage of these early Christians was clearly not daunted by their sufferings; for wherever they went they confessed their Lord. Not only those specially gifted as preachers; but the Christians as a whole evangelised the people amongst whom they moved. It is one of Christendom's most injurious fictions that some sort of official authorisation from man is needed ere the sacred office of preaching should be taken up. In truth, no further authorisation is needed than that which is found in 2 Cor. iv. 13: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, 'I believed, and therefore have I spoken'; we also believe, and therefore speak." How any man can believe that the Eternal Son became man, and died upon the cross for his salvation, and not proclaim the mighty fact to as many persons as his circumstances and abilities will allow, is a marvel which might well excite the wonder of the whole angelic host. The football enthusiast and the political partisan wax eloquent to all comers concerning the matters which fill their minds; how much more ready of speech should be the sinner saved by grace, especially when we remember that what every Christian knows every other man needs to know if he is to escape eternal ruin. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. xii. 34).

Driven from Jerusalem by persecution, "Philip went down to a city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" (Acts viii. 5), thus fulfilling the third part of the ascending Lord's commission, as given in Acts i. 8. The preaching was backed by miracles, of which God graciously granted many while Christianity was but a new thing in the earth. The need for such divine interpositions, of necessity passed away when the testimony became established. A great work was wrought in Samaria. Not only were the people struck with the miracles, but they "gave heed unto those things which Philip spake." It is not miracles that convert the soul, but the Word of God. God's message to men concerning His Son, when received in faith, at once brings pardon

and salvation, full and free. "Great joy" filled the city of Philip's labours. Samaria, which Judaism could never subdue, had now yielded to the gospel of Christ. We do not wonder at this. Law repels: but grace attracts.

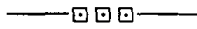
Philip, however, got one bad fish into his net—a very bad fish indeed. A magician called Simon had for some time bewitched the people with his Satanic marvels to his own advantage. Observing in Philip a power operating which was greater than that which he possessed, he attached himself to him and was baptised (with many others) as a professed believer in the Lord Jesus. His hypocrisy was manifested by the coming upon the scene of Peter, and John. These apostles visited the city as the representatives of the twelve who still continued in Jerusalem, spite of the scattering which had taken place. It pleased God to withhold the gift of the Holy Spirit from the Samaritans until Peter and John came down, and prayed for them. This unusual order had in view the religious rivalry which had so long existed between Jerusalem and Samaria, referred to by the woman at the well in John iv. 20. This God would not allow to be transferred to Christianity. Accordingly Samaria was not granted a separate outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but instead shared in the Jerusalem outpouring through the instrumentality of the two visiting apostles. The unity of the Church was thus proclaimed and safeguarded. To quote the incident as furnishing a warrant for modern episcopal confirmation is ignorance indeed.

Peter the conservative, who regarded all outside of Israel as unclean, and John the firebrand, who once desired to call down fire from heaven upon Samaritans, are now seen welcoming as brethren these strangers whose hearts God had touched (Acts x. 28; Luke ix. 51). So marvellously had divine grace wrought in their souls.

Philip's next piece of work was of a different character altogether. Not to a city full of people, but to an individual was he next commissioned by the Lord.

The last notice of Philip in Scripture is in Acts xxi. 8-9. There we find him residing in Caesarea, and entertaining Paul and his friends on their way to Jerusalem. The interesting fact is stated that he "had four daughters which did prophecy." A glimpse into a godly household is a delight, especially when the head thereof is a public servant of the Lord Jesus. For how frequently has His holy name been scandalised by the unruly behaviour of the sons and daughters of those who preach His word. With what face can any man demand submission to the will of the Lord from others if he is lax in his government of those nearest and dearest to himself?

The Children of God.



Four Aspects of their Life.

By T. ROBINSON.

PART II.—1. Peter 2.

GOD'S children are born again by the **incorruptible** seed of the Word of God (1 Peter 1. 23). Redeemed by the **precious** blood of Christ (1 Peter 1. 18). Heirs to an **incorruptible** inheritance (1. 4). They rejoice in a **"living Hope"** (1. 3); feed on the **"living Word,"** the **"sincere milk of the Word"** for **"babes,"** and then the **"strong meat"** for those of **"mature age."** They are **"living stones"** and are habitually coming to Christ, the **"living Stone,"** and thus are built up into a **"spiritual house,"** and are also a **"holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God"** (1 Peter 2. 4, 5). All this is theirs by sovereign grace, in virtue of their relationship to God as children, in joint heirship with Christ.

In a word, they are a **"royal priesthood to shew forth the virtues of Him Who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light"** (2. 9). Hence, their relationship with the world is virtually ended so far as their **portion** and **prospects** are concerned; therefore their **pathway** is that of **"strangers and pilgrims,"** who are exhorted to **"abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul"** (1 Peter 2. 11).

IN RELATION TO THE WORLD.

1st. Consider the responsibility involved in this relationship to God. The honour and privilege of **showing forth Christ** to the world, by **"well doing," "good works,"** eschewing evil, doing good, seeking peace, pursuing it. Character appeals to men more effectually than mere talk. Thus, to follow in the **"footsteps of Christ"** will lead men to glorify God in some future day of His **"visitation."**

2nd. The Apostle also shows our duty to the **rulers of the world.** **"Submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well."** The world from remote ages has been ruled by men, Their authority, however obtained, is **"of God"** (Romans 13). **"Thou couldst have no power at all against Me,**

except it were given thee from above," was our Lord's reply to Pilate. He, by His example, showed us the right attitude His people ought to assume towards the civil authorities. He said **"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."** Thus, Divine example and precept is given for our guidance. **Subjection** was His way, even under unlawful cruelties and indignities. **"When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not"** (2. 23). We are commanded to pray for **"kings and all in authority"** (1 Tim. 2). God can, and does, still **"suffer no man to do His people wrong, yea, and to reprove kings for their sakes"** (Psa. 105. 14). **"With Him is wisdom and strength: the deceived and the deceiver are His. He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools"** (Job 12. 16-17). God's children are not contemplated as **"rulers of the darkness of this world,"** but are always exhorted to be in subjection to and pray for them. **"Lawlessness"** is the outstanding feature foretold as marking the **"last days"** of this **"evil age."** It is even now coming in like a flood, threatening revolution and ruin. This **"mystery of lawlessness,"** which began to work in the days of the Apostles as the **"leaven of the Sadducees,"** etc., will, when **"He Who hinders"** is taken away, speedily develop the **"Lawless One,"** proclaiming himself **"as God,"** but will be destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming and be consumed with the **"breath of His mouth"** (2 Thes. 2. 3-8). Thus, **"man's day of evil endeth and the righteous reign comes in."** God's rightful Heir shall reign, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ (Rev. 11. 15).

3rd. "Servants be subject to your masters." Here, again, we are up against the **"spirit of Antichrist"** (1 John 4. 3). Masters are not all **"good and gentle."** **"Believing masters are sometimes served by believing servants. They are not to be despised because they are brethren, but "rather do them service because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit"** (Eph. 6. 5, 6). But the

Bible Studies in Genesis.



By ROBERT LEE.

Study No. 5.

Gen. 2. 18-25.

Study No. 6.

The Origin and Purpose of the Day of Rest.

1. Its Origin - - God.
2. Its Sanctification - Set apart by God for a definite purpose.
3. Its nature - - (a) A rest-day, Verse 2.
4. Its significance - Heb. 4. 9.

"GONE OVER IT." A Brake load of excursionists one Lord's Day was spinning merrily along a road, when a man called out excitedly, "Eh! you've gone over it!" They stopped and anxiously asked what they had gone over. "The Fourth Commandment," was the answer.

ITS ORIGIN. Formerly critics declared there was not a trace of a Seventh day Sabbath among the early institutions of humanity, that such an institution was no older than Moses, and that until the Law was given no Sabbath Day was kept. Pray note in Exodus 20 the word "Remember." It evidently was already observed. An ancient Babylonian tablet was unearthed some years ago: it is a monthly calendar showing the seven-day week and the Sabbath in full swing in ancient Babylonia. God was the originator of the Sabbath.

ITS NATURE. The Sabbath Day was intended for rest from ordinary daily work. But not for that alone. It should be a Holy Day; a day for worship.

DID GOD REQUIRE REST? Not in the sense of refreshment from physical weariness. In ceasing from His creative work a rest was needed in order that He might enjoy what He had done. God was not long permitted to enjoy that rest. When sin entered, for Him all rest departed. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5. 17). But HIS Sabbath WILL come again.

Why Left Alone? or The Holy Institution of Marriage.

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| | (1) Declaration - "It is not good" Verse 18. |
| | (2) Compassion - "I will make" Verse 18. |
| | (3) Curiosity - "To see what he would" Verse 19. |
| THE | (4) Carefulness - "Why left alone?" Verse 20. |
| DIVINE | (5) Activity - - (21). |
| | (6) Presentation - (22). |
| | (7) Intention - "Woman as help-meet" (18). |
| | (8) Type - - |

WHY LEFT ALONE? If it was not good that man should be left alone, why created alone and left for a while so? The answer reveals a Divine principle, and gives one clue as to why some prayers remain unanswered.

"MAN SHOULD BE ALONE." Then Adam was the first man (see I Cor. 15. 45 and 47).

CURIOSITY. God was, as a Father always is, delightfully interested in the proofs of the intelligence of His offspring.

WHY ADAM LEFT ALONE? Man was to be the guide and protector of the life that was to be committed to his care, therefore he must know the world in which they are to dwell, acquainting himself with its joys and dangers. He must be master before he could enthrone her as mistress. Eve was to be God's precious gift to Adam and He desired that the gift should be valued, therefore he was left alone sufficiently long to realise his loneliness. In the naming of the animals and birds he observed each had its mate, but he was alone.

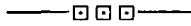
THE DIVINE ACTIVITY. God is often working to supply our needs whilst we are asleep. If God had formed Eve only of the dust of the ground (as Adam), she would have appeared to her husband as a distinct person altogether apart from himself. By God's action he recognised her as part of himself.

THE DIVINE PRESENTATION. Observe how holy marriage is. This marriage took place before the Fall. The first wedding was performed by God with Angels as spectators.

THE DIVINE INTENTION. Woman was made to be man's help-meet, not his slave. Longfellow in Hiawatha finely expresses this:

"As unto the bow the cord is,
So unto the man is woman:
Though she bends him she obeys him;
Though she draws him, yet she follows;
Useless each without the other."

THE DIVINE TYPE. God the Father does not see it good that His Son should be without a bride. That need is to be met by the piercing of His side, which took place not in the Eden of delights, but amidst the pain and ignomny of the Cross. He has now gone to prepare a place. By and by the Father will present the Bride (Church) to Christ.



Helps from an Old Source.

[Letter which accompanied this article.]

Dear Mr. Editor,

In the far Eastern lands many of the Christians have in a very marked way during the last twenty years, acquired the English language, and in many instances they prefer it even to their own tongue in reading the Scriptures. I feel these two papers* will help them to understand the Word of God better and also other Christian books.

I am glad that "Threshed Wheat" is now being freely circulated in these far off lands, and not only circulated, but read and appreciated. "Wheat" is always estimated to contain 10% of food value.

A. R. T., (Late of Singapore).

The most common and remarkable figures of speech in the Bible are the following:—

- 1. **A Metaphor** is a figurative expression, founded on some similitude which one object bears to another, as, To bridle the tongue (Jas 1. 26); For the sword to devour flesh, (Deut. 32. 42); To be born again (John 3. 3).
- 2. **An Allegory** is a continued metaphor, as the discourse of the Saviour concerning eating His flesh, (John 6. 35-36).
- 3. **A Parable** is the representation of some moral or spiritual teaching under an ingenious similitude, as that of the Sower (Matt. 13. 2-23); the Prodigal Son (Luke 15. 11-32), and the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25. 1-13).
- 4. **A Proverb** is a concise, sententious saying, founded on a penetrating observation of men and manners. Brevity and elegance are essential to a proverb (Prov. 10. 15; Luke 4. 23).
- 5. **Metonymy** is a figure of speech in which one word is put for another, as "They have

Moses and the prophets", (Luke 16. 29), meaning not their persons, but their writings.

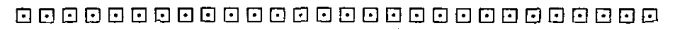
6. **Prosopopœia**, or Personification, attributes the actions of persons to things, as in Psalm 85. 10 it is said, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

7. **Synecdoche** puts a part for the whole of anything, or the whole for a part, as Luke 2. 1, "All the world," and Acts 24. 5, "Throughout the world," by which is meant the Roman Empire, or parts of it. In Acts 27. 37 the word "souls" is put for the whole person.

8. **Irony** is a figure in which a different thing is intended from that which is spoken. Examples of this kind are not very frequent in the word of God, yet there are a few. Such is the address of Elijah to the priests of Baal (1 Kings 18. 27), and the remark of Job to his friends, (Job 12. 2).

9. **Hyperbole** is a representation of anything as being much greater or smaller than it is in reality. For example of this figure see Numbers 13. 33; Deuteronomy 1. 28; 9. 1.

* Part II. held over for next issue.



Notes worth Noting.

Delete the italicised words in Gal. iii. 24, which will then read, "the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ," that is, until His coming in grace. "Covenant" and "Testament" are the same in the original, the former occurring about 12 times in the New Testament, and the latter about 20 times. In all these 32 instances the word "Covenant" should be used, save in Heb. ix. 16-17, where "Testament" is clearly the force and sense of the word there employed.

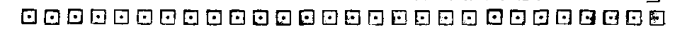
The judgment from which we are delivered is "eternal" (Heb. vi. 2); the salvation in which we rejoice is "eternal" (Heb. 5.9); our redemption too is "eternal" (Heb. ix. 12); our inheritance also is "eternal" (Heb. ix. 15).

"The heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. xii. 22) refers to the city which God and the saints will occupy in the coming ages, and must not be confounded with "The holy Jerusalem" (Revi xxi. 9, 10), which is itself the bride, the Lamb's wife.

John speaks of the whole of the present period as "the last time" (see first epistle, chap. ii. 18), which Paul divides into "the latter times" (1 Tim. iv.), and "last days" (2 Tim. iii.)—the former covering the Papal Apostasy—the middle ages; while the latter contemplates the setting in of the Apostasy of these days.

- JAMES insists upon works as evidencing faith.
- PETER conducts the flock of God through the wilderness.
- JOHN treats of life displayed in Christ and then in the believer.
- PAUL sets man aside and sets the believer in a new place before God.
- JUDE would have the saints buckle on their armour and earnestly contend for the faith.

WALTER SCOTT.



HOW WOULD YOU HAVE FELT that moment in King Ahab's presence? With what voice and feeling would you have delivered Elijah's message?

"As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."

To a God-fearing king, one who delighted in the law of his God, we might perhaps have ventured (although, even then, very timidly) and uttered such terrible words, but king Ahab—why he could have slain the prophet on the spot had he chosen. At least, that is what **we** should have thought had we been in the prophet's place that day. Do you say that you do not agree here, then, dear friend, pardon a personal question. "Why is it you are not doing such great things for God as Elijah did?" Alas, oftentimes, in far less awing circumstances and under much less trying an ordeal, we are fearful and afraid, and do not stand for God as we should. The threatened judgment of Elijah was tremendous. For surely,

- (a) It was a thing unknown for God to shut up the heavens for a man's asking;
- (b) For the prophet to say to Ahab it shall be according to **MY** word was presumption and audacity in the extreme.

But for all that, Elijah delivered his message. What faith he must have had in his God. He believed God to be able to do

WHAT HE HAD NEVER DONE BEFORE.

Are we prepared to go thus far in our daily life? Nay—do we not very often come far short of this. We do not even trust God to do for us **WHAT HE HAS OFTTIMES DONE BEFORE.** Elijah's experience was far different.

"Yes," you say, "but suppose Elijah's word had not been fulfilled. **SUPPOSE IT DID RAIN THE VERY NEXT DAY** see what contempt and discredit it would have brought, not only upon himself, but also upon his God."

BUT IT DID NOT RAIN

for three and a half years. Elijah's prophecy was right, **AND HE KNEW IT WAS RIGHT WHEN HE UTTERED IT.** Herein lies the secret of a very important truth which, if we sufficiently understand, will save us on the one hand, from making statements and asserting claims upon God which are absolutely unwarranted and absolutely detrimental to the christian cause and testimony; and on the other hand, will enable us to live that true dependent life of faith, which, knowing the mind of the Lord can say, "This shall be" or "that shall not be," and it forthwith comes to pass.

Nothing does so much damage to the christian faith as sweeping claims upon God and

extravagant remarks regarding prayer made without Divine authority and approval, and which are proved wrong and false by the facts of time. Perhaps some evangelist has claimed that he will have so many souls saved during a certain mission, or another says, that God will do such and such a thing by a certain date. The mission comes and goes, but the "so many souls" go with it. The "certain time" passes and God does not do what was said, and ridicule and contempt is heaped upon the head of the one making the statement **and rightly so,** but worse than that, it hinders many from the real christian life. What has been your experience, dear reader, in these matters? In our daily life we have at times to face a crisis, and we are called upon to act in some way which calls for faith in the Living God. Possibly we have erred on the other side and failed to give any testimony. We have looked at things **naturally,** and faith has given place to sight, with the result that what might have been a living testimony to the wonderful hand of God in answering to the faith of His child has been lost. An opportunity has been missed, and we have lost a unique blessing. Nothing pleases the heart of God more than to see faith in evidence in the lives of His people. Without faith it is impossible to please God, but **WITH** faith—simple childlike trust—God is well pleased.

That the two extremes mentioned above **DO** exist, and exist very largely to-day is apparent to us all, and we do well to ask the reason why? In Elijah's day he claimed an unheard of request, and God answered him. There is an underlying principle here. There is a cause for these effects. The failure of to-day is largely due to the fact that we have been looking from a wrong perspective. We have centred our thoughts upon the effect, and sadly neglected the root of the matter, **THE CAUSE.**

The 1st Book of Kings 17. 1 gives us the **EFFECT** in the case of Elijah. James in the New Testament 5. 17 gives us the **CAUSE,** and although the **record** is in this order, the **actual history** is in the reverse order and always is.

CAUSE PRECEDES EFFECT.

(To be continued.)

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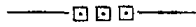
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The Children of God.



Four Aspects of their Life.

By T. ROBINSON.

PART III.—1. Peter 3 & 4.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOME AND SOCIAL LIFE.

HAVING considered the believer's relationship to **God** in 1 Peter 1. and his relationship to the **world** in chapter 2, we now would look at his responsibilities in the **home**. God appeared to Abraham and said: "I am the Almighty God, walk **before Me** and be thou perfect" (Genesis 17). David said: "I will walk within my **house** with a perfect heart" (Psalm 101. 2). There is a life, an inner life, which no one sees but God, and there is a life lived in the home circle, little seen by even friends and neighbours, but of great importance in the sight of God, for if this is not lived in "godly sincerity," the outward and visible life will be "barren and unfruitful," or as salt that has "lost its savour."

(1) "Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands that, even if any obey not the Word, they may without the Word, be gained by the conversation (i.e., the "manner of life") of their wives." Peter himself had a wife, even as also had the "rest of the Apostles and the brethren of the Lord" (1 Cor. 9. 5), but we have no record of their lives. Zacharias the priest and his wife Elizabeth, who was also descended from Aaron, both "walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless" (Luke 1. 5. 6). Blessed, indeed, when a wife is a "helpmeet"; but, alas! some of God's sons have married the "daughters of men," as they did in the days of Noah; which ungodly union brought upon "the world that then was" the judgment of God for their "disobedience" (vv. 18-20). "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6. 14), and "Only in the Lord" (1 Cor. 7. 39) are still the "commandments of the Lord."

Notwithstanding, there were doubtless many in the Apostle's days who, after their conversion, found the sorrow of having a partner who still refused Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Many wives to-day have the same experience. and here the Spirit of God, through the Apostle, encourages such to hope for the gaining of the unsaved husband by their godly "behaviour,"

even "without the Word." This must mean apart from hearing the gospel preached. They may **see** its power, transforming, sanctifying and sweetening the character of their wives and be won for Christ. Godly conversation God uses for conversion.

(2) "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning." Clothing became a necessity through the woman's transgression in Eden, and has ever since been a duty, but has been made the occasion for pride and parade, as e.g., the daughters of Zion of Isaiah 3. 16, who are described as in striking resemblance to present day fashion, "displaying the neck" (see Louth). Christian women's attire is not here particularised. It is the extravagant "putting on of apparel", the profusion of ornamentation that is condemned as inconsistent with the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price." These graces of character are here said to be "incorruptible" in contrast with the fading, transient, showy ways of this world. Modesty in dress is, especially in view of present fashions, most necessary if Christian women would please God. Of course, pride may be taken in the severe plainness of apparel. Wisdom and conscience must guide as to personal dress, whilst liberty and allowance must be extended to others.

(3) **Husbands** are next exhorted to dwell with the wives "according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel (physically, of course), as being heirs together of the grace of life" (v. 7).

Here, evidently, both are contemplated as children of God, having fellowship in all the cares and joys of the home and family. Other-wise prayer will be "hindered" if not altogether discarded. "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church" (Eph. 5. 23); but "a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband" (Prov. 12. 4).

(4) In all our **social intercourse**, not only with fellow saints but with all others, we are exhorted to be "likeminded, loving to the

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



IV. SAUL of TARSUS.

OF all the early Christians, Saul was by far the most extraordinary. Once an earnest devotee of Judaism, he became an indefatigable servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. While Philip was preaching in Samaria that which satisfied where Judaism had failed, Saul was zealously propagating the forsaken system, and persecuting to death those who turned from it to the Lord Jesus. The latter always remained a sorrowful reflection with him. Years afterwards he wrote thus: "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God" (1 Cor. 15. 9). But it has frequently happened that God has picked up the most unlikely materials, whereof to form vessels for the eternal glory of His Son.

The blindest of all blind ones are formal religionists. No more effective chains have yet been discovered by Satan than those of an hereditary ceremonial religion. We see this exemplified in Saul of Tarsus. He slaughtered men and women who were inexpressibly dear to the Father and the Son, positively believing he was doing God service (John 16. 2-3). Not content with ravaging the assemblies in Judea, he persecuted the Christians even to foreign cities. He was "exceedingly mad against them" (Acts 26. 11). Behold him therefore on the most critical day of his life approaching Damascus on murder bent. He would clear the Syrian capital of those pestiferous Christians as he had cleared Jerusalem. But "man proposes and God disposes." The historian says: "Suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" (Acts 9. 3,4). This showed him that the Lord on high regarded injury to Christians as done to Himself. But who was it that thus arrested him? In answer to his question: "Who art Thou, Lord?" he received the reply: "I am

Jesus whom thou persecutest." Then Jesus of Nazareth and the Lord of the realms above were one and the same Person! What a discovery for the astounded persecutor to make!

It smashed everything within him. He perceived that his religion had betrayed him, and that he was speeding towards eternal ruin, spite of his strict morality and religious scrupulousness. He learned that he was the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1. 15). Modern folly, which maintains that it matters little what a man believes so long as his life is upright, would rather dub Saul "chief of saints." But the stricken man saw himself in the light of God where all things appear as they really are. Five minutes in the presence of God would knock a world of nonsense out of many of our contemporaries.

Saul's companions heard the heavenly voice, but not the words. Blinded by the heavenly vision, the humbled man was led by the hand into Damascus. It was his intention to enter the city as a wolf; instead he went in as a lamb. For three days he was without sight, and did neither eat nor drink. Great questions were being gone into between his soul and God. To this hour we reap the blessing of those dark days as we read the Pauline epistles. Saul emerged from the ordeal a transformed man. He learned that the one offering of Calvary had so perfectly put all his sins away, that no further obligation, whether bloody or unbloody, could ever be demanded or accepted; he learned also that the death of Christ had closed up his history as a man born of Adam's race; and that Christ, as known in glory, was now his Lord and Head. Henceforward the world spread its charms before him in vain. He had seen a brighter glory, and had found a truer gain. Let suffering, scorn, and even death come into his path, it mattered not, such was the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

First Things First.



By EPHRAIM VENN.

WHEN we see religious worldlings blindly reversing God's order—putting works before faith, and walk before life, and vainly attempting to reach Christ through the Church instead of reaching the Church through Christ—we rightly pity them, and should seek by all means to show such the way of God. But there is the same natural tendency in us all to overlook the weightier parts of the will of God while pressing some minor points into prominence. And shall we indulge that in ourselves which we deplore in others, and not rather honestly examine all our ways to bring them into conformity with the will of God?

In our Lord's discourse upon the Mount, as given in Matthew 5-7, we find the word **first** three times used and in striking connections, which, but a slight reference to our own hearts and some little acquaintance with the ways of saints show us, are of great importance as bearing on our worship, life and service.

1. OUR WORSHIP.

"If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar; go thy way, **first** be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5. 23, 24). Although these lessons on the Mount were not intended to set forth the distinctive truths of Christianity as afterwards unfolded by our precious Lord to the circle of His "own" in John 13-17, and further developed through His servant Paul, yet do they enforce truths and principles of priceless worth to us as the children of "Our Father which is in heaven." Our double relationship comes out very clearly in Matt. 5-7, as no doubt that of Israel in coming kingdom days. The word "Father" in connection with us occurs sixteen times, and the word "brother" seven times in this discourse. God is **our Father** and every one of His children is **our brother**. The latter springs out from the former. For our relationship with each other as brethren rests upon our common relation to God as our Father. It was a happy day when I could first take my place before God in the full consciousness of

my eternal relationship with Him as His child, through faith in Christ Jesus; to know the unspeakable joy of "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." And it is a blessed thing too, to learn that there is a "brotherhood" formed of all such as know the riches of His grace to them in Christ—a redeemed, regenerated company upon the earth now; a heavenly circle in which no "stranger or foreigner" participates; a family unlike all the families of earth, all begotten of the same Father, quickened into the same life in Christ, and born of the same Spirit; dear to the Father's heart, whose love has called them to have and enjoy fellowship with Himself and with one another.

But how slow we are to realize, though in measure we recognise, this spiritual relationship! This arises, no doubt, from the fact that it is a **purely spiritual relationship**, while every one who forms it, though made "spiritual" (as a new creation in Christ), is still indwelt by the flesh, which lusteth against the Spirit. All our difficulties with each other as children of God spring from this old root. There would be no jarring discords or divisions among saints but for the allowance of the flesh in us; never would brother trespass against his brother but for this; never should we see "a brother offended" amongst us if this "old man" were kept practically under. But just because we who live in the Spirit are so liable to walk in the flesh, in some of its many forms, the very nearness of our relationship brings us into special danger. What a display of the corruption of the flesh does it make that the life and love of God within us should so little control and characterise our dealings with one another!

It is comparatively easy to bring our gift to the altar, and maintain the proper form and semblance of worship, for the flesh is not disturbed, but rather satisfied with its own form of worship. Cain was forward to bring his gift to the altar, and then went forth to slay his brother, and we are warned against this spirit by John, for "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God" (1 John 4. 7).

Seldom can a heart be lonely,

If it seeks a lonelier still:

Self-forgetting, seeking only,

Emptier cups with love to fill.

Anon.

not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 John 4. 20, 21). This is the law of love in which we are commanded to walk, but if this has been violated, and my brother "hath ought against me," the **first** thing is to be reconciled to my brother. Not merely to feel willing, not merely to seek reconciliation, but so to act as to secure it, and that before drawing near to God publicly. To say, "Let him come and show me my fault" will not do; I must **go my way**, even from the altar, and leave the great question of approaching God in abeyance, until I have approached my brother and become reconciled. Until this is done God will have no respect to my offering, He will bear no testimony to my gifts. It is only when brethren "dwell together in unity" that the Holy Spirit is ungrieved amongst saints, and where the "unity of the Spirit" is kept, God's blessing rests.

Oh, what power and blessing might be ours still if, as brethren, we were together "with one accord!" But, in looking back at our history, or on present circumstances in many assemblies, instead of spiritual concord how often has brother been separated in heart and spirit from brother, while the outward form of fellowship has been well kept! And so wide has been the breach in some instances that brethren have "preached at" and "prayed at" each other in the meeting, only to drive each other further apart. If this sorrowful state of things continues everything spiritual must be paralyzed, and the whole assembly thrown into disorder, "For where envying and strife is there is confusion and every evil work" (James 3. 16). How can the saints be edified and comforted, or the Gospel go forth with power until estranged hearts are "knit together in love"? For if the channels are not clear the spiritual supply must be hindered.

We are instructed, therefore, how to set such a matter **right**, and nothing can be plainer or more binding than the rule here laid down by our Lord, "Go thy way, **first** be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Go **thy way**; each one concerned in the estrangement must be ready to act in grace, not waiting for the other to "come round." It is just here the difficulty comes in; we are so sure to find the greatest obstacle in our own selves; we are so loath to come down from our position, so eager to prove our side of it right, and to secure our own honour, that we forget the Lord's honour, or mistake our own for the Lord's glory. Whereas, if our hearts were set for His glory, we should at any cost to ourselves seek it by keeping His commandment to love one another (John 13. 34).

"**First** be reconciled to thy brother." It may be a work that needs delicate handling and much prayerful diligence, for "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their **contentions** are like the bars of a castle" (Prov. 18. 19). But the extreme difficulty cannot relieve us from the obligation. However repugnant to flesh and blood, or humbling to our natural pride, our own feelings must be laid aside, with "all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings." We must by the grace of God conquer the greater difficulty—the flesh in ourselves; then it will be easier to overcome the lesser in the brother who has somewhat against us. May the Lord give us grace to obey His own Word.

In Matthew 18 we have the other side of the matter, "If thy brother **trespass against thee**, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Putting the two sides together, we see that the **first** thing is for each to go to the other. The offender in chapter 5, and the offended in chapter 18 are both instructed, not to "go **for** one another," but to go **to** each other, and if this were more often done in the spirit of forgiveness, reconciliation would follow, divisions would be healed, contentions cease, and untold evils be averted. The closing words, "Then come and offer thy gift," intimate that our offering of praise and service rendered would be acceptable to God, and thus the most blessed results would inevitably follow. Since our happiness is not secured by knowing, but by doing these things, may the Lord greatly help us to put them into constant practice.

2. OUR WALK.

In our life before men, is there not a solemn evidence of a very general reversal of the Master's injunction, "Seek ye **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (that ye have need of) shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6. 33)?

In the last ten verses of this chapter the Lord gives us seven great reasons for not being **anxious** or "of doubtful mind" about the necessities of this life. First, He who gives us the greater—life and the body—will not withhold the lesser—food and raiment (v. 25). Second, He who feedeth the fowls of the air will **much more** care for His own children (v. 26). Third, besides, our anxiety will not really improve matters; it is of no avail, we cannot turn the wheels of providence (v. 27). Fourth, even God's lavish expenditure on things inanimate inspires confidence as to the certainty of

FIRST THINGS FIRST—(Continued).

our Father's care for us (v. 28). Fifth, and again, to be so concerned about earthly things is to act like the world, and is most unworthy of the children of God (vv. 31, 32). Sixth, is not the Father's knowledge of our needs, and well known readiness to supply them, ever enough for faith? (v. 32). Seventh, beyond a doubt all these things **shall certainly be added** to all who seek **first** the kingdom of God (v. 33). Surely this ought to be enough to set our minds at rest, and furnish us with some leisure and heart for the things of God. What can we want more?

"What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and this lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Are there any Sauls in our day accumulating luxurious hoards of Amalekite spoil, at the unspeakable loss of the Kingdom, which far outshines that forfeited by Saul? That strange noise in the camp is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry from being overcome. Spiritual warfare and victory are out of the question when the golden calf is set up and worshipped; for "He that warreth entangleth not himself with the affairs of this life." A sorry soldier was Achan, who, by covetousness, brought death to himself, disaster to his house, and defeat to the whole army of Israel.

Oh, that the "Achans" and the "Sauls" with all who to-day allow things of earth to govern the heart, could be persuaded, or at least reminded, that we are not called to live delicately on the earth, in self-indulgence, nourishing the heart in a day of slaughter (James 5. 5), but to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, nourishing our hearts, by looking for that blessed hope, so that we love His appearing.

It may be our blessed Lord threshed out this matter in such detail, in view of our special danger of allowing cares for to-day and anxieties for to-morrow, discontent with the necessaries and lust for the luxuries of life, to crowd out of our minds and hearts "the kingdom of God and His righteousness," well knowing that the seed of the Kingdom is oft-times choked with "the cares and riches and pleasures of this life;" and brings forth no fruit to perfection.

It is startling to see the tide of worldliness rising fast among Christians almost everywhere, with a corresponding ebb in the desire for spiritual prosperity; on all hands there are abounding symptoms of spiritual decay, which

it is to be feared will be followed by increasing ambition for fleshly advantage. Our Master's question may well ring in our ears and consciences to-day: "What **do** ye more than others?" Not what **know** ye more than others? We may pride ourselves on knowing the things of God, which the poor worldling cannot possibly perceive, but if we spend all our energies, crowd our minds, engage our affections, and tax our wits for present worldly advantage, do not the men of this world the same? If we content ourselves with just the Lord's day observances and meetings, do not religious worldlings the same? If we do not bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in a godly walk, in faithful testimony, and devoted service, what do we more than others? **The most convincing book to the worldling is our manner of living, but if, withal, we are as hard in our dealing, as keen for selfish gains, as inconsiderate for others' rights in our bargains, as shrewd and tricky in running our business as the most wide-awake worldling, he will not believe the book, for its author is a living contradiction.**

But the sad result is that Christ is wounded again in the house of His friends, and His holy name is dishonoured. He is misjudged by His foes, because misrepresented by His friends. It is one thing to be saved by Christ, and quite another to be satisfied with Him; but very many claim Him as Saviour who never seem to make any further acquaintance with Him. As the one Centre in the midst of all, the one Lord above all, and the one Object before all, how little is He known; and while the conscience has been relieved by His work, the heart is not attracted to His Person, and therefore is not detached from the world and worldly aims. When Christ is engraven on the heart, we become His epistle, we speak for Him in our life before all men; but when the spirit of worldliness has seized the citadel, Christ is either veiled, or so distorted is the view of Him, through us, that the unsaved are driven from Him rather than drawn to Him.

It is utterly impossible to run the heavenly and earthly business on the same level; one or the other must be on the top; the mind cannot be set on things above and on things on the earth with equal devotion. Both cannot be "**first**"; one or the other must be. One must increase, the other must decrease. The question is, Which shall I make my object?—"The kingdom of God and His righteousness," or "all these things" after which the world is seeking? Never was a greater mistake than to think I can compete with the worldling in the pursuits, the possessions, the pleasures, and the politics of earth, and finally come off as a spiritual overcomer. No; that which ministers

to the flesh wars against the soul, and it is impossible to secure the present without loss, both present and future, for "he that loveth his life shall lose it." Let us honestly examine our ways as to which of the two objects is occupying the supreme place in our hearts—Christ or self. Do we "mind earthly things" or is "our conversation in heaven" (Phil. 3)? Have we counted the cost of true discipleship, to suffer the loss of all fleshly gain, for the surpassing gain of Christ? Which is it to be? May the earnest cry of our souls be: "search **me**, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

3. OUR SERVICE.

We have looked at the matter of **first importance** in relation to our worship and walk. We come now to that which must be **first** in our service one to another (Matthew 7. 3-5). In each of the three great spheres of our life as Christians—toward God, before men, and among brethren—we are reminded of what must ever be the primary necessity. There are three things noticeable in this passage. First, the discovery of a mote in a brother's eye (v. 3); next, the offer of a voluntary service to remove it (v. 4); and then the only way in which this can be effectually done and what it involves (v. 5).

1. Beholding the mote in our brother's eye is intended to illustrate a very common tendency amongst us of turning our eyes toward our brethren for the discovery of their fault, instead of using them to search out our own; it also intimates that this is done, not occasionally through the attraction of some glaring mishap, but habitually. "**Beholdest**" means that it is a continuous thing. It further points out a most lamentable **weakness** in us, that proneness to overlook all the general features of a brother's character, however praiseworthy, and fasten the gaze upon the smallest spot and the least speck that is wrong with him, though it can hardly be discerned. But it does more, it proves that this is hypocrisy, for those who are quick-sighted and fore-sighted to spy out the mote in their brother's eye, do not, for lack of ability or lack of inclination or perhaps honesty, consider the **beam** that is in their own eye.

It is easy and natural to point out a small sin in my brother, while allowing a very great one in myself; whereas my own faults should appear greater and graver to me than the same faults in a brother. If I cultivated the habit of self-judgment instead of being severe with the sin of others and indulgent with my own, I

should then "**consider the beam**" in my own eye, that is, I should first deal with my own faults with unsparing judgment, and then with my brother's, if necessary, in the spirit of meekness.

How unconscious are we naturally of our personal failings! As with a mote or a beam in the eye, we are powerless to discover that which is lodged in our own flesh, and the greater the evil, the less able are we to perceive it in ourselves. Those who are the most faulty are too often the least conscious of it, and usually the first to find out the faults of others, and the most unsparing to condemn them. It was not the brother with a mote in his eye that discovered the beam in his brother's, but he with the **beam**, although, undoubtedly, the former could see more clearly of the two. May we have grace to examine ourselves, and to mortify our own members, for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

2. Then, "How wilt thou say to thy brother Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold a **beam** is in thine own eye?" There is nothing wrong in offering to remove the mote surely, for if it is offensive to us, how much more is it painful to the brother himself! In itself it is a brotherly action. We are not to be blind or indifferent to each other's welfare, but it must be by love that we serve one another and wash one another's feet.

If a brother be overtaken in a fault, to neglect him, or leave him alone to drift, would be most blameworthy; much less should we lend our tongues to retail the wrong; by all means seek to restore such, but the spiritual only are able, for this must be done in the spirit of meekness, by those who have learned to consider themselves, lest they also be tempted. It is not every one who is skilful enough to perform this difficult operation, for it requires a delicate touch. At the same time let no one excuse himself from the responsibility. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him" was God's express command to the Israelite; so may we never forget that it is not the will of our Father that one of these little ones should perish. But from the extreme difficulty of doing this in a manner not to be a further cause of stumbling to an erring brother or sister, no service calls for more prayer, delicacy of feeling and meekness of wisdom. It must not be done just to "relieve my own mind" and to have "a clear conscience." The motive must be nothing less than love, the manner nothing else than showing "the kindness of God."

FIRST THINGS FIRST—(Continued).

Even a well-meaning word may be entirely out of place, and produce contempt rather than conviction. It must be a word in season, and "a word fitly spoken" from lips that know what is acceptable, if it is to be a blessing, for "as an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprove upon an obedient ear" (Prov. 25. 12).

3. "Thou hypocrite, **first** cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." He who would point to a brother's wrong and seek to set him right, must **first** consider his own weakness, so as to be free in himself of that which he seeks to remove from another, or endless sorrow may result from an ungracious attempt to deal with another's faults by one who has worse forms of evil in himself neither "considered" nor "cast out." Zeal for judging evil without honesty and impartiality enough to detect and judge personal errors, is indeed grievous hypocrisy, for to deal with another's fault supposes that I am free from (that) wrong myself, and an enemy to the evil in question.

Let us therefore have grace to diligently "consider" and "cast out" **first** our own beam, that we may "see clearly" to cast out the mote from our brother's eye, or our best attempts will be nothing better than an ungracious judgment of the sin in another, which has grown to more terrible proportions in ourselves.

Studies in the Psalms.

No. 3.

THERE is a wonderful progress of truth in the whole Word of God, which is visible to the most casual reader, but we often miss a progress of thought contained in shorter portions of the Word, through not paying sufficient attention to the use of a simple word, or a given line of thought.

We find this brought out in the Psalms in many ways, in the whole book, in certain Psalms in unity. Psalms 22, 23 and 24 are well known in this connection, also in individual Psalms, but in many cases a word has a line of thought which, with each mention, brings us as so many stepping stones to the goal.

To illustrate this, may we take two words from the 119th Psalm, "Precepts and Walk."

- 1. The Psalmist is commanded to keep His precepts diligently in v. 4.

- 2. The next mention of them is in v. 15, where he begins to meditate in them, then quite naturally,
- 3. He prays that he might understand them, v. 27.
- 4. His prayer, no doubt being answered, he begins to long after them in v. 40.
- 5. Then seeks them, v. 45.
- 6. Keeps them, v. 56, with the result that he
- 7. Seeks the companionship of them who fear God, v. 63.
- 8. This separates him from the world, with the result that the worldling has his pride touched, in v. 69, and he forthwith forges a lie against him.
- 9. Not satisfied, the worldling being proud, deals perversely with him, in v. 78.
- 10. And almost consumed him, in v. 87.
- 11. But God steps in, in v. 93, and quickens him with them (the precepts).
- 12. Now he is saved for having sought them, v. 94.
- 13. And gets more understanding than all the ancients, v. 100.
- 14. Therefore he hates every false way, v. 104.
- 15. But still the wicked laid a snare for him, v. 110, yet he erred not.
- 16. Finally, he sums up in v. 173, where he is no longer under commandment to keep them diligently, but makes them his choice and can now claim the help of God.

Walk is found three times only.

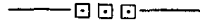
- 1. He walks in the law, the hard path with hedges on either side, no turning to the right hand or to the left, v. 1, under the iron rule of LAW.
- 2. Next they walk in his ways, v. 3, 4. His ways may lead to the mission field, as Paul, or the prison as Joseph, the wilderness as Moses, or to the rocky mountains as David, but it leads to the Throne and to liberty.
- 3. Therefore, in v. 45, he walks at liberty.

May these two illustrations serve as a guide to other lines of truth found in the Word of God on the same principle.

C. H. DARCH.

Bible Studies in Genesis.

By **ROBERT LEE.**



STEPS which led to the Fall.

Study No. 7.

Gen. 3. 1-7.

1. Parleying with the Enemy.
2. Tampering with the Word of God.
3. Doubting the goodness of God.
4. "Saw," "Took," "Gave."

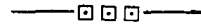
ONLY SOLUTION. Let us remember that the rejection of this Bible story of the Fall is the rejection of the only solution of the most awful problem connected with our existence—the fact of sin.

THE SILENCE OF SCIENCE. The late Dr. Alexander Whyte has drawn attention to the silence of science. "As we read the great books of our modern scientific men with delight and advantage, we always miss in them a matter of more importance than all else. All the time we are reading these fascinating discoveries and speculations, we still feel in ourselves a disturbance, a disorder, a disharmony and a positive dislocation from a moral order of the universe, a disorder our scientific teachers neither acknowledge nor leave room for the acknowledgment of, or redress. In one word, what about sin?"

A FACT OF HISTORY. The Genesis account of the Fall finds an echo in every religion of the world. A sacred tree and a serpent figure in all ancient religions.

SATAN'S SUBTILTY. (a) He did not appear in his proper person as a fallen angel. (b) He spoke through the only creature beside man that had the power of speech. (c) He made the attempt when the two were apart. (d) He made the attempt on the weaker vessel. (e) He presented the temptation when they had not had long experience of the goodness of the Lord. (f) He presented the temptation when Eve was near the Tree. (g) He successfully got lodged in her mind a doubt of the goodness of God.

STEPS IN THE FALL. Satan threw doubt on whether the Lord had spoken or no, and even then misquotes. Eve ought to have replied to the enemy's query "Hath God said?" by saying, "God hath said" and fled. It was folly parleying with the Tempter. She also tampered with God's Word. She added, "Neither shall ye touch it." The Lord did not say, "Lest ye die"—Eve turned God's declaration into a perhaps.



Study No. 8

Gen. 3. 8-21.

Evidences and Results of the Fall.

1. Rousing and awaking of conscience.
2. Perverted Adam's Judgment.
3. Disturbed man's relation with his Maker.
4. Made man a coward.

WRONG SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE. Adam and Eve sinned in seeking knowledge by unlawful means. Is this not one of the chief objections to spiritualism or spiritism?

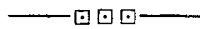
CONSCIENCE. "Their eyes were opened." This surely implies the rousing and awaking of conscience.

ADAM'S JUDGMENT. The Fall influenced Adam's judgment. A short time before he was so wise that he could name all the creatures brought to him; now his judgment is so perverted that he set about making a covering to hide from the face of an omniscient and omnipresent God!

MAN'S RELATION. A change of relationship with God took place. God, who had been their delight, now became to them a fear and a dread.

COWARDICE. It was cowardly on the part of both Adam and Eve to attempt to lay the blame on another. Adam's answer was really an attempt to throw the blame upon God.

THE PROPHECY OF THE BRUISEINGS. By the "heel" is meant the lower or bodily nature of the Redeemer. An Eastern understands by the bruising of Satan's head, not the slaying of Satan, but the taking away of the poison bag, its death-dealing power.



Study No. 9. Gen. 3. 22-24

The Cherubim and the Flaming Sword.

CHERUBIM AS MINISTERS OF

- (1) **Justice** — Gen. 3. 22 to 24.
- (2) **Mercy** — Exodus 25. 10 to 22.
Zech. 13. 7.
Heb. 1. 7, 13 and 14.

MYSTERY. There has always been an element of mystery about the Cherubim and the Flaming Sword. Undoubtedly they belong to an exalted order of Angels. They are always represented near to God and His Throne, indicating a guardianship of the Divine Majesty. They are God's bodyguard, Cabinet, His chief officers of justice. In Ezek. 28. 14 Satan is called "The Anointed Cherub," i.e., the head of this exalted order. By a careful study of the various Scriptures we conclude he was the leader of the worship of the Universe. The presence of these glorious beings in the Garden was a revelation to man of the awfulness of his transgression. The holy splendours of the Throne of God were placed where God's holy law had been despised and profaned. Here, as ministers of Justice, they hold the Flaming Sword. But why in Exodus 25. 10 to 22 is there not a sword in hand? Certainly the Ark contained the tables of stone bearing witness to Israel's sin. Why? Study Zech. 13. 7. The sword had, in figure, been sheathed in the body of Christ, our sacrifice. That is why now they are ministers of mercy (Heb. 1. 7, 13 and 14) and not of Judgment.

Helps from an Old Source.
PART II. (See Page 38.)

"I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets."—Hosea 12. 10

PROBABLY there are no writings in existence whose style is not, in some degree, metaphorical; which, indeed, really constitutes much of its essential beauty.

The language of the Scriptures is highly figurative, both in the Old and the New Testaments. Figures and similitudes drawn from many striking subjects. The Saviour's discourses are strikingly metaphorical. By mistaking these many most extravagant notions have been published. Some have adopted a literal application of those expressions which are so plainly figurative, and by so doing show the incorrectness of a literal interpretation. Speaking of Herod, our Lord said: "Go ye, and tell that fox" (Luke 13. 32). Here, as every reader perceives, the word "fox" is transferred from its literal signification, that of a beast of prey, proverbial for its profound cunning, to denote a cruel tyrant, and that use of the term conveys, as was designed, the idea of consummate hypocrisy. Our Lord said to the Jews, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6. 51). The Jews understood His words literally, and said, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" (verse 52), not considering that He intended the sacrifice of His life, which He gave as an atonement for the sins of the world. In the institution of the Lord's Supper, our Saviour said of the bread, "This is My body," and of the wine, "This is My blood" (Matt. 26. 26, 28). Upon these words the Romanists, since the twelfth century, have put a forced construction; and in opposition to other passages of Scriptures, as well as every principle of nature and sound reason, they have attempted to establish their monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation; or, the conversion of the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper into the real body and blood of Christ, when the priest pronounces the words of pretended consecration, though to all the senses they remain just the same bread and wine unchanged. The evident meaning of our Lord was, that the bread represented His body, and the wine signified His blood. This mode of expression may be seen used in the Old Testament (Genesis 41. 26-27; Exodus 12. 11; Daniel 7. 24, and by our Saviour Himself in His parables, Matthew 13. 38-39; John 10. 7-9) Also, Christ calls Himself "the Door" (John 10. 9). "The Vine" (John 15. 1). "The Shepherd" (John 10. 11).
A.R.T.

a sinless saint, neither was he of an angelic order, but a poor frail mortal, like unto ourselves, but **HE prayed**, and he prayed **earnestly**.

What Elijah did, you can do, my beloved reader, though verily conscious of your shortcomings and failures; though subject to like passions as Elijah; yet if, with a full and frank confession to God of all that is amiss in your life, (for "if I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me," Ps. 66. 18), you draw near to Him in faith, you may rest assured upon His Word that "a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Ps. 51. 17). "Before they call I will answer," saith the Lord.

But did you notice our Scripture said, "Elijah **WAS a man.**" He was certainly no coward, neither was he one who desired praise of men. He was A MAN in every sense of the word. A man who feared God, and such men do not fear their fellow creatures, nor fail to declare unto them the whole counsel of God. Beloved, though at our best we are but men, let us see to it that we **are** the best of men. Men of God, as Elijah was, with naught but the fear of God and His divine Majesty before our vision. Shall we **not** each seek to be MEN; men and women whom God can use, and if He commands let us not fail to obey, no matter what the task may be.

Elijah could tell Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." This was because God had assured His servant beforehand that such would happen, as it was His mind and purpose. Let us be assured of God's mind before we do or say anything for Him, and once we are thus assured let us not hesitate to declare whatever it may be. We must, however bear in mind that **GOD WILL NEVER DO, OR SAY, ANYTHING CONTRARY TO HIS WORD**, which is our sure guide. The Word of God and the Will of God are inseparable.

As we look around at the companies of God's people to-day can we not see that in a collective aspect the same is true as in the individual. **WE DO NOT PRAY.** How many are there at the Prayer Meeting? But perhaps more important still, how often am I at the Prayer Meeting? Why is it that we are not seeing souls saved in this our day as in other days? Why no revival in our midst? Why such spiritual apathy? Why no Spurgeons, Wesleys, Mullers, and the like to-day? One ventures to suggest that the cause, very largely, is due to the lack of real, earnest prayer, both individually and collectively.

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A Subscriber writes: "Must say while writing that the ministry of 'Threshed Wheat' is sweet and so helpful."

Not by Bread Alone.

By H. ARTHUR WOOLLEY.

WE all know what bread is and how essential it is for the upkeep of the human frame. Though not in the least likely to forget the bread that perisheth, seeing that most of our waking hours are spent in labouring for it, under the strain of modern conditions we are in grave danger of forgetting, or failing to find time for, the Bread that endureth, the Bread of Life.

Result: The body fed well, the soul almost starved! How different with some of whom we read in the Volume of Truth. Job, for instance, esteemed the words of God's mouth **more than his necessary food.** The Psalmist rejoiced "at Thy Word as one that findeth great spoil," hiding that Word in his heart that he might not sin "against Thee." Recall Jeremiah's successful search for spiritual bread. "Thy words were found and I did eat them." Here is communion and meditation. No wonder he goes on "and thy word was unto me the joy and the rejoicing of my heart." Mary knew that joy. For she "also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word." Attracted to Him, loving Him for the glorious worth she saw in Him, she definitely chose "that good part." She wanted HIM; and waited to hear what He would say.

All these realised that it is not by bread alone that man lives; and in their measure they fed upon the Heavenly Manna.

Life and service are seriously impoverished by neglect of private prayer and secret study of the Scriptures. But there is a far more solemn aspect to be emphasised. Letting habitual communion go, means that **God is deprived of His portion.** He is forgotten.

Consider Israel. Warned against forgetting the Lord (Deut. 6. 12), they nevertheless did forget Him after all He had done for them. "My people have forgotten Me days without number." (Jer. 2. 32). Think of it—"days without number." How heart-moving is the Divine complaint? Can you not hear the sob in that loving voice? And does it not vividly remind us of Luke 19 41-42? But how is it with His heavenly people? Do we forget Him? Do we let whole days slip by without being occupied alone with Him for some little period? Perhaps without once actually speaking to our Lord? **During this present day how many minutes have been devoted wholly and entirely to the Lord Himself?** Put this question to yourself now and see what your answer is? It is sadly possible to be very busy, doing much that is good, and yet utterly fail to give Him His due; fail to consciously enter His transforming Presence with the sacrifice of praise, or to listen for, and respond to, the words He would fain speak to adoring hearts. Remember Mal. 3. 8. To forget God is surely to rob Him!

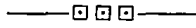
Remember, too, that Israel being a picture of ourselves, these things were written "for our learning," that we might profit thereby.

Ample fare for the wilderness journey is provided in the Written Word. But the Lord's portion must be first. What He looks for must come before all else. Of old the offerings were "unto the Lord"; the priest's share came after.

Let us then learn to sit at His feet not merely for personal gain, comfort, or nourishment for our ever-needy souls; but because of what He is in Himself; because He desires our company; and because He is expecting something from us. "The Lord's portion is His people." He looks for that which only those redeemed by precious Blood can give Him. If Christ has first place it is certain we shall suffer no lack so far as our needs are concerned, for He Himself will be our food. Thus shall we live by Him, and not by bread alone.

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



V. The Ethiopian Eunuch.

OUR Lord's commission to His disciples in Acts 1. 8 was all-embracing. "Ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The law was restricted to one nation, but the Gospel has no limitation whatever. The law being an experimental educative measure, it sufficed to apply to Israel only; but the Gospel is God's great panacea for all human ills, and since all men are alike needy, its sweet message is addressed to all without distinction.

The Jerusalem persecution was instrumental in sending the Gospel to Samaria. Now the more distant stranger has his turn. Not that any preacher was, as yet, sent to the Gentile world; at the moment nothing greater occurred than the blessing of an African visitor to Jerusalem.

The instructions given to Philip in Acts 8. 26 were most extraordinary. "Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." What could he expect to accomplish in a desert place? And for this to quit a city which was now full of interest in the Christ of God! The evangelist, however, raised no questions, but went where he was bid. There he fell in with Queen Candace's treasurer, returning in his chariot from Jerusalem to Ethiopia after a journey which had so far been altogether fruitless.

A thousand miles of travel in search after God! Surely a strong rebuke to the shameless indifference of this day! It was natural that the eunuch should go up to Jerusalem, for it was God's earthly centre. There was His house, and there also was His Word. But Jerusalem was nothing but a shell when the Ethiopian arrived. True, the temple still stood in its glory, and its priests were still ministering therein, but GOD was not there. In the person of His Son He had visited His people, and had been cast out and slain. Oh, religion, God-hating and murderous from first to last, in Christendom as truly as in Judaism!

The eunuch became possessed of a copy of Isaiah's prophecy, and was reading it as he travelled homeward. Prompted by the Spirit of God, Philip ran up to him, and said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Invited to do so, he presently got into the chariot, and found that the particular chapter with

which the eunuch was occupied was the fifty-third. Modern blinded Christendom, following in the wake of unbelieving Israel, fails to perceive Christ and His cross in the sufferings described in that chapter. But Philip had no doubt whatever as to WHO was the true theme of Isaiah 53, and so he "began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus." The heart of the Ethiopian was divinely opened. Most welcome therefore was the testimony that "He was wounded for our transgressions . . . and Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." The once-slain but now glorified Saviour became forthwith his confidence and hope. Forgiveness of sins and life eternal became his nessed portion through faith in His name. Presently a wayside pool coming into view, he exclaimed: "See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptised?" Connecting this with the words that he was reading when Philip hailed him, it seems evident that the eunuch at once perceived the true thought in Christian baptism. "His life is taken from the earth," said Isaiah's prophecy, and baptism has reference to death. As Romans 6. 4 puts it: "We are buried with Him by baptism unto death." It is one of the stupidest of Christendom's many blunders to make baptism regenerative—to make it speak of life when Scripture makes it speak of death. Thus cleverly has the great deceiver obscured the significance of this solemn initiatory rite from the people of God. But the eunuch was under no such delusion. To him baptism meant death, and since Christ's life had been violently taken from the earth, he no longer desired a standing where He has none. Henceforward he was willingly dead to all that to which his Lord is dead. Are we like him in this respect?

As the Evangelist and the eunuch came up from the water, "the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." A great lesson is here. However deeply a servant of Christ may be used to men's souls, it is not the will of God that they should hang upon mere servants. The Christian's joy is in the Lord. If Philip and all others were removed from our midst, we still have the unfailing Lord on high upon whom our souls may safely lean. Let us, then like the eunuch of old, go on our way rejoicing.

The Sabbath and the Lord's Day.

—□□□—
By W. KELLY.

REMARKS ON MATTHEW 24. 15-22.

THE setting up of this idol in the holy place is the Lord's appointed signal for the disciples to escape. "Let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains." Further, so rapid was to be the flight that a man was not even to come down from the housetop to take his property from his house—was not even to return from the fields to take his clothes. Not a moment was to be lost for bare life. Sorrow to those who had babes unborn or lately born, for how could they thus flee? Again, they were to pray that their flight might not be in winter nor on the Sabbath. How comes here the **Sabbath day**? It is well known—I trust every believer knows it—that the day for us is the **Lord's Day**. I do not mean by this to lower the sanctity of the day that the Lord has been pleased to initiate and give the Christian, but the very contrary. The difference between the Jewish Sabbath and our Lord's Day is not that the seventh day or Sabbath is more holy, but rather that its holiness is of a lower character than that which now clothes the first day of the week or Lord's Day in the eyes of the Christian. The Sabbath was a day of external rest; it was a day on which every one, slaves, yea, the very beasts of burden, were to enjoy repose according to commandment. The Lord's Day, as such, is neither of the first creation nor of the law, like the Sabbath. It is characteristic of the new creation and of grace, in contrast with the associations of the Sabbath. It is not the epoch in which we find the first man, Adam, an unfallen man, nor is it the sign which God subsequently made so special between Him and Israel; but the infinitely brighter day that is only known to faith, that was ushered in by the Second Man, triumphant for ever over sin, death, and judgment, who, in virtue of His own triumph, has brought those that believe in Him out of their sins, even now to God. Therefore do I claim for the Lord's Day a character of sanctity as much transcending the Adamic or Mosaic Sabbath of Jehovah, as the Second Man is superior to the first, as much, too, as grace rises above law. But it is not the Lord's Day in view of Christians that is spoken of here, but that very different day, the Sabbath, in view of Jewish disciples, present and future. Accordingly the context is quite in character with the Sabbath day. It is a question of those in Judea, and no

others, fleeing to the neighbouring mountains, as the sign was an idol set up somewhere in the Temple of Jerusalem. Hence they are to pray that their flight might not be on that day, any more than in winter time. Is there a Christian who would have a conscience about himself or another fleeing on the Lord's Day, if it were a matter of life or death? Would he scruple for **just or gracious** reasons to travel ever so many miles on that day? Certainly, if the Christian were under the law as to the Sabbath, nothing would justify such breaches of it. Nor does the Lord weaken but maintain its authority by His direction that they should pray for any other day. The question for us is: Are we under the authority of the Sabbath? Or is our day the Lord's Day? Were we really on the former ground, our duty would be plain, and we could not, on the Sabbath, do such things rightly. If it is the Lord's Day, on the contrary, you may magnify it according to what is calculated to glorify Him.

Suppose a man could walk twenty miles on the first day of the week, and preach twenty sermons, do you think he would be guilty of a bad work? I trow not; it were assuredly a good and acceptable service if he preached the truth. But here the disciples are manifestly under the law of the Sabbath. How evidently then is it another atmosphere we own as Christians! The obligation of the Sabbath was all right for those who were under the law. The Christian stands in connection with a dead and risen Saviour, and the Lord's Day is a symbol of His blessing. Therefore it is that the Church universal keeps the Lord's Day, not the Sabbath day and quite right too, though (strange to say) so many that do it, aver that it is all one and the same thing.

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What God has Given.

1. His Son (John 3. 16).
2. His Spirit (Luke 11. 13; Acts 2. 38).
3. His Word (John 17. 14).
4. Eternal life (Romans 6. 23).
5. Wisdom (James 1. 5).
6. Grace (Romans 5. 20; James 4. 6).
7. All things (Romans 8. 32).

Principles of Scripture Interpretation.

By H. DENNETT.

Part I.

DO you wonder why of all the books in the world the most widely read is the Bible? And why it has the largest circulation?

Most books are very circumscribed in their scope. Technical books state facts or elaborate theories relative to the particular science of which they treat. Ethical writings proffer a code of human conduct of varying standard, and there are volumes of history and biography that record facts of the past. Concerning the future the literature of the world has nothing to offer but vague speculation.

The Holy Scripture embraces all this and more. In it there are accurate records of certain important periods in the history of the world. The most sublime poetry ever written is to be found within its pages. Its statements relative to the sciences of which it treats are exact. The moral code that is set forth is without parallel in purity and grandeur as compared with those of such teachers as Buddha or Confucius. Above all, the Bible is the **only** book that can and does give definite information as to the future.

Still further, if reference is made to the books of the world upon any one subject, and the views of to-day are compared with those of a 100 years ago, or again with the pronouncements of the sages of ancient Greece on the same point, what would be discovered? Utter confusion and contradiction. But in the Scripture you may turn from Genesis to Revelation and trace out any subject you please that may be treated of by a dozen or all of the writers; you may compare each one with the rest, and only harmony and absolute concord will be found.

But is this all? As the child of God reads the above there is probably a reservation in his mind. Granted that the Scripture is a masterpiece of literature; that within its various parts there is most wonderful co-ordination, even this leaves much untold. It is this. In the narration of the simplest event, or plainest record of human frailty there swells the organ peal of divine inspiration. It is **God** writing to man His creature; it is **Jehovah** instructing His

beloved people; it is **Jesus** revealed to His adoring church.

Small wonder that the earnest desire of devout men and women all down the ages has been to understand better this precious legacy of Holy Scripture. How many a man has sat up half the night, despite the day of work so little time ahead; how many a grown negro or out-cast Hindoo has resolutely struggled with the A. B. C. month after month—all with the same end in view, to know God's mind through His Word.

Some books of the Bible are confessedly difficult to understand, and many a young believer has felt as if he were groping about in a dark pathless wood as **apparent** contradiction and

disconnection confront him at every turn. It is with the desire to help such that these notes have been written. Certain principles of Scripture interpretation have ever been recognised by teachers of the Word, and in this series of articles some of them are put in a concise form and illustrated by numerous examples.

It is far removed from the purpose of these notes to slight the simple-hearted believer—especially those older in the faith. All learning is purely relative in degree. The negro already cited who, by persistent application has learned to read, a childhood accomplishment with us, is regarded by his peers in much the same light as one in our land who, by diligent study, has acquired fluency in Greek and Hebrew.

The point is not the amount of learning but the motive that lies behind it, and the principles set out here will be utterly useless if there is not in the heart of the reader a lively zeal and thirst for the water of life. More will be said on this later, meanwhile let us apply the words of Romans 14. 3, "Let not him that is learned despise him that is learned not, and let not him that is unlearned judge him that is learned."

Below is a rough outline of the principles referred to. In succeeding articles, God willing, fuller detail will be given, together with illustrations of their application. Used carefully

Facts about the Bible.

"Russia is the only country in the world that forbids the Bible."

Dr. Ritson, Secretary of the B. and F. Bible Society states that before the war the Society circulated 600,000 Bibles a year in Russia. When he became secretary of the Society it published the Bible in 360 languages, now the number is 618.

In the last 30 years **237,000,000 Bibles have been circulated**, 77,000,000 more than in the preceding 95 years. And this **world's best seller** is seldom given away. During Dr. Ritson's secretaryship £9,000,000 have been spent, and 56 Bible Houses have been built.

and reverently they will throw much light on the underlying beauties of the Word of God.

1. **Get the setting of the whole book you are reading.**
 - (a) In relation to the rest of Scripture.
 - (b) As to its own construction.
 - (c) The position of the passage being read.
2. **Learn the meaning of Scripture symbols.**
 - (a) Much of Scripture is written in this "language."
 - (b) The value of symbols.
 - (c) Consistency of Scripture symbols.
 - (d) The interpretation of symbols.
3. **Study the figurative language of the Bible.**
 - (a) Figures of speech abound in Scripture.
 - (b) Various figures of speech described.
 - (c) Is the meaning figurative or literal?
4. **Appreciate the Eastern and Historical setting.**
 - (a) The Bible is an **Eastern** book
 - (b) Customs, occupations, etc., that explain Scripture.
 - (c) Historical circumstances of Bible events
5. **Find out the literal meaning of words.**
 - (a) Why so many versions.
 - (b) What is their comparative value?
 - (c) Concordances and how to use them.
6. **Read your Bible with the utmost care.**
 - (a) See what Scripture **does**, and equally what it does **not** say.
 - (b) Most "objections" to Scripture are *founded on* careless and incorrect reading.
 - (c) Scripture is its own interpreter.
7. **Lastly, because the most important of all, see how the Lord Jesus Christ is the centre and key of all Scripture.**

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Believe me!
 There is a place that you can fill.
 Some work that you can do;
 That no one can, or ever will,
 Do just as well as you.

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Suggestive Outlines.
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Seven Aspects of Christian Life.

- (1 Peter 2).
1. Verse 2, "Babes." Feeding.
 2. Verse 5, "Living stones." Buildd.
 3. Verse 5, "A Holy Priesthood." Worshipping.
 4. Verse 11, "Strangers." Away from home.
 5. Verse 11, "Pilgrims." Going home.
 6. Verse 16, "Servants." Obeying.
 7. Verse 20, "Sufferers." Submitting.

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Three Downgrade Steps.

1. Concerning the truth have **erred**.
(2 Timothy 2. 18).
2. These also **resist** the Truth (2 Tim. 3. 8).
3. **Turn away** from the Truth (2 Tim. 4. 4).

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Three Mighty Shalls.

Phil. 4. 7, 9 & 19.

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**The Scriptures.
 A three-fold Cord.**

1. Read to be wise.
 2. Believe to be safe.
 3. Practice to be holy.
-
1. Food to support.
 2. Light to direct.
 3. Comfort to cheer.
-
1. Should fill the memory.
 2. Rule the heart.
 3. Guide the feet.

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Three Things not fully Known.

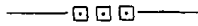
1. Ephesians 3. 8.
2. Philippians 4. 7.
3. Romans 11. 33.

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FROM FAR-OFF CHINA:

Dear Mr. Vallance,—Thank you very much for sending "Threshed Wheat" month by month. **We do indeed appreciate the most helpful articles**, and it gives us joy to pass on the finest of the **Wheat** to our dear Chinese brethren.—F. J. HOPKINS.

What Saith JOEL the Reubenite?



By FRANK MANSFIELD (Tobago, B.W.I.).

THE little three chapter prophecy of Joel portrays what his name implies,

JEHOVAH IS GOD,

and we can easily trace this fact as we consider the chapters one by one as they refer to Israel.

Chapter 1. 4, Israel's **RUIN**.

Chapter 2. 25, Israel's **RESTORATION**.

Chapter 3. 16 (margin), Israel's **REFUGE**.

All these because HE IS GOD.

Now see His great insect army sent among His backsliding people because He must punish sin, but again see the recovery from their **ruin** and destruction because this same God of righteousness is the God of Jacob and Israel, and in their midst to **give**, that they may "eat in plenty" in **restoration**. In that day what a **refuge** this their God shall be unto them, and what a stronghold to the "sons of Israel." Thus far is Israel's experience in prophetic view.

Let us now look at some suggestions for our **own** help and guidance.

CHAPTER 1. RUIN.

Verse 12, "Because **joy is withered** away from the sons of men." Is there not on all sides evidence of this, even though our day is a **pleasure** loving age; but pleasure is not joy, the one may have some passing excitement for its cause, the other has a deeper heart reason for its existence.

Jesus said, "that My joy might remain in you," not My pleasure. In fact, the word is not used in New Testament language other than connected with the world's fleeting amusement.

We mark the joyless faces and lives of the poor Christless worldling, even though he spends his days in so called pleasure. **But what lies behind the "Because"** The fruits of the whole earth wither, languish, waste away; dry up and perish, and surely when **man's joy** has gone every pleasant thing becomes unsatisfying and has lost its sweetness. When will the sons of men learn the "good tidings of great joy" about the Saviour God, who came to bear our sins, sorrows and sicknesses in order to be our Joy-giver to the full (John

16. 24). **But the loss is deeper** v. 16). "Joy and gladness is cut off from the **"house of God."** May we not mourn the absence of real God-given joy in the "House" to-day. Lightness and vanity there surely is, happy, bright meetings, but the deep upspringing "joy in God," or even the "joy of the Lord" is in many ways "cut off." **May it not be because** the "gift offering" is "cut off" from the House of the Lord (vv. 9 and 13), in fact verse 16 so emphatically states it, that we trace the cause at once.

Jehovah is God,

and no real joy can flow so long as we are unyielded (Rom. 6. 13). Daniel 3. 28 for comparison.

CHAPTER 2. RESTORATION.

Verse 12, "Therefore also **now** . . . turn ye to Me with **all** your heart," etc. Fasting, weeping, mourning, and heart rending, sound strange ways to get back to the "cut off" joy, but

Jehovah is God,

and no other way has the righteous God for His people's restoration. Confession, as in 1 John 1. 9, must lead to clear vision of those glorious prospects of restoration as we bow beneath the "rod of God."

Verse 14, "He will leave a **blessing** behind Him." What a blessing. Would it not be one of the very best if we became, through it, a voluntary (freewill) offering in the day of His power (Psa. 110. 3 R.V.).

Verse 18. **THEN**. Ah! what then. "I will **send** you corn and **new** wine and o'il," a three-fold supply for a trinity of satisfaction, "and ye shall be satisfied." Verse 26 says yet more, "Ye shall eat in **plenty** and be satisfied, and

PRAISE THE NAME OF THE LORD."

Verse 21, there shall remain no more fear. Gladness and joy shall return. For the Lord will magnify to do great things. The very God that hath dwelt wondrously with you (v. 26) says, "My people shall **never** be ashamed." Satisfaction leads to praise, and praise to the recognition of the "One in our midst" (v. 27).

The Children of God.

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Four Aspects of their Life

By T. ROBINSON.

PART 4.—1. Peter iv. 10—(v.).

WE have taken a brief survey of the believer in his relation to **God** as seen in chapter 1; to the **world** in chapter 2; and in **family and social life** as in chapter 3-4. 9. Now the Apostle, after fortifying their minds against the fiery trials and reproaches for the name of Christ, by reminding them that these make them "partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed they might be glad with exceeding joy" (4. 13); also, that "judgment must begin at the house of God," now asks, "if it first begin at us what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (v. 17).

This way of God is often exemplified in His Word, that in **judgment** He always begins with the highest, the most privileged and responsible (see Ezek. 7., "Begin at My sanctuary"); whereas, in **grace** He always begins with the least and lowest. "This Man receiveth **sinner**." After this encouragement in their sufferings he goes on to exhort them as to their relationship with each other, in their collective capacity as "the flock of God" (chapter 5).

He first addresses "**elders**." This term refers rather to **age** and experience than to **office**. It is evident that Paul at least, and those delegated by him, as Timothy and Titus, did set apart certain men to the work of overseeing in the assemblies of the saints, but it is clear that they were, and had to be, men who answered to the exemplary and spiritual character described in 1 Timothy 3. To-day, we have not apostolic authority for doing this, but we have still, thanks to the great Head of His Body the Church, Who gives "gifts unto men," "Evangelists, and pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4. 10-13).

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder . . . feed the flock of God which is among you." "Elders," plural, for we have no example in Scripture of one presiding elder in each church. Elders "**among**" the flock; the flock "**among**" the elders. This shows a close co-mingling and intimate fellowship. The oversight was to be taken, "not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind—not as lords over God's

heritage." The word means God's marked-off lot, really His **clergy**. "The Lord's portion is His people . . . the **lot** of His inheritance" (Deut. 32). "Feed the flock of God." Give them food, tend them as Peter himself had been enjoined by his Lord to do (Jno. 21). It is **God's** flock, **God's** heritage, not man's. He bought the Church "with His own blood" (Acts 20. 28). This ought to inspire a loving devotion to the care of the flock. Moreover, there is the prospect of "a crown of glory that fadeth not away," when the "Chief Shepherd shall appear" (v. 4). All the honours this world can give are "a crown of pride and the beauty of a fading flower" (Isaiah 28. 1).

Next, the "younger" are exhorted: "Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility." Youth naturally is inclined to be hasty, eager, impatient with the cautiousness of elder brethren; but grace can give forbearance one with another, that "the unity of the Spirit may be kept in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4. 2, 3).

Moreover, these trials of faith and patience are occasions for discipline and sanctification for all concerned and are designed of God to be such. Under the systems of men, all may be controlled by human authority; but in the simple, family fellowship of Apostolic days, as in ours, the Holy Spirit's guidance and grace are absolutely necessary.

"Rebuke not an elder but entreat him as a father" (1 Timothy 5. 1) is an injunction sometimes, alas! called for. Tender entreaty, fervent brotherly love, God will own and use for blessing; for "love will cover a multitude of sins" (iv. 8). Elders that rule well are to be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine" (1 Tim. 5. 17). This shows that some elders may not be "teachers."

How many of the Lord's prophets of old were called in their youth, e.g., Joshua, Samuel, David, Elisha, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc. Also all the apostles must have been young men, Peter probably the senior of the twelve.

Bible Studies in Genesis.

By ROBERT LEE.

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The First Recorded Murder.

Study No. 10.

Gen. 4. 1-15.

CAIN'S	(1) Birth - - -	Verses 1 and 2.
	(2) Sacrifice - -	" 3 to 5.
	(3) Lack of Courtesy -	Verse 6.
	(4) Dangerous Position	" 7.
	(5) Crime	" 8.
	(6) Punishment - -	Verses 9 to 15.

EVE'S MISTAKE. What a mistake Eve made! When her first baby arrived she called him Cain (acquisition) saying, "I have gotten THE Man, even the Lord" (verse 1) (another rendering), that is, the promised Messiah. But instead of being the Messiah he became the first murderer.

"AT THE END OF DAYS" is the margin of verse 2. That is, at the end of the week, i.e., the Sabbath.

CAIN'S ERROR. Cain was the first Unitarian, daring to approach God without blood, offering the fruit of the cursed earth to remove the curse. How can a sinner's toil atone for sin! Only the blood of Christ can do this.

FIRST TIME WORD SIN. In grace the Lord remonstrated with him. The R.V. is startling; "If thou doest not well, **sin croucheth** at the door, and **unto thee is its desire; but thou shouldest rule over it**" (R.V. Marg.). The Lord warned Cain that his wrong doing had created a horrible monster—sin—which desired his ruin, but by God's grace he could rule over it, have the victory over sin. First time the word sin is mentioned in the Bible.

DISCOURTESY. But not a word of reply did Cain make. Instead, Cain said unto his brother, "Let us go into the field" (R.V. Marg. of verse 8). Cain must have been 120 years old when this took place.

BLOOD HAS A VOICE GOD CAN HEAR. Abel's blood cried out for the punishment of the sinner; the blood of Christ cries out for the forgiveness of the same (Heb. 12. 24).

PUNISHMENT. "Cain said . . . mine iniquity is greater than can be forgiven" (Marg.).

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Study No. 11 | Gen. 4. 16-18.

The Origin of City Life. The City Built.

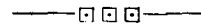
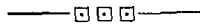
1. To divert his mind from his crime.
2. As a memorial of his lack of faith in God.
3. As an attempt to nullify the sentence.

"CAIN WENT OUT"—not driven away. He was relieved to get away from the Holy Presence. Israel stands in precisely the same position as Cain. After they had, with wicked hands, crucified and slain the Lord of Glory, they were driven forth into all lands. Like Cain, in their wanderings they are busy in city building. Unlike him, they will be restored again. By a careful calculation there must have been one hundred millions of Adam's descendants by this, so Cain would have no difficulty in securing a wife.

ENOCH (consecrated); name of Cain's first-born, and of first city to be built.

WHY CITY BUILT? (1) Possibly to divert his mind from his crime. Work is a blessing in disguise. (2) It was his permanent memorial to his lack of faith in God. He was haunted by the fear of vengeance. He could not trust the Lord's promised protection, so he safely surrounded himself with city walls and friendly neighbours. (3) Though a fugitive from God he thus attempted to nullify and defeat the sentence of restlessness.

ITS TEACHING. (1) As a husband his wives valued him; hence their concern. In composing this song he proved to be a thoughtful and considerate husband. (2) He did wrong (a) in avenging personal wrong. (b) In taking the life of another. (c) In excusing his crime. (d) In presuming on the mercy and protection of God. He evidently had Cain in mind. If God set a mark and protected Cain for taking a life without provocation, surely, said he, I am safe for taking a life under great provocation. If his death would be avenged sevenfold, surely mine seventy times more.



Study No. 12. Gen. 4. 19-26.

Do You Know?

The Sword-Song.

The Earliest Known Poem.

- 1. Its Author - Lamech.
- 2. Its Origin - murder.
- 3. Its Purpose - comfort his wives.
- 4. Its Teaching - presuming on mercy of God.

LAMECH was a direct descendant of Cain. He is the first recorded polygamist. Lamech's sons proved to be men of inventive genius. "Father" is here used as equivalent to the word "inventor."

MURDER. Behind these verses lie some dark crime, the murder in cold blood of a young man. By R.V. Marg. we learn he purposed to commit this crime. "I will slay." By R.V. we learn he had already committed the crime. "I have slain," and it was to avenge a personal wrong, "I have slain a man for wounding me." The Authorised Version shows that he recognised that the committal of this crime exposed him to great dangers. "I have slain a man to my wounding."

PURPOSE OF THE POEM. It was composed expressly to comfort his wives, who were fearful lest the relatives of the murdered young man should seek to avenge the wrong, and in consequence their husband lose his life.

Do you know that being "saved by grace" means that God saved you, independent of any merit; in fact, without merit in the past or prospect of it in the future? (Romans 3. 24).

Do you know that this makes you an everlasting debtor to God, and emphasizes the fact that "Ye are not your own, but are bought with a price?" (1 Cor. 6. 19. 20).

Do you know that being "saved for nothing" does not mean that now you should live for nothing higher than to go on pleasing yourself as formerly? (2 Cor. 5. 15).

Do you know that, although "not of the world, even as He is not of the world," is the position of every child of God, yet if not watchful, it is easy to become like the world? (John 17. 14-16).

Do you know that you are left in the world, not to "build a nest" here, but to be a testimony to an absent and rejected Lord, whose desire is that we should be all for Him and hold all for Him? (Heb. 13. 13).

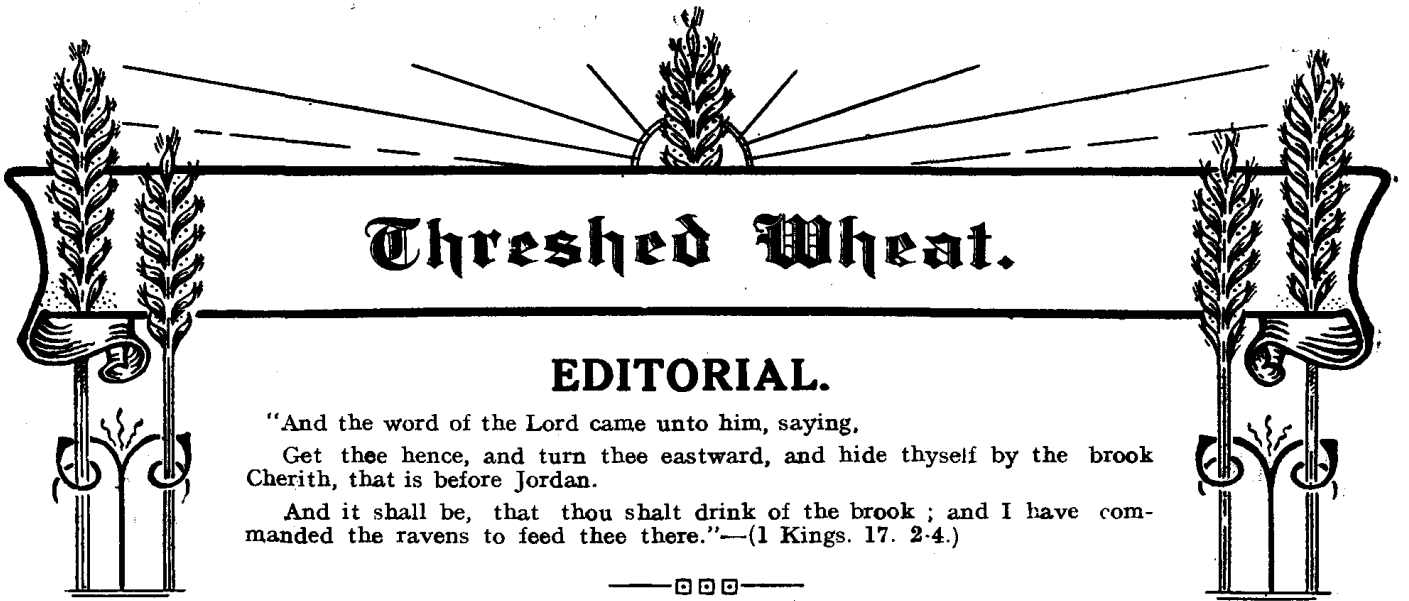
Do you know that you are responsible to spread the gospel of God's grace, personally, as far as you are able, (Mark 16. 15), and representatively, among such as you cannot reach unto? (Rom. 1. 14-15).

Do you know that this "responsibility" means the use of your time, talent, and money, as you have opportunity, for the furtherance of the gospel at home and abroad? (Phil. 1. 3-5), and that such service, is accepted as a sweet-savour offering by God (Phil. 4. 18. 19).

Do you know that, if you withhold from God that which is His due, you are "robbing God," and, like Israel of old, you are shutting up the windows of heaven, from whence blessing comes? (Mal. 3. 8-10).

Do you know that while "under law," God claimed a tenth, — or tithe: now, under grace, He claims all; therefore, the question is not, "How much should I give?" but "How much dare I withhold?" (Lev. 27. 30-32, Acts 20. 24).

Do you know the standard of giving is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye, through His poverty might be rich?" (2 Cor. 8. 9). Measure your gift by this.



Threshed Wheat.

EDITORIAL.

"And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,
 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.
 And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook ; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."—(1 Kings. 17. 2-4.)

ELIJAH'S LONELY MINISTRY.

WE have considered the prophet alone with God, and alone in Ahab's court, we are now to behold him

ALONE AT CHERITH.

One verse of Scripture tells of Elijah's great work in the court of King Ahab, and the rest of the 17th chapter tells of his subsequent movements. The time we spend **WITH** God is far more important than the time we spend in service **FOR** God. **Note this well.**

GET THEE HENCE—AND HIDE THYSELF.

This chapter is a chronicle of unexpected events. This would have been the last thing we should have expected; but then God's ways are **NOT** our ways, and are often very far different from our thoughts and desires, but nevertheless they must be obeyed.

We should doubtless have felt, had we been in Elijah's place, that it was essential that we should be near at hand in the condition of things that was about to arise, for surely the Lord's prophet would be needed, sooner or later, to intercede on behalf of the people and their need of water. We are so apt to imagine that **God cannot do without us**, when oft times His work would prosper more if we followed the prophet's example, and went and hid ourselves.

Why did God command His servant to get hence and hide? For a twofold purpose. Firstly, because it would be best for Ahab to be left alone, and secondly, because it was **ESSENTIAL** for Elijah.

It is a proven fact from Scripture that the child of God is never so weak as immediately

after some spiritual victory. Then it is that the Adversary seeks to gain the advantage; then it is that very often he succeeds in tripping the feet of the saint of God. We find this principle true in natural things also, and an illustration or so may help. After any great contest in the National Games of a nation the victors are completely exhausted; the body being at a very low ebb, and rest and refreshment essential. Especially is this illustrated in a great rowing match, e.g., Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. So in the spiritual realm, Elijah has accomplished a mighty victory and his spiritual life is thereby weakened. He now needs rest and refreshment, thus God calls him aside to rest awhile. "Get thee hence and hide thyself."

May this not be a needed word for you and me to-day? A ministry, the truth of which has been, perhaps, overlooked and neglected. Indeed, it seems to be more essential than ever, in these days of rush and tear, and busy city life for most of God's dear people. May it not be that many of us are too active. A little more quiet, alone with God, especially after any spiritual service or victory graciously allowed us, would perhaps tone us up for the next encounter and refresh our tired and weary spirits. Whilst there is no joy like the joy of Christian service, yet for the Christian worker rest and spiritual food are both vital and essential if a high standard of ministry is to be maintained. Maybe there are too many Conferences and similar gatherings to-day, and not enough quiet study and meditation. The daily portion, gathered fresh by **our own hand** will prove, like the manna of old, to be neither too much nor too little, and far to be preferred to any amount of Conference ministry, where another feeds us. The former will prove of lasting good, building

us up on our most holy faith. The latter, more often than not, merely forms a topic of conversation afterwards, or alas, a carnal comparison with other similar addresses. May we ever remember, when hearing or reading God's Word, that happiness only comes from a **DOING** of the revealed mind of God and not from a mere knowledge of it. "If ye know these things, **HAPPY** are ye if ye **DO THEM.**"

What did Elijah do when he got to the Brook Cherith?

HE DRANK OF THE BROOK.

In a parched and thirsty land there was refreshment for the prophet. He would not have had that in Ahab's court, but he had it at Cherith and for that reason God sent His servant there. So to-day, after any service for Christ we should go to "Cherith" (separation) and drink of the brook. The water of the Word of God is ever a refreshment to the soul and it can only be drunk in all its beauty and power "alone at Cherith." The crowded court of Ahab was not the place where spiritual strength could be renewed. Alone with God is the drinking place. But not only did Elijah drink of the brook at Cherith, God had told him that He had commanded the ravens to FEED him there. Mark it well—**THERE.** Nowhere else. A most unlikely place, and what an unlikely channel for food. Ravens to bring flesh for the prophet. Why, that was **THEIR** food! **THEY** needed that! Yes, but God had said **He** had commanded that they should bring him food, and bring it they did. Have you never found that God has been pleased to send you spiritual refreshment—food for your soul—through some most unlikely channel. From some source which seemed to be far more in need of food even than you did, but because God had commanded, it was brought to you **THERE.** Where? Perhaps upon some bed of sickness. Maybe in yonder hospital—an aged sister, an infirm saint, a babe in Christ—all unlikely sources of supply, yet God sent them across your path to give you refreshing vigour and help just when you most needed it. Had we been anywhere else but "there" just then, we should have missed the ravens, for God only commands them to feed His servants **THERE.** Shall we then make it our practice to resort "THERE" at all times, and especially after the joy of service and blessing, and "THERE" drink of the brook, and feed upon the God-given and God-sent food.

After a while the brook dried up which was God's sign that His servant was to go forth once more. When God dries up the brook look out for the next commission.

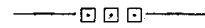
(To be continued.)

FREE DISTRIBUTION FUND.

We have a fund for the free distribution of Gospel Tracts to those unable to purchase, and gifts will be valued at all times and duly acknowledged in these pages.

No deductions of any kind are made for working expenses, but to every gift sent in we add 50 per cent. ourselves. Thus, if you send 5/- we add 2/6, and to every 10/- we add 5/-.

Gifts are now being received for the summer's work. Send to Editor, "Threshed Wheat," 2 Broomhill Road, Goodmayes, Essex.

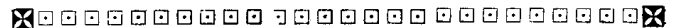
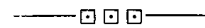


THRESHED WHEAT TO MISSIONARIES.

We have a list of several hundred Missionaries to whom we should like to send a copy of "Threshed Wheat" monthly as issued.

The cost of an annual subscription post paid is 2/6, but we will pay half of this if any christian friends care to have fellowship with us by paying the remaining portion. Thus for every 1/3 you send to the Editor a copy of "Threshed Wheat" will go regularly to some worker at home or abroad, for one year.

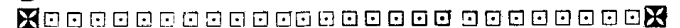
Latest Gifts:—T. M., California, 28/9; Shottery, 10/-; H. B., Tottenham, 1/3; C. S., Bury St. Ed., 2/6; Anon., 1/3; R. D. S., Clapham, 1/3; J. H., London, 1/3; E. T. Ealing, 2/6; T. G., Westcliffe, 5/-.



"Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee."

(Zech. 3. 4).

Oh! troubled soul, look again at these blessed words! Think on whose they are! He can never deceive; and be assured that this is God's way in grace with every soul that is really cast on what He is. They are fitted and intended to give you immediate peace in His holy presence. Can you ever doubt more, with such an assurance before you? Surely not! It is God who says it, and that is enough. Such are His ways in grace to every soul that believes in Jesus. "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" (Romans 10. 12, 13).



SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

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A DEVOTIONAL STUDY.

By **J. H. McCORMICK.**

THE saints of God have each shown their faith in God, their love to Him, and their loyalty to His throne by "Songs in the Night." How terrible some of those nights have been—the nights of persecution and martyrdom, of poverty and sickness, of distress and pain. Yet the song has ever risen to gladden the heart of God from the lips of His suffering people. Think of songs at the stake, songs in the prison, songs in pain and agony, songs in poverty and distress. The history of Christianity is the history of songs in the night; the darkest night of all was that

NIGHT ON THE CROSS

when the Holy Sufferer was forsaken of God, mocked by His creatures and left in darkness by His creation. Yet from Gethsemane and Calvary there went up songs in the night—songs of faith, "My God," songs of love, "Father—Father," songs of loyalty, "Not My will but Thine be done." Oh, the joy that filled the heart of God as He heard those songs in the dark, dark night of the Saviour's anguish ascend from His lips; how His ways were vindicated and His name glorified thereby. The Psalmist sings, "I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psalm 34). It is easy to bless the Lord sometimes when our circumstances are favourable, but to bless Him at all times requires the knowledge of Himself—the remembrance that however much our circumstances may change and be against us, He never changes. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. His attitude towards us never changes, is not affected by our coldness or indifference and His love never changes towards His own. It is as strong to-day as it was when on Calvary's central cross He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, receiving the full judgment they deserved and suffering all the wrath which fell upon them as He died for us. When we remember that He never changes, that His attitude towards us is ever the same, and that His love is as changeless as Himself we can indeed "Bless the Lord at all times," and His praise shall be continually in our mouth.

DAVID'S CIRCUMSTANCES

at the time he wrote the psalm were all against him; he was hunted by Saul, was an exile from his own land, and in the land of the Philistines, yet "He encouraged himself in the Lord his God," and sang "this song in the night." The Psalmist again cries "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee" (Psalm 119). Midnight speaks of the hour of trouble, sorrow, reproach and persecution for Christ's sake. It was midnight with

JOSEPH

when his mistress tempted him time and again to lie with her, and on his refusal to do so, denounced him to her husband and had him cast into prison. But oh, what a song God heard in Joseph's words of loyalty to Himself. "How can I (a servant of God) do this great sin and wickedness?" And in the prison the Lord was with His suffering servant, bringing him forth in glory. It was midnight with

JOB

when at the request of Satan his oxen, sheep and camels were destroyed or carried away, his children slain, and his own body smitten with sore boils. In his property, possessions, children and person he was stricken, yet the song arose in these submissive triumphant words, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job. 1. 21). It was midnight with

THE THREE HEBREW YOUNG MEN

when they were taken and brought before the angry king, threatened with death in the burning fiery furnace, if they did not worship the golden image which he had set up and thus deny their God, and deeper midnight was to follow when they were cast into the seven times heated furnace. But oh, the joy that fills the heart of God as He hears their midnight praise "If it be so our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace—but if not be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods or worship the golden image which thou hast set up" Daniel 3). Sublime.

words of transcendent faith and heroism; our God is able, but He may not deliver us; it may not be His purpose to do so, but it makes no difference to us whether deliverance comes or not, we will be true to our God, we will not serve thy gods or worship thy image. The king had them cast into the furnace but the song in the midnight had so glorified God that He sent His Son to company with them in the fires. The leader of faith—our Lord Jesus passed through midnight in the garden, with the judgment hall and the cross in front, yet the midnight song arose "Not My will but Thine be done." But on the Cross itself He passed through a midnight which no saint of God ever knew. He was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, and when our sins were laid upon Him He was forsaken of God. Even then the night song of faith went forth "My God", followed quickly by the song of love and filial devotion, "Father." How sweet to the Father, the faith, love and loyalty of His Son in the midnight was!

PAUL AND SILAS

went forth to preach the gospel to the Gentiles; when in Phillipi they were used of God to the deliverance of a demon-possessed girl, whose masters, angry at the loss of the gains they made through her sin stirred up the multitude against the missionaries, who were dragged before the rulers, beaten and cast into the inner prison, their feet being made fast in the stocks. Truly it was the midnight hour for them. But "at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them." God's answer to their prayer and praise was the earthquake which loosed their bonds and set them free. May we not conclude that the song had much to do with the conversion of the jailor and his family that night, and possibly the prisoners who heard may afterwards have accepted the Saviour. God is always glorified by "Songs in the night," and men are moved by them to see the reality of divine power to save, keep and satisfy even in the midnight hours. What numbers have been saved through hearing the afflicted servants of Christ sing? Many more than have been converted through hearing the song in days of prosperity; scarce a martyr died singing at the stake without some of his enemies being moved to repentance and faith in Christ. Reader! have you learned the song unto "Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood?"

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 □
 □ When ye pray, □
 □ Believe that ye receive. □
 □ And ye shall have. Mark II. 24. □
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QUES.—In a contemporary Magazine, in a paragraph dealing with the Lord's return, it is stated that He "speaks with Archangelic Voice (His own voice)." Is this correct? Are the Lord and the Archangel really one and the same?

ANS.—The writer in question acted unwisely in adding to the Word of God. Three things are mentioned in connection with the great drama—the Lord's shout, the Archangel's voice, and the trump of God. This is in keeping with the general structure of the Epistle (1 Thess.), which is characterized by its many "threes."

The Lord and the archangel are not one and the same. In Dan. x. 12 Michael is introduced to us as the great prince who stands for the children of Daniel's people, i.e., Israel, and he is seen engaged on their behalf in conflict with hostile spiritual powers. All that is written concerning him in this most interesting portion of Holy Scripture seems to distinguish him carefully from the Lord of all. Thus in chapter x. 13, he is called "ONE of the chief princes." In chapter xii. 7, it is practically certain that "the man clothed in fine linen which was upon the waters of the river" is none other than the Lord Himself (compare His action then with that of the sun-clothed Angel in Rev. 19): and if so, Michael and He are quite distinct persons.

The language of the archangel in Jude 9 forbids the suggestion that he is the Lord Himself. "When contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses [he] durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee."

But the question will arise, why should the archangel's voice be heard when the Lord descends into the air to claim His saints? Two suggestions (they are but suggestions) may be offered. First, Satan may be disposed at that moment to challenge the divine right to raise the bodies of the departed saints, and the same mighty spirit who acted for God when Moses' body was in dispute may be again used of Him in our case also. Second, the rising up of the Lord Jesus to assemble around Himself His heavenly saints is the first step towards the deliverance of Israel, and indeed of the whole creation. Here again we may find a reason for the activity of the archangel. No more can safely be said.

W. W. FEREDAY.

QUES.—It is sometimes said that a man can be quite a good Christian, and yet refuse to believe the story of Jonah. Is this so?

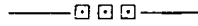
ANS.—Most certainly not. The Lord Himself when on earth spoke twice of this prophet (Matt. xii. 39-41; xvi. 4) thus affirming his personality. He spoke also of his preaching and its wonderful results, and of the fact that he was three days and three nights in the fish's belly. To refuse the story of Jonah is thus to challenge the truthfulness of the Lord of all, as serious an offence as can be imagined. The real quarrel of the enemy is not with Jonah, but with Christ. To discredit Him is his unceasing aim. Let all who bear His holy name beware of the infidel teachings of our time.

It should be apparent to all that if our Lord's Word may not be taken about a simple matter of history such as Jonah and his remarkable experiences, we cannot safely trust Him in the serious matters connected with our salvation. Where are we then? On what is our faith founded if not on the word of the Lord? See John xii. 47-48.

W. W. FEREDAY.

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



VI. Ananias.

NOT Ananias of Jerusalem, but his namesake of Damascus. Not the husband of Sapphira, of infamous memory, but the humble Christian who succoured Saul of Tarsus in his soul-distress, and then baptised him where he lodged in the Syrian city. He is described in Acts ix. 10 as "a certain disciple," and in chap. xxii. 12 as "a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt in Damascus."

It was during Saul's memorable three days that the Lord spoke to Ananias in a vision concerning him. Calling him by name (for the Good Shepherd keeps account of the names of all His own—John x. 3), He bade him arise, and go into the street called Straight, and inquire for a man called Saul of Tarsus, who lodged there in the house of one Judas. The Lord graciously added, in order to solve the doubts of His servant, that the man in question was in prayer, and had seen in a vision one called Ananias coming in, and putting his hand upon him that he might receive his sight (Acts ix. 10-19). But Ananias still had difficulties, and so ventures to reason with the Lord thus: "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon Thy name." It is a pleasure to transcribe such words in full, for they show the precious intimacy to which the Lord of all admits His people with Himself, and the utter absence of dread with which His believing ones are entitled to address Him. Such is the wonderful fruit of grace divine, founded upon redeeming blood. We may be more at home with the Sovereign of the universe than with the pettiest of earth's rulers!

The Lord did not censure His servant for thus speaking to Him, but graciously explained that the man of whom Ananias and other Christians had heard so much evil was now a chosen vessel to bear the name of the Lord Jesus before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel, adding, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." It will be noted that here the Gentiles are put before Israel—quite a departure from the order which had prevailed from the days of Moses. This is the new order for this Gospel age.

Ananias at once went in search of his man, and entering the house where he was, he put his hands upon him, addressing him as "brother Saul," and forthwith he received the Holy Ghost, his sight was restored to him, and he was baptised. Such a story—and the facts are too plainly stated to be controverted—is entirely opposed to ecclesiastical officialdom. There is no evidence that Ananias was a preacher, eminent or otherwise, yet he baptised the man who became the chief apostle of Christianity, and through the laying on of his hands the Holy Ghost was imparted. Why has Christendom so earnestly and so long endeavoured to confine the operations of God's grace within certain specified channels? Happily, the grace of God cannot be thus restricted. It overflows all men's boundary lines, and blesses as it pleases, the officially appointed channels being frequently left dry and destitute. Let it be clearly stated that the great privileges of Christianity, the gift of the Holy Ghost and the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are not in the slightest degree dependent upon a ministerial order, in order to be enjoyed. Scripture is unequivocal in its testimony upon these points.

We have three accounts of Saul's conversion in the book of Acts. In chapter ix. it is related by the historian; in chapter xxii. by Saul (or Paul) himself from the steps of the castle in Jerusalem; and in chapter xxvi. by Paul again, but this time before King Agrippa and others in Cæsarea. Comparing the Apostle's own recitals of the wonderful things that happened to him in Damascus, we observe that it was in Jerusalem, to a Jewish audience, he showed the part played by Ananias. The doings of this simple disciple would scarcely interest the grandees before whom the apostle spoke in Cæsarea. Accordingly to them he stated at length the terms of his commission as a herald of the Lord Jesus, and omitted Ananias altogether. But it was of importance, when speaking to his own countryman, to make reference to so excellent a Jew, possibly known by repute to some of them. Both in what he inserted and in what he omitted, the apostle manifested conspicuous divine wisdom.

Principles of Scripture Interpretation.

By H. DENNETT.

Part II.

Get the setting of the book you are reading.

Understandest thou what thou readest ?

THE Holy Spirit in writing the 66 books of the Bible took up 40 or so men of varying character, outlook and occupation, living at widely separate times, and used them to express the mind of God on a great variety of subjects. This makes it easy to understand why every book of the Bible has its own peculiar setting and characteristics, while still being an integrant part of a single volume. The first question therefore to ask concerning our reading of the Scriptures is

Give at least equal attention to the two main sections of the Word of God. If you neglect the Old Testament you will be shallow; if the New Testament is not given proper place you will be legal.

THE SETTING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Almost the whole of the Old Testament is occupied with the ways and purposes of God in relation to His earthly people Israel. For the sake of space the detailed order is given lower down with the key verse of each book.

"What is the general subject-matter and particular view-point of the book I am reading?"

At the moment we shall deal with the Old Testament only, and if Luke 24. 44 is read, divine authority will be found for the order in which the books of the earlier scriptures are placed — not indeed in our modern version, but in the order that our Lord Jesus used them, the order of every Hebrew Bible to this day.

About the Bible.

A leading Daily Paper writes under date 5th December, 1929:—

"That among books, beyond all comparison the best seller is still the Bible. In the last 30 years 237,000,000 have been sold by the British and Foreign Bible Society throughout the world.

While detailed figures are not given for the sale of the Bible in this country, there can be no doubt that it holds first place. **Our English Authorised Version is one of those very few translations which are noble literature.**

It is part of the English heritage and one of those things that have helped to mould the national character and to form the national history, while about the very words has gathered a mass of associations which are priceless to us as a people."

We see in the

LAW :

The nation of Israel born, and brought **out** of bondage.

PROPHETS :

The nation of Israel brought **into** the land but carried **out** again because of their idolatry. There is also an anticipation of their return.

*PSALMS :

The nation of Israel **finally** brought back **into** the land and restored to God's favour. This is shown both in type and prophecy.

"These are My words which I spake unto you . . . while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the LAW OF MOSES, and the PROPHETS, and the PSALMS concerning Me."

Here it might be well to say a word as to the importance of reading and studying the Old Testament. This part of the Word of God is approximately three and a half times as long as the New Testament, yet most Christians give about ten times as long to the study of the shorter part of the Scriptures as they do to the longer. In result they are rather like a child that is struggling with an advanced text-book before having thoroughly mastered the A. B. C. The Old Testament is the divine "picture book" or explanatory chart of the New Testament. It is like the diagram that the teacher draws upon the blackboard. It is not the thing itself, and unless you have seen the reality the diagram will be of little use, but having seen the article the drawing helps you to understand it.

(*and other writings see below.)

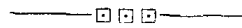
Not only is it important to see in which section of the Old Testament a book is found, but it should be considered in relation to what precedes and follows. For this reason it is strongly recommended that consecutive reading of the Old Testament should be done in the order shown below.

THE SETTING OF THE INDIVIDUAL BOOK.

In a good "Students" Bible each book is preceded by an introduction which is often useful in giving the setting of the book. The key verses given in the following table are only suggestive and should be carefully tested by the reader. In doing so a very good idea of the scope of the book will be gained.

The Law.	Key verse.	General character.
Genesis 1. 1.	In the beginning.	The root of all Scripture.
Exodus 12. 2.	This month shall be the beginning of months.	A new beginning by redemption.
Leviticus 1. 1	The Lord spake out of the Tabernacle .	The book of the sanctuary, sacrifice and worship.
Numbers 1. 1.	The Lord spake in the wilderness .	The desert journey, pilgrimage and service.
Deuteronomy 1. 1.	These are the words .	A divine commentary on the four previous books. Not repetition.

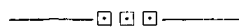
The Prophets.



Joshua 1. 1.	After the death of Moses.	Moses representing the law could not bring into the land.
Judges 21. 25.	There was no king in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.	Lawlessness alternated with divine compassion.
*Samuel 1. 17; 6. 5.	Asked of God.	Hannah asks for a son; the people ask for a king.
*Kings 1. 1	King David was old.	The "decline and fall" of the kingdom of Judah.
Isaiah 1. 1.	Concerning Judah and Jerusalem.	Nothing to do with the church at all.
Jeremiah 1. 3.	Unto the carrying away of Judah.	Isaiah is about the Assyrian crisis, Jeremiah about the Babylonian.
Ezekiel 1. 1.	As I was among the captives.	Written during the captivity but a promise of restoration.

The twelve shorter prophets form a kind of appendix to the three previous longer prophecies.

The Psalms.



All the rest of the Old Testament is gathered up under the heading of "Psalms and others writings," called by the Jews the Hagiographa or sacred writings. Each book of this section has special reference to the full restoration of Israel, to the favour of God, and their preparation of heart for that glad time.

Psalms 1. 1. 150. 6.	Blessed is the Man. Praise ye the Lord.	The full course of God's dealings with His repentant people amidst the raging of the nations (2. 1).
Proverbs 2. 2.	To know wisdom.	Christ the wisdom of God, and the seductions of the strange woman!
Job 42. 5-6.	I abhor myself.	The Jews must learn both God and themselves ere blessing comes.
Canticles 7. 10.	His desire is towards me.	Israel will learn that they are beloved of their Messiah.
Ruth 4. 10.	Ruth have I purchased.	Israel so degraded by idolatry that they are viewed as a Moabitess whom only the grace of the Kinsman Redeemer can bless.
Lamentations 1. 1.	How doth the city sit desolate.	Deep contrition for national sin.
Ecclesiastes 1. 13.	Under the sun.	Confession that there is no true satisfaction apart from Christ.
Esther 1. 1.	In the days of Ahasuerus.	A Gentile reigning over Israel. God has hidden His face, so His name does not appear.
*Ezra-Nehemiah Ezra 1. 3.	Build the House of God.	This double book tells in type, of Israel's restoration. No miracle is recorded.
Neh. 1. 3.	The wall of Jerusalem.	

Chronicles. The last book of the Hebrew Bible. It is to Samuel and Kings, as Deuteronomy is to the preceding books—a divine commentary. Kings closes with a vassal king; Chronicles with a liberated people. Compare the amount of detail given in Kings and Chronicles respectively to the secular and religious reforms carried out by Hezekiah. As one would expect from the suggestion given above Chronicles stresses the religious side—God's viewpoint.

* One Book in the Hebrew Bible.

Having seen the setting of the book you are reading, both with regard to its place in the Scriptures and also its own special theme, then see what position the passage or verse being considered occupies in the book. Who is speaking? Who is being addressed?

Sometimes statements are found in Scripture that appear utterly contradictory to the general tenor of the Book. Before you jump to conclusions see whether they are not simply the divinely recorded utterances of uninspired men. In the book of Job, for instance, three rather foolish men argue with Job himself and say some very silly things. It has pleased God to place on record in His Word all that they said, but in so doing He gives no sanction to their statements. Read the book of Ecclesiastes in this light.

In some books of Scripture there are turning points which deeply effect all that follows. In Exodus, chapter 19, verse 8, the people of Israel with dreadful complacency pledge themselves to absolute obedience to a holy law. Immediately the Lord's attitude to them changes, and the result of their self-confident gesture can be traced through almost the whole course of Scripture. In 1 Samuel the turning point is the impatience of Saul which caused him to offer sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel to come.

There are certain phrases in the Bible that are in the nature of sign posts. The words "after these things" are always an indication of a lapse of time between what follows and the preceding verses. Ezra 7. 1 is an important case. Nearly 60 years have elapsed between chapters 6 and 7, and this explains the sad condition in which Ezra finds the Jews on his arrival in Jerusalem. The opposite phrase is "in those days." In the books of Moses distinct communications are marked off by the words "The Lord spake unto Moses," and in the prophets by "The word of the Lord came unto —"

Another factor that tends to confuse the reader of Scripture is the statement of a theme in brief, in say one or two verses, then the same ground is gone over again in fuller detail. It is distinctly puzzling to the young student to find himself on earlier ground, historically or morally, than a few verses higher up. Isaiah 52. 13-15 is an epitome of chapter 53. In Psalms 32 the glorious fact of the forgiveness of sins is stated in verse 1, then the experiences are detailed that led up to that blessed state.

Next month:

"Notes on the setting of the New Testament."



Do You Know?

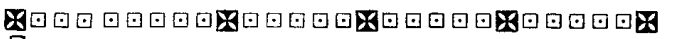
That it has been said that when we reach Heaven God will look us over, not for medals, or diplomas, or for earthly distinctions, but for **scars**—scars of past conflicts, waged for righteousness and for God.

That my appreciation of Christ up there, determines my expression of Christ down here.

That we are only qualified to stay here when we are ready to depart. Then Christ is before me, and I am possessed by Christ.

That the earth is growing too small for the ambitions of men, and already they are claiming the air, so making way for their own final destruction.

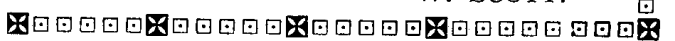
That there is only one blessed Person can tame the tongue, and He gives me the Holy Spirit that I might be completely under control.



Wise Words.

THE sure way to become a moral shipwreck, to stand disgraced as a witness for Christ, is to neglect secret prayer and intercourse with God; also to give up the private reading and study of scripture. "Praying always and watching thereunto with all perseverance" is an apostolic counsel to saints sitting in heavenly places (Eph. 6. 18). The knowledge of heavenly truths, or even an accurate acquaintance with the internal contents of the whole of the Sacred Volume, will not yield dependance upon God which is expressed in prayer. If you want to be preserved, never neglect prayer. The Christian who, for a day even, omits this privilege and duty, trades upon his own strength, works upon his own resources, and, unless God in mercy upholds, he will most assuredly stumble. A Christian who has been with God in "much prayer" is calm and not easily "put out" in presence of evil and difficulty.

W. SCOTT.



“Behold My Servant.”

A Devotional Study.

By Alb. Payne.

THERE are four servants presented to us in the book of the prophet Isaiah. Eliakim (chapter 22. 20), Isaiah himself (chapter 6), the nation Israel (chapter 41. 8 and 44. 1), and an unnamed servant whom we know to be none other than our Lord. To this last named, God calls special attention. Twice in this Book (52. 13 and 42. 1) we are called upon to

“BEHOLD MY SERVANT.”

The word “behold” is employed no fewer than 78 times in this prophecy, and has the meaning of “consideration,” “meditation.” Many of these “beholds” are a call to consider a wonderful fact, and are used to call attention to something that is unique. The two concerning the Lord Jesus, in His servant character, fall within this category. All servants of the Lord have fallen short and failed in one way or other, but this Servant was to be unique in that it was prophesied of Him “He shall not fail,” and the New Testament writings abundantly testify to the fact that He did not fail.

There is a second reason, I would suggest, for calling attention to this perfect Servant. We who have trusted in Him are called to service, and the Father would have our service to be after this pattern. Let us then consider this Servant in some of His ways.

THE SERVANT'S HEART—UNSELFISH.

The unselfishness of our Lord is brought out very clearly in Phil. 2, “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” The thought suggested in this phrase is that the robber in a selfish way seeks to grasp tightly and keep unto himself those things which do not rightly belong to him, but this One in the unselfishness of His heart gives up that which is His by right. He laid aside the position of equality with God. He did not lay aside that nature which He shared with the Father; He ever was, and never for one moment ceased to be, God. But He gave up that equality of position which He shared with the Father and became the subject One. He gave it up on your behalf and mine that through His poverty we might become rich.

THE SERVANT'S MIND—LOWLY.

“He made Himself of no reputation.” When He became flesh He elected to be born of a virgin. His birthplace was not in the royal palace but in the manger. Throughout His life He sought not His own glory but that of the Father. The prophecy of Isaiah concerning Him was truly fulfilled, “He shall not cry, nor cause His voice to be lift up in the streets.” When the people sought to make Him a king He departed into a mountain alone. Those who saw Him transfigured were charged to tell no man. And on that Passover night, in the full knowledge that the Father had delivered all things into His hands, He took the lowest place and washed the disciples feet.

THE SERVANT'S WILL; SUBJECT TO HIS GOD.

On coming into the world He said, “Lo, I come, . . . to do Thy will, O God,” and throughout His life He claved to this purpose. The expression “I will” did not pass His lips (the “I will” of John 17. 24 implies “I desire”). On no occasion did He act independently of His Father, on the contrary, on at least eight occasions do we find Him referring to His Father's will, and in other instances He states that the “Son can do nothing of Himself.” The climax of His life was the place called Calvary, and there “He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

THE SERVANT'S EAR—OPEN.

Throughout His earthly life His ear was ever open to receive instructions from His Father. When others went to their homes to sleep, He went to the Mount of Olives to commune with His Father (John 7. 53; 8. 1). His ear was wakened morning by morning to hear as the learner (Isaiah 50. 4). He was ever guided by the Father's counsel, His actions were in accordance with the commandments received from His Father and His doctrine was received from His Father also (Psalm 16. 7; John 14. 31; John 7. 16, and John 17. 8).

THE SERVANT'S MOUTH.

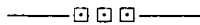
There are three things concerning His mouth.

(1) He did not refrain from testifying concerning the truth received from God. The language of Psalm 40. 9 is His, "Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest." Human nature shrinks from opposition and fears consequences, but here was **One who, in** the face of fierce opposition and in the full knowledge of the consequences, shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God and who testified to the world that its works were evil (John 7. 7).

(2) "Grace is poured into thy lips" (Psalm 45. 2). His ear was wakened morning by morning to hear as **the learner**, and having heard God's message He went forth, as the **learned**, to speak a word in season to the weary. He offered rest to the sin-burdened one, spoke peace to the troubled ones and bound up the broken-hearted.

(3) When led as a lamb to the slaughter, He opened **not His** mouth in self-defence, but meekly submitted. His silence was truly as wonderful as His speech. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not (although as the One who is yet to judge the world He was in a position to); but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2. 23). He sought not to establish His claims before men for He knew they would not hear Him. His words and works up to this time fully established who He was, but men closed their eyes to them and declared Him to be a deceiver, a blasphemer, a possessor of a demon, accursed of God and worthy of a criminal's death. He, therefore, closed His mouth and committed His cause into the hands of the Righteous One whom, He knew, would in due time establish His claims and give Him His rightful place.

May we obey God's voice and "Behold His Servant," and God grant that in beholding Him we may be changed into the same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.



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□
□ **IT SHALL NOT COME NIGH THEE.** □
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□ —○— □
□ Plagues and death around me fly: □
□ Till He bids, I cannot die; □
□ Not a single shaft can hit, □
□ Till the God of love sees fit. □
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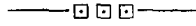
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What manner of PERSONS ought ye to be?
(2 Peter iii. 11).

1. PERSONS who gird up the loins of their minds, are sober, hopeful and obedient. 1 Peter 1. 13.
 2. PERSONS who do not fashion themselves according to the former lusts (desires) of their ignorance. 1 Peter 1. 14.
 3. PERSONS who are holy in all manner of conversation. 1 Peter 1. 15.
 4. PERSONS who love one another with a pure heart fervently. 1 Peter 1. 22.
 5. PERSONS who lay aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisies, envies and evil speaking. 1 Peter 2. 1.
 6. PERSONS who desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. 1 Peter 2. 2.
 7. PERSONS who shew forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. 1 Peter 2. 9.
 8. PERSONS who abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. 1 Peter 2. 11.
 9. PERSONS who, when they suffer for well-doing, take it patiently. 1 Peter 2. 20.
 10. PERSONS whose adorning is the hidden man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. 1 Peter 3. 4.
 11. PERSONS who are of one mind, compassionate, loving, pitiful, courteous and render blessing for evil and railing. 1 Peter 3. 8, 9.
 12. PERSONS who are sober, watchful, prayerful, charitable, hospitable. 1 Peter 4. 7-9.
 13. PERSONS who rejoice inasmuch as they are partakers of Christ's sufferings. 1 Peter 4. 13.
 14. PERSONS who must not suffer as murderers, thieves, evildoers or busybodies in other men's matters. 1 Peter 4. 15.
 15. PERSONS who humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time. 1 Peter 5. 6.
- QUARTUS.

Bible Studies in Genesis.

By ROBERT LEE.



Study No. 13. Gen. 4. 25-26.

Study No. 14. Gen. 5. 21-24.

The Earliest known revival.

CALLING (1) upon the name of the Lord.
(2) themselves by the name of the Lord.

A BRIGHT GEM. This is a literary gem with a dark, dark background. We read of Eve's thought of God at the birth of her third son, Seth. It was at the birth of Enos, son of Seth, that a great spiritual cleavage took place in the world between the godly and the ungodly. It was the first outward and visible separation between the descendants of Cain and Seth. This is the earliest known revival.

CALLING UPON HIS NAME. By 1 Kings 18. 24 and Psalm 116. 17 we see that calling on His name is associated with the offering up of sacrifices, and the taking of the Cup of Salvation. Therefore we have here the result of revival, viz., definite organised worship.

CALLING BY HIS NAME. "Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord" (R.V.). This is indicative of a great christening following a great divide. This act marked the division of the population into two clear sections, those known as "Children of Men" and those known as "Men of God." What an honour to bear His name. I must respond to the calling of my name by the Lord, before I can be called by His name. Study Isaiah 43, verses 1 and 7.

ENOCH. The man who walked with God.

ENOCH: (1) The man of the world.
(2) The man of God.
(3) The first recorded Preacher.
(4) First man translated.

SEVENTH. Seven is the Bible number for perfection. Lamech was the seventh in the line of Cain, and the wickedness of the Canaanites comes out more fully in him. Enoch is the seventh in the godly line, and godliness found its highest perfection in him. Enoch is referred to here, Hebrews 11. 5 and Jude 14 and 15. Only seven verses, but what a lot is compressed into so small a space.

MAN OF THE WORLD. He only "lived," i.e., existed, for 65 years. Life without God is a mere existence. The turning point in Enoch's life was the birth of his firstborn.

MAN OF GOD. "He walked with God AFTER he begat Methuselah." The birth of his first son led to him becoming a great saint. He maintained a high standard of holy living. By Malachi 2. 6 we find such a term used in describing a priest's intercourse with God in the Holy Place. Walking with God is a relic of the first Paradise. This life was lived (a) in spite of abounding corruption, (b) and a large family. (c) This life was lived for 300 years, steadfastly and perseveringly.

PREACHER. Jude 14. Living in communion with God we learn much about the future, so that he made the Second Coming of the Lord the subject of his preaching.

TRANSLATED. He was known as the man who pleased God, and then he went to Heaven without dying.

BIBLE STUDIES IN GENESIS.—Cont.

Study No. 15. Gen. 6. 1-7.

The Wickedness of the Antediluvian.

Those were days:-

- (1) of sinful self-reliance: "they chose," verse 2.
- (2) when the godly preferred outward beauty to moral beauty, verse 2.
- (3) of unity and alliance at the expense of righteousness
- (4) of awful moral deterioration - verse 5.
- (5) of mental and physical culture - verse 4.
- (6) of lawlessness 6: 13.
- (7) of Divine activity and grief, verse 6.
- (8) of faithful witnessing by the few. 2 Pet. 2: 5.

We may be inclined to pass this section of Genesis by after just a glance, but for Luke 17. 26. This New Testament Scripture invests this portion with up-to-date interest.

After the days of Enoch, the members of the Sethite line, faithful to God, became fewer and fewer until there was but one family left untainted with the prevailing corruption; the family of Noah. If there was a lack of quantity, without doubt there was real quality of spiritual life and devotion. When the line of separation between the godly and ungodly was obliterated, the descent was awful.

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THE LOVE OF GOD.

Oh! the love that passes might,
Love most pure—as radiant light,
Love so sweet, eclipsing bright,
Love surpassing, infinite.

Love, O Lord could only be,
Known most fully unto Thee,
Thine own character I see
In that love displayed to me.

Worthy of Thyself alone,
Love most wondrous has been shown,
By the gift which did atone,
To Thyself—the rebel one.

1870. H.W.T. (Barnet).

Suggestive Outlines.

THE RICH FOOL (Luke 12. 16-21).

Three terrible mistakes:—

1. He mistook himself for God.
2. He mistook his body for his soul.
3. He mistook time for eternity.

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THE DEVIL REVEALED.

1. A Roaring Lion (1 Peter 5. 8).
2. A Beguiling Serpent (2 Corinthians 11. 3).
3. An Angel of light (2 Corinthians 11. 14).

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A MAN NAMED MATTHEW.

(Matthew 9. 9; Luke 5. 27-29).

1. Matthew at his work without Christ. "Sitting at the receipt of Custom."
2. Matthew seen by Christ. "He saw a man."
3. Matthew called by Christ. "And He said unto him follow Me."
4. Matthew obeys Christ. "And he arose and followed Him."
5. Matthew leaves all for Christ. "And he left all."
6. Matthew entertains Christ. "And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house."
7. Matthew brings others to Christ. "There was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them."

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PAUL'S SEVEN WISHES IN PHILIPPIANS.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| 1. To know Christ. | Phil. 3. 10. |
| 2. To win Christ. | „ 3. 8. |
| 3. To magnify Him. | „ 1. 20. |
| 4. To be found in Him. | „ 3. 9. |
| 5. To be conformed to Him. | „ 3. 10. |
| 6. To be with Him. | „ 1. 23. |
| 7. To rejoice in Him. | „ 2. 16. |

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- Prophet** (Deut. 18. 15; Acts 3. 23).
Priest (Heb. 4. 14 and 6. 20).
King (Rev. 3. 21; Matt. 24. 30; Rev. 11. 15; Zech. 6. 13; Jer. 23. 5 and 6).



Threshed Wheat.

EDITORIAL.

"So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

"And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening: and he drank of the brook.

"And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." (1 Kings 17. 5-7.)

ELIJAH'S LONELY MINISTRY.

PART IV. ALONE AT ZAREPHATH.

ONE of the many perplexities and puzzles of the christian pathway, and one which confronts most of God's dear people, is that after having followed what was evidently, and honestly believed to be, God's mind and will, eventually "the brook dries up." In other words, the path which seemed to be the right one ends in failure or disaster. Are we to assume at such times and in such circumstances that we have mistaken the Lord's leading and come by the wrong way? By no means. God does not promise us that He will always lead in paths of success or prosperity. It is just as possible that He will lead us in a way of failure or adversity if by so doing He is able to fashion us more for His glory.

THE DIVINE POTTER uses strange implements and unthought

of ways in moulding His vessels. Where prosperity would mar and spoil the child of God shall not the Potter then use other means whereby that marring and spoiling of a choice vessel may be spared. Beloved child of God, if, and when, the brook dries up may we be given wisdom to see in that also, the way of the Lord.

In any case that was the experience of Elijah. You can imagine, perhaps better that I can describe, the feelings of the prophet, who was a man subject to like passions as we are, as he now beheld, day after day, the flowing brooklet gradually getting less and less in its supply. He had now, during a whole year, been miraculously fed and preserved. But a miracle per-

petuated soon ceases to appear a miracle. And when it begins to be regarded as a matter of course, it fails of its due impression, and God's hand in it is liable to be overlooked. There is an eastern story, of a boy having challenged his teacher to prove to him the existence of God by working a miracle. The teacher got a large vessel filled with earth, wherein he deposited a kernel in the boy's presence, and bade him pay attention. In the

place where the kernel was put, a green shoot suddenly appeared, the shoot became a stem, the stem put forth leaves and branches, which soon spread over the whole apartment. It then budded with blossoms, which dropping off, left golden fruits in their place, and in the short space of one hour there stood a noble tree in the place of the little seed.

Just for To-day.

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be.—Deut. 33. 25.

Just for to-day, my Lord, I ask,
For needed strength to do Thy will
As I perform each daily task,
And all life's varied calls fulfil.
O give me, Lord, a lowly heart,
A loyal mind, a quenchless zeal,
Thy wisdom, peace and joy impart.
And on my labours set Thy seal.

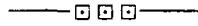
A. GARDNER.

The youth, overcome with amazement, exclaimed, "Now I know there is a God, for I have seen His power!" The teacher smiled at him, and said, "Simple child, do you only now believe? Does not what you have just beheld take place in innumerable instances, year after year, only by a slower process? But is it the less marvellous on that account?"

Are we not too often like such simple children? Suppose at rising in the morning we found

A LOAF ADDED TO OUR PROVISIONS, which we could be certain that neither we nor any human being had put there—we should then have no difficulty in saying that the Lord

The Brooks of Scripture.



I Samuel 17. 38-40; 49-51; John 18. 1-2; Numbers 13. 23-24; I Kings 17. 1-8; I Sam. 30. 8-10; Gen. 32. 22-32.

By the late CHAS. HICKMAN.



This Mss. is from shorthand notes of an address delivered by our esteemed brother in the Lord. We have purposely refrained from touching it up for press in any way as we feel sure our readers would prefer it as it came from the lips of the author, now in Christ's presence.

EACH of the above named Scriptures speak of a brook. The first is the

BROOK ELAH.

David went down there to obtain the stones with which he could meet Goliath. He was the one whom God had chosen and fitted; there was no one suitable to meet Goliath but David. In this respect David is a striking type of the Lord Jesus. There was no one who could meet the power of the enemy and meet the claims of Divine justice except the One whom God had appointed. There was no one competent to meet those claims but He Who was God; and so the Eternal Son came into manhood, ordained of God. He came here to overthrow the power of the enemy and to deliver God's people.

We are told that David went to the brook and chose five smooth stones. Perhaps he chose **five** in his responsibility as a servant; but my impression is that there is a deeper reason. Goliath had four sons, and when David went forth to meet the giant he carried sufficient artillery, not simply to overthrow Goliath, but all the family of the giant. The Lord Jesus Christ, when He rose from the dead was the Mighty Victor over all the forces of the devil. Satan, the wicked spirits under him, and all the hosts of Hell were defeated by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are told that David went alone. There were two armies looking on; on one side the army of the Philistines, and on the other side the army of Israel. David went alone into that valley to meet the giant. Let me say, when the Lord Jesus Christ went to Calvary, He was alone. He had to bear the wrath of God alone; He does everything, or He does nothing. He alone met the power of the enemy.

David hastened to meet the giant. He hurled that stone that struck the giant in the forehead, and the giant measured his length on the ground. When David had cut off the giant's **head**, and the Israelites saw that he was dead, shouts of triumph rent the skies. The Lord

Jesus Christ went against a greater giant than Goliath. He went against the giants of hell, but He did not leave the battlefield until He could raise the shout of triumph, "It is finished!"

David took the giant's head, and carried it to Jerusalem, the city of the great King. What a triumphal procession it was—every step a step of triumph. In David here, we have a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in His mighty victory. We are told He went on high and took with Him a multitude of captives. What I understand by the Lord Jesus leading a multitude of captives and making a show of them openly is this: It is not that He went down to some place below, liberated the saints there, and took them up above. The Holy Ghost is using a figure which was quite familiar to those whom the Apostle was addressing. When a general went to war and was successful, he would take the king whom he had conquered, and the mightiest captains of the army, and the greatest citizens of that land, and he would lead them in chains behind his chariot wheel. Now the Lord Jesus was the Mighty Victor risen from the dead. In figure He takes Satan, death, Hades, all that was against His people, captive. He led them in triumphal procession. He made a show of them openly.

After David had won the battle, he became the centre of attraction. The women came and said, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." The Lord Jesus Christ said, "If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all unto Me." He did not mean by that, that He would draw all without exception; this would be Universalism, and scripture proves that multitudes will perish. What the Lord meant was all, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, rich or poor. The time is coming when that One Who was lifted up, will be the centre of attraction to the whole universe; except the damned in hell. Angels and men will all own Him as the worthy One. I love to read Rev. v. There you see Him in heaven, the centre of attraction. The angels are there,

and the elders are there; the angels are ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands. Yes; **but Christ is the centre.** Every voice speaks **His** praise, "**Thou** art worthy, for **Thou** wast slain." Now I ask every person here, "Is Christ the centre of attraction to you? He is to every true Christian. Deep down in your heart can you say you love Him? If you do **not** love Him you may believe all these doctrines, but you will go to hell. There is no hope for anyone who is not attracted to the Person of Christ. If any man love **not** our Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema—maranatha."

II. Now I would call attention to the second brook (John 18. 1-2). David filled with the power of the Spirit was conscious that he was going to be a victor and it cost him nothing. What about the Lord Jesus? We are told He went over the

BROOK KEDRON.

He was on His way to Gethsemane and Calvary. He was going to meet the power of the enemy. **Why did He go to Gethsemane before He went to Calvary?** He was going to measure the cup of wrath which He was about to drink. We sometimes offer to do things and we do not know what it involves. A man may offer to die for his fellow, but when he begins to understand what is involved in death, he may withdraw. The Lord Jesus knelt down and prayed, and as He prayed He sweat as it were great drops of blood. What caused that agony? He was looking at the cup of wrath which He was about to drink. He measured it fully. No created being could have measured it because the depths are fathomless to the creature. If you can say you are saved through the death of Christ, can you estimate the **greatness of the cost to Him?** Never let 24 hours pass without a visit to Gethsemane and Calvary. If we were to apprehend the vastness of the price, our hearts would be drawn out to Him, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mighty Victor.

When the Lord Jesus went to the Cross, He thought of us individually. Never forget that. It was not simply that the Lord thought of all His people, but He thought of each individual. The Apostle could say, "The Son of God loved **me**, and gave Himself for me."

The question has been raised, "Is it right that the innocent should die for the guilty?" It is not fair that an innocent creature should die for a guilty one, but that is not the Gospel. The Gospel is that the Creator, the One Who gave the law at Mount Sinai, came into manhood, and suffered for the creature. Now if

He saw fit to do so He had the right. Then some very shallow-minded people have raised the question, "How could the death of one atone for the sin of millions?" The answer lies in the Dignity of the Person. A man is of far more value than a regiment of worms. What about the Creator compared with the worms of the earth?

III. The third brook to which we would direct attention is the

BROOK ESCHOL.

I desire to connect that with the fruit of the victory. The spies returned with grapes, pomegranates and figs. Why did they bring the fruit back to the wilderness? It was to encourage the people to go into the land to possess it. When at last they entered the land, they did so by crossing the Jordan. Now the Jordan gives us a type, not so much of Christ's death and resurrection for us, but of **our death and resurrection with Christ.** In His death, I died; in His burial, I was put out of God's sight. We are raised up together, and seated in the heavens in Christ, by and by to be seated there with Him in Person. Now every Christian in **God's account** has crossed the Jordan. That is true of you as being **in Christ.** You are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavens **in Christ.** It is a totally different thing to cross the Jordan **experimentally.** What stimulates you in your christian pathway? What gives you vigour and energy? Some will say "I know that my sins are forgiven. I know that the Lord Jesus will never let me perish. I am quite sure that one day I shall reach heaven." If that is all you can say, you have not crossed the Jordan experimentally. The man who has crossed Jordan experimentally apprehends in measure **the purpose of God.** Suppose I were to ask each of you what is the purpose of God, I am afraid some of you could not tell me. Let me tell you. Before the worlds were created, God had purposed that His Son in Manhood should head up all things. But not only so; there were to be companions linked with Him, who should be in perfect suitability.

Here is the Eternal Son of God in Manhood placed at the head of all things. After the Millennium has run its course, Christ heads up the New Creation; but we are going to be with Him, companions in perfect suitability.

When the Man Christ Jesus administrates for God throughout the universe, we are to be with Him, sharers in all His acquired glory.

If we did but apprehend the purpose of God, everything down here, however good, would

appear insignificant in comparison. Thank God for home, for love and for temporal mercies, but here is something overwhelming. I am to be a companion of the Son of God! This is to be my portion throughout the Eternal Ages.

I want, if I can, to bring a little of the fruit to tempt some who have not experimentally crossed the Jordan. You are brought into the perfect favour in which the Lord Jesus Christ stands, in Manhood, before the Father. It is not simply that you are forgiven and are going to heaven. Angels will be in heaven. You are brought into the same place of favour which the Lord Jesus Christ has. I would say with all reverence, that the Lord Jesus was in haste to make this known to the disciples; He says, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them: 'I ascend unto My Father, and your Father, to My God and your God.'" "Go to My brethren," not to My apostles. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. "He who sanctifies, and they who are sanctified are all of one." The Lord Jesus beholds us according to divine counsels; He sees us as we shall be, the perfect workmanship of God; and as such He sees perfect suitability for His companionship.

This, of course, involves that we are the children of God and the heirs of God. Now there is no love like the love of relationship. God could have saved us had He seen fit, without making us His children; but He says, "I am going to do the greatest thing I can do. They shall have the dignity of sonship. They shall be companions of My Son." We are born of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in our hearts to produce the consciousness of relationship, so that even now we enter consciously into this position of favour. But then, it means too, that we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. If we think of Christ in Manhood, God has made Him His glorious Heir. If we think of Christ in Deity, God can give Him nothing. He created all things, and being God created all things for Himself. But in Manhood God has given the universe to Jesus and we are His joint-heirs. I do not think there is a created being can tell you what that means. Think of the universe, with its thousands of suns, probably each with planets coursing around it. Everything belongs to Christ, and everything belongs to us as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. We need to rise to the dignity of being blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. Very shortly the Lord is coming, and we shall enter upon the inheritance with Him.

Now some one may be saying, "What you say is very grand about the future, but what about the present? Does God care about me now?" This will bring us to

THE BROOK CHERITH.

(To be continued next month).

Deity Manifested.

THE deity of our Lord Jesus Christ is openly avowed in more than one passage, both of the Old Testament and of the New. The witness of contemporaries, such as John the Baptist, Peter, Thomas, and Mary, is quite conclusive on the point. The works, which He did and the miracles He showed, leave no doubt to the devout mind. The fact that He never once had to withdraw or make an apology for a statement, is evidence not to be gainsaid.

But in this short article it is my intention to apply a test in another direction to establish beyond a doubt the truth that the Man of Nazareth was no less a person than God manifest in flesh.

His fame as a great teacher and as a new prophet had spread with tremendous rapidity from Dan to Beersheba, and learned scribes and Pharisees had gone from Jerusalem to Galilee to make enquiries, as the religious leaders of the people. There seated in the courtyard of a Capernaum house, they listened to such discourse as had never greeted their ears before. Suddenly a noise is heard above their heads and they look up to see an extraordinary sight, nothing less than the removal of part of the roof and the lowering of a mat, upon which lies a man. This strange phenomenon continues until the paralytic rests at the feet of Jesus our Lord.

Now, note the words of the evangelists. "When He saw their faith." Stay, reader, did you ever see anyone's faith? I trow not, You have seen evidences of faith, you have heard expressions of faith, but faith itself you have not seen and you cannot see it. God only can see faith. Must Jesus, our Lord, then be possessed of the full Deity because He saw their faith? Assuredly He must.

Note next, if you please, His words to the paralytic. "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." Human understanding could grasp the fact that he was in deep need of bodily healing. But who, that was merely human, could have read that soul longing for the forgiveness of his sins? Only one possessed of Deity could have diagnosed such a state of affairs. Christ Jesus, our Lord, read the man's inward and intimate thoughts, thus asserting His Godhead.

The religious leaders, after the manner of their kind, became uneasy in their minds. No words escaped their lips, no hint was given of the thoughts that their well-trained minds conceived. But again He read them. He knew their thoughts. He perceived their inmost calculations. Who but one possessed of Deity could have done this?

W. H. BEGBIE.

The Divine Purpose in Human Life.

By J. W. ASHBY.

BRIEFLY expressed, the divine purpose is
“CONFORMITY TO TYPE,”

otherwise, likeness to the Lord Jesus Christ, according to Romans 8. 29; and this, not for man's sake alone, but for the exaltation and satisfaction of the Lord Himself, “that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” The purpose is also stated in 1 Cor. 15. 49, “As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” (It may be well to note in passing, that many ancient authorities read “let us also bear,” etc.—suggesting the co-operation of the redeemed sinner in the fulfilment of the divine purpose). This great purpose explains our Lord's words to Nicodemus (John 3. 6), “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” And the “Shorter Catechism” is entirely scriptural, when it says in the answer to its first question, “The chief end of man is to glorify God, and enjoy Him for ever.” Obedience to His will is to glorify Him, and likeness to Him is essential to any enjoyment of Him; for even among our fellow-creatures some similarity of disposition and tastes is necessary to the enjoyment of one another's society; and therefore it follows that conformity to the likeness of Christ, while chiefly for the Creator's own satisfaction and glory, is also necessary to His creatures' joy and satisfaction. It will be obvious, however, to any thoughtful person, that our gracious God will use many and various methods to accomplish this, His purpose of wisdom and grace; so for the present, we will confine our thoughts to one of these methods, which we may call,

“CONFORMITY BY MEANS OF PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE.”

as stated in 2 Cor. 3. 18. “We all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image.” And this principle is beautifully illustrated in the life of David, especially in the incidents referred to in 1 Samuel 22. 1-2.

All my readers will doubtless recognise in David a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, and will also remember the words of 1 Cor. 10. 11, “All these things happened unto them for ensamples (types) and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world (age) are come”; so that we are expected to learn from the types of the past, that which shall help forward to their accomplishment the divine purposes in our lives. At the time of which the record speaks (1 Sam. 22. 1-2) David was a rejected king, and just previously had feigned himself a madman, in order to escape from among the enemies of his people, and had now taken refuge in the cave Adullam. But even under these conditions a number of men were attracted to him; and some of these provided in one respect a contrast to the experience of the Lord Jesus, for we are told that “his brethren and all his father's house went down to him,” whereas in the case of the great Antitype we read, “neither did His brethren believe in Him” (John 7. 5). But, as then it was necessary literally to “go down” into the wilderness to find David, so now it is still necessary for a seeking sinner to “go down” in his self-judgment, and humble himself in self-condemnation at the feet of the Saviour of sinners. We notice, too, that **all** of certain classes were attracted to David, **“everyone** that was in distress, and **everyone** that was in debt, and **everyone** that was discontented gathered themselves unto him.” Not merely an individual here and there, in such conditions, but **everyone** of such gathered to David! There may have been many others who had some liking for David, perhaps admiration for his prowess in defeating Goliath, but according to the history, it was those with a sense of need, who **all** sought out David as their God-given deliverer. They, at least, would not rest till they found themselves in the presence of David. And sinners who have been awakened by God to know their guilt and need, must needs seek with similar earnestness, an acquaintance with the Lord Jesus; and it must be added, only such do really seek Him. Like David's followers, it is their need of which they are chiefly conscious, so that the famous Dr. Arnold was quite right when he said, “Christ died for my sins can never really be believed by

one who has had no care for sin beforehand, and cannot be really believed by one without making him care for sin as never before." Besides this, it was to

DAVID HIMSELF

that they were attracted, as the one whom they needed. Not the cave in which he sheltered, nor his friends already gathered there, but the living person attracted them; and thus it is to-day, not fellowship with the people of God, nor membership in a church, nor observance of ordinances, that can meet a sinner's need, but only a personal Saviour, Who can love, and be loved by, a needy sinner. It may be of interest to refer, in passing, to Gen. 49. 10, "And unto Him shall the gathering of the people be," and to note especially the rendering of the R.V., "Unto Him shall the obedience of the people be!" So that in prophecy and type, the Holy Spirit foretells the attraction of sinners to the Lord Jesus, and the resulting obedience on the part of such when received and blessed by Him. But there are two remarkable results of this gathering to David which we must now notice, and which may be described as

"TWO GROWTHS,"

for David grew and his followers also grew.

I. David grew, "he became a captain over them"; he did not compel them at the point of the sword to swear allegiance to him; neither did they elect him to be their chief, as might have happened in these modern days; but "he became," he just grew into their hearts; they had sought him as helper and deliverer, and now, having come to know him, his person awakens first admiration and then love, and it becomes apparent to each one of them, that there is only one David, and that none but he can be captain over them! They are now bound to David by two bonds, and that bond which was first has become second; for they are bound to him first by what he is, and afterwards by what he did for them. And here it may be well to pause and ask ourselves about the bonds which bind us to the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, we love Him because He first loved us; but do we not often only thank Him for what He has done, delivering us from threatened judgment, and transforming us from enemies into friends? We should also thank Him for what He is. Do we sometimes borrow such language as that of John Lavater's hymn, and say,

"Lord Jesus Christ grow Thou in me
And all things else recede!
My heart be daily nearer Thee,
From sin be daily freed.
More of Thy glory let me see
Thou Holy, Wise and True;
I would Thy living image be,
In joy and sorrow too."?

May it indeed be so, for writer and reader.

II. But, secondly, they also grew! The results of their living with David may be traced, at least in part, in 2 Samuel, chapter 23. Here we have the record of a time about 40 years later. They have been eventful years for David and for his followers, with enemies to fight, and with responsibilities to be borne, as servants and lovers of David; but their difficulties, like ours to-day, did but provide opportunities to prove their love to David, by imitating his prowess, and in self-sacrificing devotion to him, to seek the welfare of their fellows. David's "last words" as his life draws to a close, have been recorded telling of grateful praise and thanksgiving to God, and then follows a list of names of some of his followers, and an account of what they did in the service of their king. David himself had needed their courageous hearts and strong arms; and David's people had needed men who could fight for them, and for their food when enemies would rob them of it. And so we read (2 Samuel 23. 8) of one who fought against 800 enemies; of another, (verse 10) who fought till "his hand was weary and his hand clave unto the sword, and the Lord wrought a great victory that day," and the rest of the people had only to collect the spoil; of another (verses 11 and 12) who when, their enemies would carry away the peoples' food (the lentiles) stood alone in the defence of that field of lentiles, and again, "the Lord wrought a great victory;" thus reminding us that whatever service may be rendered to our David, or to His beloved people for His sake, is only accomplished by the Lord's enabling, and to Him must all the praise be given. But we have yet one other example of faithful service thus recorded, and we may well call it, in a very real sense, the best of all. This was not merely fighting, either to drive out enemies or to save the peoples' food, but we are told (verse 13) of three men who, having heard David express a longing for a drink of water from

THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM,

in spite of the fact that the Philistines were at the time encamped upon that very ground, risked their lives in order to gratify their Captain's wish, and having fought their way through to the well, brought to David the water he longed for! It is not however to be wondered at, that David in view of such evident devotion to himself, felt unable to drink the water; it was too precious, and must be made an offering to God! Thus we see, wonderfully preserved for "our admonition" the effect on these men, of having lived with David, of having learned to love David, as they copied his example in their conflicts, and in their care for his people, and especially in thus risking their lives (not because he commanded it) but to gratify his mere wish! How real was the transformation wrought out by their contact with David, and especially by their love for David, which love it was that led them thus to imitate him. And now, is it necessary to remind ourselves of One Who says "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matt. 11. 29-30)? Of Whom, too, it is written, He "pleased not Himself" (Rom. 15. 3), and "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2. 5). Or is it necessary to remind ourselves of the real conflict to which Christ's servants and soldiers are now called (see Eph. 6. 10-18) and of His words to such, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2. 10)? Or, have we overlooked the fact that the food of the people in God's precious Word, is in danger of pollution by error, and of being taken away altogether from starving souls? So that not only our earthly king, but his subjects also, need to be in reality "defenders of the faith"; or, have we (saddest possibility) never learned that our gracious Saviour and Lord

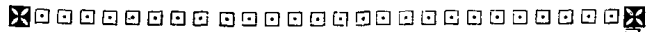
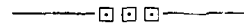
EXPECTS AND LOOKS

for similar devotion on our part, to that of David's men? So that His wish is law to us? So that we truly "desire" (or "wish" or "will") to lose our lives for His sake? (Matt. 16. 25). And so that, by and by, it may be said of us at the end of the days of conflict, and of all our opportunities to serve a rejected King among His enemies, "they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12. 11)? Has our acquaintance with David's greater Son, ever growing and increasing and deepening, led us to desire above all else, the ability to please Him, to bring to Him some satisfaction, which

will be, even to Him, what the water of the well of Bethlehem was to David, a very precious evidence of loving devotion, and worthy of offering to His Father and our Father? Then, brethren, is the

DIVINE PURPOSE

being carried forward in our lives, and in these brief fleeting days of our pilgrimage here, the eternal plan of conforming to the image of His Son, a redeemed people for His praise, is indeed being wrought out, and some day it shall be possible to write over our lives, "As they once bore the image of the earthy (of the first man), so now they bear the image of the heavenly (the Second Man), the Lord from heaven."



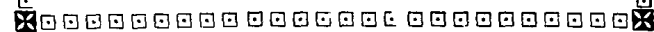
"Meet for the Master's Use."

2 Tim. ii. 21.

The garden had to be watered
At the close of a sultry day,
And the Gardener looked for a vessel
The drooping leaves to spray.
He noticed an empty vessel
Without beauty of shape or design;
An ordinary earthenware pitcher,
Not coloured with even a line.
Another, more delicate vessel,
With a daintily sculptured form
Was standing, half full, near the pitcher,
On the Gardener's well-kept lawn.
He glanced at this well-formed vessel,
And stooped to take it up;
But He saw it would need to be emptied
Ere filled from His sparkling cup.
Reluctantly then He replaced it
With its self-gathered water still there,
And turned to the plainer vessel
His own pure water to bear.
The earthenware pitcher was ready,
And the Gardener could use it so,
To freshen the drooping fruit-trees
And help the young shoots grow.
Oh! make me that empty pitcher,
Ready at hand for His needs;
So empty that always the Gardener
Can fill from His own cool meads.

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L. J. Vallance.



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Principles of Scripture Interpretation.

—□□□—
By H. DENNETT.

Part III.

The Setting of the New Testament.

THE simplest and youngest reader of the Bible cannot fail to be impressed with the profound distinction between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Luther has very quaintly likened the two main sections of Scripture to the two men who carried the bunch of

GRAPES FROM ESCHOL.

He that went first knew that he was carrying a precious burden and could feel the weight of it, but could neither see it or the man behind. The second man saw both the bunch and the man that was going before. 1 Peter 1. 10-11 makes the position of the Old Testament writers clear in the light of this.

As far as is known there is no divine order to the books of the New Testament as in some of the oldest manuscripts the order varies, but it is equally important to see the precise setting of the books in this part of the Bible as it is in the Old Testament.

There is no better known or more wonderful case of precision of setting and intentional variation than that which is seen in the four gospels. Here is a wonderful field of study for the eager student. So perfect is the accuracy of the Scripture that there is not a parallel verse or even word that differs in any of the Gospels but that will yield a precious truth if carefully searched out. Below are given some of the better known and outstanding characteristics of these four accounts of the path on earth of the Lord Jesus.

MATTHEW was an unpatriotic tax-gatherer who had served the enemies of his people, yet was used to write of the Lord as the **KING OF ISRAEL**. He writes specially to Jews and therefore great stress is laid on the fulfilment of the Old Testament predictions. Zech. 9. 9 gives the setting of this Gospel "**Behold thy King.**"

MARK the unprofitable servant (Acts 13. 13 John Mark) writes of **THE PERFECT SERVANT**. He writes for Romans, so his account is vivid and mobile. "Straightway" is his favourite word. Isa. 42. 1 "**Behold My Servant.**" Both Matthew and Mark quote Ps. 22. 1 and so set forth the Trespass and Sin-offering aspect of the sacrifice of Calvary.

LUKE the Gentile writes to Gentile Greeks of **THE SON OF MAN**—the meal offering, the perfect walk of the Lord Jesus. Zech. 6. 12 "**Behold the Man,**" is the theme of Luke. Ps. 22. 1 is not quoted here or in John.

JOHN the beloved disciple writes of **THE SON OF GOD**, the burnt-offering. Written much later than the first three gospels, it is thought to be intended to correct any errors that had arisen up to that time.

In reading **THE ACTS** it is helpful to see that not only did the early believers but slowly and grudgingly give up their Judaism, but there was also a definite party who set their face against the slightest relaxation of the rigour of the law. This, too, even for the Gentile converts, let alone the Jews that were born under it. This will account for the rather curious situations that are found in the book. See specially chapters 11. 2; 15. 1; 21. 20 and Gal. 2. 12, 15.

It is not our purpose to deal with the New Testament books in such detail as the Old Testament, for they are generally better known. We will here take one very important instance of the value of studying the setting of a book—the Hebrews epistle. More than one large body in Christendom definitely teach from this book that it is possible for a believer to fall away and be ultimately lost—relying mainly on certain well known passages in chapters 6 and 10. This is just to show how important it is to have a clear grasp of the scope and teaching of such a book as a whole.

If Hebrews is read in conjunction with the activities of "**they of the circumcision**" already referred to in Acts, and it is further seen that those addressed were **Jews** who had professed faith in Christ, then we are a long way on the road to a correct interpretation. The Jews alone had a religion that could claim a divine origin, but it had become corrupted by long tradition. Furthermore, God had spoken since in His Son (Heb. 1. 1), and though many Jews had professed faith in this new revelation they found it very hard to break away from the ingrained teaching of childhood.

In addition to this constant tendency to slide back to ceremonial forms (which would be fostered by the "circumcision teachers") these Jews who had professed faith in Christ, instead of receiving any visible benefits from their confession, rather incurred the bitter enmity of their still unbelieving fellow Jews. They lost their status as Israelites and were counted as traitors to their race. Under the law obedience to God brought temporal blessing, and they were therefore at a loss to understand the opposite happening. Under the stress of it all some were inclined to turn back from an invisible Christ to a visible Judaism; to rely on the blood of bulls and of goats rather than the Blood of Christ. It was to awaken such backsliders to the sense of the reality of Christianity that the Hebrews epistle was written, and a three-fold appeal is made to them:

1. **To their intelligence**—by telling of the complete superiority of Christ to the old order.
2. **To their conscience**—by revealing the dangers of apostasy.
3. **To their affections**—by telling so fully of the sufferings of Christ.

The key to the whole book is this—those who **DID** turn back thereby demonstrated that whatever their profession, they never possessed life in Christ.

It is of the utmost importance to lay hold of the dispensational distinctions between the Old Testament and the New Testament. The following contrast will illustrate the point. **Stephen** spoke thus of his murderers, "Lay not their sin to their charge." **Nehemiah** prayed concerning the opposers of his day, "Hear, O God for we are despised, and turn their reproach on their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of their captivity. and let NOT their sin be blotted out from before Thee." On a line with this are the "imprecatory" Psalms such as 3. 7; 7. 6; 10. 15; 17. 13; 18. 42, and many others.

The point of distinction is this. The christian **of this dispensation** (as was Stephen) looks for a Saviour who shall take him **OUT** of this scene altogether and bless him in heaven. Nehemiah and the Jews, **both past and future**, look for deliverance **ON EARTH** in Palestine through the Lord coming back—not into the air, but on to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14. 4). His Coming is to set up the kingdom and reign, **but before that can be**, everything that offends **must be put away and judged**. The Jew therefore knows that judgment on his enemies **must precede** his own blessing (Note Rev. 16. 6)

Words of Wisdom.

"No man can safely command, but he that has learned willingly to obey."

"No man can safely speak, but he that can willingly hold his peace."

"Faith and love are mother and daughter. Faith is God's favourite child, resting quietly in God like the child in its mother's arms."

"Unless your heart is out of the world, you are of no use to God in the world."

"The Spirit of God is not a great divine influence that we are to lay hold of and use, but a divine Person who desires to lay hold of us as instruments through whom He can work."

"In the present broken state, what is needed is not the gift of tongues, but the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit."

"The first requisite in a servant is acquaintance with his master's will, the second is absolute obedience to that will."

"The usefulness of an individual believer depends on whether he continues to grow in the knowledge of God."

"It is better to seek power to obey, than to seek excuses for disobedience."

"Rightly used, our gold may become a portion of our crown hereafter."

"In judging others a man laboureth in vain, often erreth and easily sinneth: but in judging and examining himself, he always laboureth fruitfully."

"Pray that God may take away everything that hinders Him from manifesting His presence and saving power in us."

"Service is the rent we pay for our life on earth."

"Keep conscience whole without a crack. If there be a hole in it, so that it take in water at a leak, it will with difficulty mend again. It is a dainty delicate creature and a rare piece of the workmanship of your Maker, and therefore deal gently with it, and keep it entire."

Bible Studies in Genesis.

By ROBERT LEE.

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Study No. 16. **Gen. 6. 8-11.**

An Ancient Preacher of Righteousness.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| (1) His Message | (2 Pet. 2. 5). |
| (2) His Qualifications | (Gen. 6. 8 & 9). |
| (3) His Reliance on God's Word | (Heb. 11. 7). |
| (4) His Reverence ("Moved with fear") | (Heb. 11. 7). |
| (5) His Enduement | (1 Pet. 3. 18). |
| (6) His Lack of Success. | |

PREACHER. By 2 Peter 2. 5 we learn that Noah was a Preacher, and that his message was righteousness. He himself had "found grace," and he was in consequence "a just man." That is to say that the righteousness which became his by faith, he proclaimed. Enoch preached judgment; Noah preached righteousness.

He was thus qualified to preach righteousness. He relied on God's Word, and was reverent. The fear that moved him was, as R.V. of Heb. 11. 7, a "godly fear."

ENDUEMENT. 1 Peter 3. 18 shows that he preached in the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet his ministry was signally unsuccessful. Not a single convert was granted him, unless we count his wife and family, seven in all. It may have been that the preacher's sons undid all their father's preaching. What an awful hindrance to a preacher is an ungodly family.

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Study No. 17. **Gen. 6.**

The Ark.

THE ARK WAS

- (1) Imperishable (14).
- (2) Fragrant.
- (3) Sacrificial.
- (4) Perfect.
- (5) Roomy (14 to 16).
- (6) Light (16).
- (7) Inclusive (19).
- (8) Satisfying (21).

NOAH'S FAITH. In obedience to God, Noah began to prepare an Ark for the saving of a family (verse 18) he had not as yet. He was 500 years old when his first son was born (Gen. 5. 32). He was 600 years old when the Flood came (7. 11). He was building the Ark 120 years (6. 3), therefore began 20 years before the birth of his firstborn.

SIZE OF THE ARK. It was ample for all needs. It was about the size of the Great Eastern, nearly as long and about half the width of St. Paul's Cathedral. Naval architects have found the proportions of Noah's Ark to be ideal, and have pronounced it to be a masterpiece when its *raison d'être* was considered.

"THOU MY ARK OF SAFETY." As a picture of Christ it is suggestive. It was made of **imperishable wood** (gopher wood resembled Cyprus or Cedar), so He is eternal; it was **fragrant**, and was not His life so? It was red wood, reminding us of Sacrifice. Their safety lay in the red-wood home. It is not in the Incarnation but the Atonement we find shelter. It was **Perfect** (within and without). Roomy (14 and 16). Light (16) and only one window, and it was at the top all around. All in the Ark had to look up. It was inclusive, for it found room and gave shelter to clean and unclean. There was satisfaction there, for ample food (21) was provided.

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Study No. 18. **Gen. 7.**

The Deluge.

- (1) **THREE REASONS FOR BELIEVING THE DELUGE WAS UNIVERSAL, AND NOT LIMITED.**

- (a) Testimony of Scripture.
- (b) " " History.
- (c) " " Geology.

- (2) **SUNDRY LESSONS:—**

- (a) First "come" in the Bible (7. 1).
- (b) Seven days' grace.
- (c) Windows of Heaven.

FACT NOT FICTION. That the Deluge was fact not fiction is clearly seen:

(1) **SCRIPTURE IS EMPHATIC ON THIS POINT.** If not universal, no need of birds to have entered the Ark, for they could have flown to dry ground on other continents (7. 3). Note "All the high hills that were under the whole heaven" (19). When the Ark rested it was on Ararat, which is 17,700 feet above the sea.

If you wonder where all the water came from, remember that science has calculated that, were all the moisture in the air precipitated to the earth it would cover the earth to a depth of 30 feet. The 15 cubits of c. 7. 20 would be 20 or 30 feet, and that apart from the assistance of the fountains of the deep (7. 11). Modern science declares that if the earth were level, there is enough water in the seas to cover the earth to a depth of two miles.

(2) **HISTORY.** Almost every human race under the sun has a tradition of a flood.

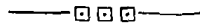
(3) **GEOLOGY.** Many geologists are now admitting that there has been a universal deluge since man appeared on the earth.

SUNDRY LESSONS.

(1) The first "Come" in the Bible (7. 1) is one of Salvation and Communion. "Come" not "go." The Lord was there.

(2) The Lord gave those outside extra seven days' grace (7. 10) before He shut the door.

WINDOWS OF HEAVEN OPENED. 1st in Judgment (7. 11). 2nd Blessing of Holy Spirit (Luke 3. 21). 3rd to give a comforting and a saving sight of the Lord Jesus (Acts 7. 56). 4th for wonderful blessing here and now (Malachi 3. 10).



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Bible Difficulties.

QUES.—In Ecclesiastes ix. 5 we read "the dead know not anything." Does this suggest that after death the soul becomes unconscious?

ANS.—The passage suggests nothing of the kind. The standpoint of the Book of Ecclesiastes is earth. The writer is occupied from first to last with things "under the sun." Concerning all such matter the dead know nothing. A man may have been the head of a vast business concern during his life-time, but of its present conditions he knows nothing, and the same is true in connection with all the relationships and interests of earth. The dead man, whether sinner or saint, has left them behind for ever.

Many Scriptures clearly teach the consciousness of the soul after death. In Luke xx. 37-38, the Lord affirms that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were living men when God spake to Moses out of the bush "He is not God of the dead, but of the living for all live unto Him." The following passages speak of conversations in the disembodied state—Luke xvi. 19-31: Isa. xiv. 9-10: Ezek. xxvii. 21. The Apostle would hardly say "to depart and to be with Christ is very far better" (Phil. i. 23) if he expected to pass into a condition of unconsciousness. Manifestly he looked for deeper enjoyment of His company and His love when all earthly limitations were left behind. See also 2 Cor. v. 6-8: Rev. vi. 9-11 may also be studied in connection with this subject.

W. W. FEREDAY.

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Precious Portions.

Collected by **QUARTUS.**

"How precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God, great is the sum of them"—Ps. 139. 17.

Believers deal too little with the **infinitude** of God. Hence the tendency to "limit the Holy One of Israel."

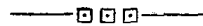
His thought of redeeming us was a great thought; His thought of making us divine by the regeneration of the Holy Ghost is a great thought; His thought of bringing us to glory to enjoy Him fully and for ever is a great thought. All these thoughts of God are as great as they are precious, and as precious as they are great.

O God, when I read Thy heart in the cross, in the wounds, in the tears, in the anguish, in the blood of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, how precious are Thy thoughts unto me! Thoughts that planned and accomplished my redemption, by an expedient so vast, and at a cost so precious.

Blessed is it to trace a Father's thoughts of us in our providential mercies; to feel that this good has come, this mercy has been bestowed, this table spread, this want supplied, this pressure met, this evil averted, by God's providential thought of us. Oh, how precious are these thoughts to one who lives upon a Father's bounty, who can trace a Father's hand, feel a Father's heart, and hear a Father's voice responsive to the petition,

"Give us this day our daily bread."

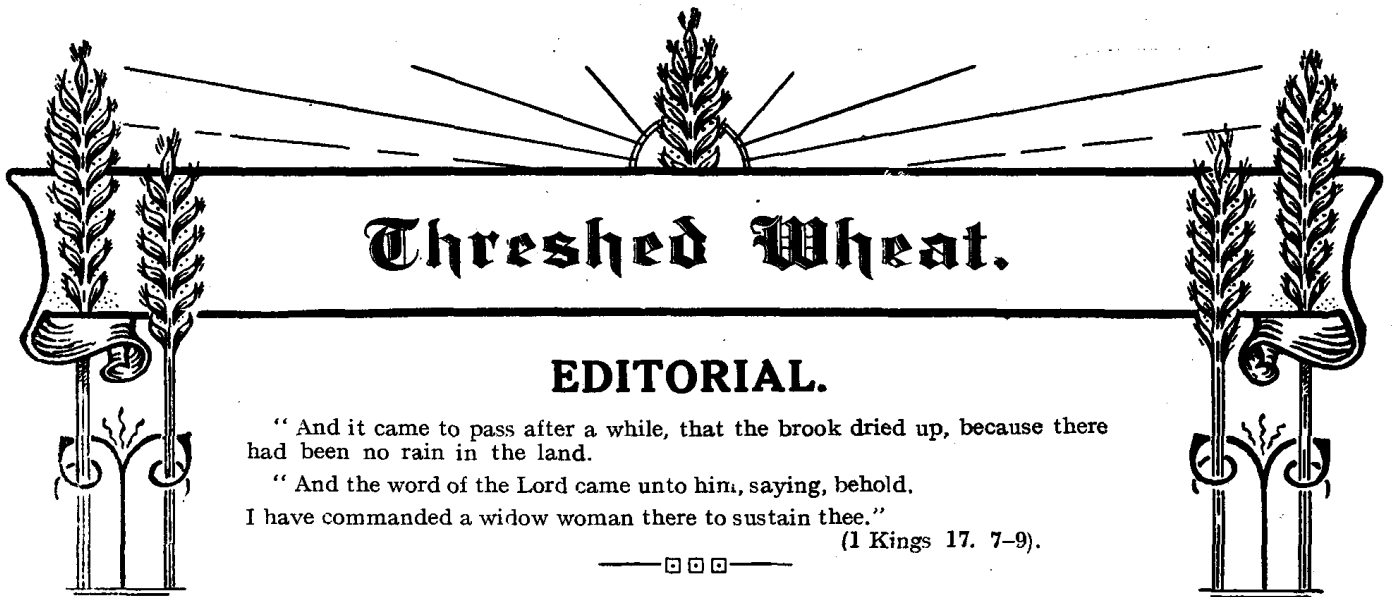
There is another peculiar stage of Christian experience in which the soul experiences the preciousness of God's thoughts. We refer to the season of mental disquietude and depression, it may be of despondency and despair. Oh, is it not then soothing and precious to be reminded that your heavenly Father has thoughts of you, your High Priest in heaven has thoughts of you, the Holy Spirit—the Comforter has thoughts of you. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil." "I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands, thy walls are continually before Me" (Isa. 49. 16).



Suggestive Subjects.

Acts 8. Christ sees the first movement of a soul toward Him—"Reading the Scriptures." He sends the most successful preacher of the day to help him.

Acts 9. He sees the first movement of a soul toward Him—"Behold, he prayeth." He sends a man who knew intimacy with Him to help him.



Threshed Wheat.

EDITORIAL.

“ And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

“ And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, behold.

I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.”

(1 Kings 17. 7-9).

ELIJAH'S LONELY MINISTRY.

PART V.

“THE BROOK DRIED UP”

and, so to speak, a prop of Elijah's faith collapsed. **But** the God of the brook remained, and what matters if creature streams **do** run dry if the Creator of all streams remains? May we learn then from this instructive word that the Giver is greater than the gifts He gives, and if to-day, our brook is running low and maybe has just dried up, look up, for God still lives. He who previously said, “**I have commanded** the ravens to feed thee **there**” can now say, “**I have commanded** a widow woman **there** to sustain **thee**.” God cares, beloved, and He is still Jehovah-Jireh “The Lord will provide.” Depend upon it, God never dries our brook up, unless He has a better one in store for us.

We do well to note here that it was not until the brook **had** dried up that the Word of the Lord came again to Elijah. The flesh longs to **know before the time** what God intends to do, but for the exercise of faith it is essential that we know **not**, for the spiritual pathway is one of **trust** from first to last, even though we cannot trace. God told Abraham to go out, not knowing **whither** he went—he believed God and went. God promised Abraham a son, but did not tell him how such a miracle would happen. Abraham believed God although he didn't know **how** it would come to pass. His son was given. God told Abraham to take that son—Isaac—and offer him. Not that God wanted Isaac's life—He desired rather Abraham's heart. Not knowing **why** God should ask this, he nevertheless believed God and obeyed. These three examples of faith should help us to yield complete obedience to our God, even though we cannot understand what He has in mind for us.

Now the brook **has** dried up, and now also comes the Word of the Lord saying, “Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell **there**: behold **I have commanded** a widow woman **there** to sustain thee.” What a reward for patient waiting upon God! As the brook gradually got lower we might have been tempted to take some rash step or make some hurried plans of our own, but “He that believeth (hath faith in his God) shall not make haste” (Isa. 28. 16). So Elijah waits, and help now arrives, but in a strange manner. Strange for two reasons. Firstly, because of the place he is sent to, and secondly, because of the person.

GET THEE TO ZAREPHATH.

This was the native country of Jezebel, King Ahab's wicked consort, and in their search for the missing prophet we may be sure Zarephath had full instructions to report any visitation by the man of God. Yet to Zarephath Elijah is sent, and he arose and went, for does he not know that “not a single shaft can hit till the God of Love sees fit.” What matters whether it be Ahab's Court or Jezebel's house, if God commands we are safe in obeying His voice and doing His bidding. But was it not equally strange that God should command a **widow** woman, and that a Gentile widow, to sustain the prophet? Had it been that God had commanded the prophet to sustain her we should perhaps have thought it more in order, but nay, God who sees the end from the beginning has a “needs be” for this; and for His glory, and the widow's good He commanded her to sustain Elijah.

Methinks if Elijah ever had any pride in him at all this would completely remove the last shred, to think that he must now become chargeable for his sustenance to a poor widow woman. Truly God's ways are past finding out, but they are nevertheless wonderful and marvellous in our eyes. Furthermore, I think that if the prophet required faith at Cherith, he requires a double portion now, especially when he meets his hostess and hears her pitiable story. But God had said, "I have commanded," and what a grand and solid foundation on which to build!—The word of the Lord. "For faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord is laid for your faith in His excellent Word." "**I have commanded**"—it is ours to believe. Being fully persuaded that what He has promised He is able also to perform (Rom. 4. 21).

God hath **not** promised skies ever blue,
Flower strewn pathways always for you,
But He **hath** promised strength from above,
Unfailing sympathy, unfailing love.

SO HE AROSE AND WENT TO ZAREPHATH.

How could Elijah have said, as he afterwards did, upon Mount Carmel, "If the Lord be God, follow Him," if his own private path had exhibited a wilful and rebellious spirit? Impossible. The path of a servant must be the path of obedience, otherwise he ceases to be a servant. The word servant is as inseparably linked with obedience, as is work with workman. "A servant," as another has observed, "must move when the bell rings." Would that we were all more alive to the sound of our Master's bell, and more ready to run in the direction in which it summons us. "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," is our proper language. Whether the word of the Lord summon us from our retirement into the midst of our brethren, or from thence into retirement again, may our language ever be, "speak Lord for Thy servant heareth." The Word of the Lord, and the attentive ear of a servant, are all we need to carry us safely and happily onward.

Now this path of obedience is by no means an easy one; it involves the constant abandonment of self, and can only be pursued as the eye is steadily kept looking off unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of **Faith**. Elijah now reaches Zarephath and by one of those

SEEMINGLY STRANGE COINCIDENCES

by which we are often led to explain "what a small world this is after all," the very widow woman, whom God had commanded, was at the gate of the city gathering sticks.

(To be continued.)

Gospel Literature Fund.

Evangelists at home and abroad can often use many more tracts than they can afford to purchase, whilst other friends who can spare a little for this good work, may not have the time and opportunity to distribute. This fund links the two together and Editor supervises every parcel sent out.

Gifts received since our last acknowledgment:—

T.B., Swanley, 2/6; T.M., London, 5/-

All gifts should be addressed: Editor, "Threshed Wheat," 2, Broomhill Road, Goodmayes, Essex.

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Threshed Wheat to Missionaries.

We continue to send out monthly a large number of copies of "Threshed Wheat" to Missionary brethren and sisters free of charge. This is made possible largely by the generous help of our readers. The annual subscription, as all are aware, is 2s. 6d., but for this special fund we regard it a privilege and honour to contribute a portion to every copy sent to the Foreign Field. Thus for every 1s. 3d. sent in for this Fund we send a copy of the Magazine Free and Post Paid for 12 months, to any labourer in the foreign field that you care to name, or that is on our waiting list. The difference being supplied by ourselves. Our readers' prayers for definite blessing is being abundantly answered. A beloved missionary brother, home from India, told me personally of the help received from the June editorial article, and how it seemed to meet his special need just at that time. Another from Spain writes:—

"We receive a copy of "Threshed Wheat," initialled on cover, but we cannot link same with a known friend at present. As we appreciate receiving the paper, with its good things, you may be able to pass on our thanks for same. JAMES RENNIE."

These are but samples of the many cheery messages one receives from readers all over the world, and such words are full compensation for time and labour involved in preparing the monthly issues of this little Magazine.

We do not attempt to boast of a huge circulation, for we realise that by limiting our pages to purely expository and devotional themes, without any sensational and newsy pages, that only those really interested in divine things will use the paper. But we rejoice to know that in spite of this more copies are required each month, and the Annual Volume (3s. 6d. Post Free) is constantly in demand.

May I solicit the continued prayers of every reader and your personal recommendations, which prove to be our best means of making the paper known. If any wish we will supply 6 or 12 copies to any reader for **FREE** distribution.

Editor.

The Brooks of Scripture.

1 Samuel 17. 38-40; 49-51; John 18. 1-2; Numbers 13. 23-24; 1 Kings 17. 1-8; 1 Sam. 30. 8-10; Gen. 32. 22-32.

By the late CHAS. HICKMAN.

This article is from shorthand notes of an address delivered by our esteemed brother in the Lord. We have purposely refrained from touching it up for press in any way as we feel sure our readers would prefer it as it came from the lips of the speaker, now in Christ's presence.

PART II.

IV. The Brook Cherith.

ELIJAH was a man walking apart before God, but he had to suffer. When God's hand is stretched out in governmental dealings, the saints have to suffer, but still God cares for them. God told Elijah to go to the Brook Cherith, and says, "I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." Elijah was alone, and a fugitive, but God cared; and God is unchanged. The God of Elijah is our God. With Him there is no shadow of turning. You tell me He does not work miracles in our day. I am not so sure of that, but the hairs of our head are all numbered, and not a sparrow falls to the ground without Divine permission. God says, "Come out from among them and be ye separate . . . and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." I do not want to be misunderstood. God cares for every child. There is no mistake about that; but here we have what is conditional. God said to these Corinthians, "You stand for Me. Come out from what is contrary to Me, and I will be a Father to you. I will stand for you." My impression is that if we really walked in devotedness, and separation from the world, God would be able to show Himself more openly on behalf of His people. You take Lot. I have often thought the angels were ashamed of him. Lot said, "Come into my house." "No," they said, "we will stay in the street all night." It was only under pressure that they would enter. God is our Father, and He is the Lord God Almighty. I want the youngest christian here to have the comfort of it, that God controls the Universe, and He is our Father. He knows and cares. I remember the case of a poor Christian man, who was visiting a Christian woman, living in one room. The Spirit seemed to whisper to him, "Give her five shillings." That was all the money he had, so he gave her 4s. 6d., but felt unhappy, so he went back and said, "I feel I ought to have given you sixpence more." Later he discovered that she had been praying for something of which she was in need, and which cost exactly five shillings. If we cannot trust God for the path, we shall try to look after ourselves, and the peace of God will not garrison the heart.

Now I want you to think for a moment about

V. The Brook Besor (1 Sam. 30. 8-10).

David seemed to have lost faith. He went to live with the Philistines who gave him the town of Ziklag. It seems David had sunk to his deepest depths. He who was the Anointed, offered to join the Philistines against Israel. God in His providence delivered him from that position. When David went back with his men to the town of Ziklag he found it had been burnt to the ground, and his wives and children and all his property taken away. His men in their desperation spoke of stoning him. David was a man intelligent in God's mind; I have no doubt God was dealing with him as He deals with His children in government. "Whatever a man soweth that shall he also reap," is true of the Christian as well as of the unconverted. If we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption. We need to think of that.

But there is another way God deals with us, and that is by direct intervention. He takes the rod direct. If there is an unconverted person here, you may sin now with comparative impunity. God is going to deal with you at the Great White Throne. But if you are a child of God, He will not tolerate sin; God comes in with the rod and smites.

I think I should have lost heart if I had been in David's place, and said, "I have brought all this on myself." But David knew God; he encouraged himself in the Lord his God, and prayed to God for deliverance and God delivered him. But not only so. God promoted him to be king over Judah, and after that to be over the twelve tribes.

God's chastening is always for our profit. He does not do it in anger; He does it in love. Let me say to anyone who is passing through sorrow or infirmity, God uses this very discipline to make you more effective in His service. By our falls we are taught lessons. Let us remember it is a solemn thing. "If ye call on the Father, Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

The last brook is

VI. The Brook Jabbok.

Jacob was returning according to God's direction to his own land. There he had this terrible message about Esau's coming with 400 men, and his guilty conscience told him he deserved the anger of his brother. Jacob was alone that night, and then God comes to deal with him. My impression is that most of us do not know what it is to be alone as often as we should. How much time do we spend alone with God? Jacob was alone, and there wrestled a man with him till break of day. This is one of the most mysterious statements in Scripture. Jacob was stubborn, he would not give way. When the angel found he was making no headway, and the morning was breaking, the angel touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and Jacob is crippled. Now he clings to the angel. Jacob said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." The angel said, "What is thy name?" In Scripture the name is always descriptive. There must be the confession. "I am a cheat, a supplanter." The whole truth came out of what he was; and He blessed him there. He said, "Thy name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel." Did you ever go to God and say, "I am Jacob"? Did you ever go with self-loathing and say, "I am vile; I abhor myself"? God has to teach us not simply that there is a great deal of evil in us, but that **there is no good in us.**

When we have learned that we have no strength or goodness, we cling to Christ, and the power of Christ comes into the life, and we are delivered from the domination of sin. We become princes, having power with God and power with men. We will never become princes until we have learned that in ourselves there is no good thing.

God wants all His people to be princes. The Apostle Paul had gone through that experience. He says, "When I am weak, then I am strong." It is when we have learned experimentally that in ourselves there is no goodness that we turn to Him, and the power of Christ comes into our lives. Jacob next day crosses the brook, and he halts on his thigh. Some of the young men of the camp might say, "Look at Jacob, who was such a strong man and a good walker. See him now, he is a cripple." They might despise him, but the angels would say, "There is a prince, who has power with God and power with men." God is teaching us the lesson that in ourselves there is no good, and when we turn to Him in the power of an ungrieved Spirit, the result will be, we will walk down here as princes having power with God and men.

NOTES ON

The Acts of the Apostles.

By WALTER SCOTT.

TWENTY-EIGHT CHAPTERS AND 1,007 VERSES.

LUKE, the "beloved Physician" and fellow-labourer and traveller with Paul, is the writer of this book, which commences exactly at the point where the third Gospel breaks off, that is at the ascension of the blessed Lord. Thus this historical account of Christianity forms a necessary and connecting link between the Gospels and the Epistles, forming a supplement to the former, and an introduction to the latter. The old creation, with its many unmet responsibilities, and its large and repeated probationary trials came morally to an end in the Cross of Christ. The rejection of the Lord Jesus proved man and Israel to be unmendably bad—**CONDEMNED ALREADY.** Now Christ risen up out of the dead, and ascended to God's right hand, has become the root and source of "all things new"; the foundation and centre of God's new creation, on this truth therefore **THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES** opens, and on this ground the after-teaching of the New Testament proceeds. The book unfolds the energy of the Holy Ghost, come down from heaven, and acting through Apostles and others in testifying to the glory and exaltation of Israel's rejected Messiah, and in ministering the riches of His grace founded on the accomplished work of the cross. We have the founding of the faith; the spread of Christianity first, amongst the Jews, **JERUSALEM** being the centre, and then amongst the Gentiles, **ANTIOCH** being the centre, and the missionary labours chiefly of Peter, and then of Paul of whom fully two-thirds of the history treats, and brought down to his imprisonment at Rome, A.D. 65. The three Missionary and Evangelistic tours undertaken by Paul were as follows:—**FIRST**, from Antioch, an important Syrian city, to the now interesting Island of Cyprus, visiting its chief towns, then passing through a portion of Asia Minor, and again returning to Antioch (chap. xiii.-xiv. 26). **SECOND**, again starting from Antioch, but this time visiting Europe (chap. xvi.), and spreading the truth from various important centres in Macedonia and Achaia (chap. xv. 36-xviii. 22). **THIRD**, once more leaving the important and commercial city of Antioch, he visits the scenes of his former labours, until Jerusalem is reached, when his free labours close by his imprisonment (chap. xviii. 23-xxi.). The Evangelistic and other discourses recorded in this book are model sermons; the constant reference to Scripture, the pungent appeals to the conscience, the narration of facts and the singular boldness with which they were delivered—make these discourses highly valuable to servants of the Lord. Distinct guidance by the Holy Ghost apart from human appointment, committees, societies, or the present elaborate machinery by which Missionary, Evangelistic, and Church work is now generally carried on, is a truth abundantly taught in this book. The practical guidance of the Holy Ghost, in all work for God, whether in the church or world, is the undoubted teachings of the "Acts." In fact we should greatly prefer to see its title altered (which is merely a human one) to "**THE ACTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.**"

GENERAL DIVISIONS.

- (1). Jerusalem, the religious centre and the labours of Peter, James, John, and Stephen—the last offer of grace to Israel refused in the stoning of Stephen.—Chap. i.-vii.
- (2). Saul called out, but Peter still prominent, Jerusalem being yet the centre of the work.—Chap. viii.-xi.
- (3). Paul's work amongst the Gentiles, including his missionary journeys, Antioch being the centre of the work amongst the heathen.—Chap. xiii.-xxi.
- (4). Paul a prisoner—details of his journey from Jerusalem to Rome.—Chap. xxii.-xxviii.

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



VII. DORCAS.

THE memory of this excellent Christian woman has been kept green by the familiar "Dorcas meeting." It is interesting to compare her case with that of Saul of Tarsus, given in the same ninth chapter of the book of the Acts. The latter was favoured with "visions and revelations of the Lord," and was occupied throughout his career with the profoundest things of Christianity, at one time being in such a condition of spiritual elevation that he was unable to say whether he was in the body or out of it (2 Cor. xii. 1-4). Nothing of the kind is recorded of Dorcas. Of her it is written: "This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did."

TWO PHASES OF CHRISTIANITY.

are thus presented to us—the heavenly and the earthly. Every believer in the Lord Jesus should desire both to be true of him. One-sidedness constitutes a very real danger. On the one hand, the profound thinker is apt to despise the practical worker as operating on a line too low for his notice; and, on the other hand, the diligent servant of everybody is disposed to regard the thinker as an idler, and useless in a needy world. But the Lord could appreciate both Dorcas and Paul; and Martha and Mary also.

Dorcas was the Greek name of this good sister, Tabitha, her Hebrew name, being also given. The one means "gazelle" and the other "beauty." To the dismay of her beneficiaries in Joppa, Dorcas died. A valuable life cut short! Knowing that Peter was in the neighbouring town of Lydda, the disciples "sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them." This is remarkable, for what could even the apostle be expected to do in the presence of death? Since Christianity began, this dread enemy had not yielded to the summons of anyone. The confidence of the brethren in Joppa was not in Peter, but in the name of Jesus. When Peter and John healed the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple, they made it perfectly plain to all that it was not by their own power or holiness they had made the man to walk. It was the potency of the name of Jesus. "His

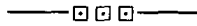
name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all" (Acts iii. 1-16). In the spirit of this, the apostle on his arrival at Joppa, excluded everyone from the death chamber, "and kneeled down and prayed, and turning to the body, said, Tabitha, arise."

DEATH SURRENDERED

forthwith, and Dorcas sat up. Mark the words, "Kneeled down and prayed." Here we have the secret of this—Peter's mightiest—miracle. Prayer is the expression of the soul's dependence upon God, the means by which is called into operation a power not our own. In this matter of fact day prayer is apt to be neglected—to our hurt and loss. Yet God is always prepared to put honour upon the name of His Son, whensoever that name is pleaded before Him in simple faith. If it is no part of God's present ways to restore the physically dead, it is His delight to quicken men spiritually dead—"dead in trespasses and sins" (John v. 24-25; Eph. ii. 1). This marvel is wrought by means of the Gospel. When prayerful lips give forth their testimony to the Lord Jesus, His life-giving voice is heard, and men pass from death unto life. Such a miracle is not one whit inferior to the raising of Dorcas so long ago, and its effect is abiding and eternal.

The raising of Dorcas was fruitful in happy results. "It was known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord." This was good; but, remarkably, greater results followed a lesser wonder—the healing of palsied Eneas. "All that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord" (Acts ix. 35). Who can pretend to explain the wonderful ways of God? "Many" in Joppa; "all" in Lydda and Saron. Assuredly He is sovereign, and works as He pleases amongst the children of men. We are reminded of the words of the Lord Jesus concerning the operations of the divine Spirit: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth" (John iii. 8).

“ This Man.”



A Devotional Study.

By J. H. McCORMICK.

WHAT a contrast is “this Man,” our Lord Jesus Christ, to every other man who trod this earth. (1) “This man

RECEIVETH SINNERS

and eateth with them” (Luke 15), words of truth spoken in mockery and contempt by His enemies. He received sinners, but they would not have allowed their garments to be soiled by contact with such people. Simon the Pharisee thought that it was a good proof that our Lord was not a prophet, because He received the worshipping love and gratitude of the poor sinful woman of Luke vii.. How blind he was, Christ received the woman’s worship because He knew what Simon did not know, and could not have understood if he had known. He knew not only the depth of the woman’s sin, He also knew the reality and depth of her repentance and faith in Himself. What a contrast Christ is to other men! These Pharisees were religious, moral men, the leaders of the Jewish nation, some of them at least righteous or even good men, yet they would not have received these sinful men and women, much less would they have sat down at table with them. How marvellous the grace, mercy and compassion of the Lord Jesus; He not only forgives the sinner, He also brings him into fellowship with Himself and sets him down at His own table to feast with Him.

Other men might in the greatness of their mercy forgive the poor sinner, but they would never think of bringing him into their homes and setting Him at their table, which shows how different our Lord Jesus is from all other men. Not satisfied with forgiving the guilty one, He justifies him from every charge, gives him peace from every fear, brings him near to Himself and makes him a present possessor of eternal life. How perfect the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is.

(2) “Through ‘this Man’ is preached unto you

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS,

and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13). Through this blessed man Who passed through death and is now risen and glorified there comes the glorious Gospel of free and full forgiveness purchased by His precious blood for all who believe in His sacrificial work for them and receive Him as their personal Saviour; and by Him the same blessed risen, glorified Man, all believers are now and for ever completely justified from every charge which can be brought against them. What a contrast Christ is to every other prophet; through no prophet, psalmist, law-giver, or apostle is forgiveness preached or justification declared. Neither Moses nor Peter could forgive sins or justify the sinner. It is only “the Son of man Who hath power on earth to forgive sins,” and none can be justified save in the name of the Lord Jesus. Glorious Saviour we worship and adore

From the palace of His glory,
From the home of joy and love,
Came the Lord Himself to seek me;
He would have me there above.
There from that eternal brightness
Have His thoughts flowed forth to me
He in His great love would have me
Ever with Him there to be.
Trembling I had hoped for mercy—
Some low place within His door:
But the crown, the throne, the mansion,
He made ready long before.
And in dim and distant ages,
In those courts so bright and fair,
Ere I was, was He rejoicing,
All He won with me to share.

Thee, through Thy name we enjoy complete forgiveness and perfect justification; no other name could ever have brought us such blessings as these. Peter himself declares “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4), and Paul proclaims “There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all.” Reader, are you trusting in this blessed man as your Saviour? Have you received from Him a full forgiveness and a perfect justification through faith in His blood? If not, call upon Him without further delay and take the gifts He offers thee—Himself as thy Saviour, the Holy Spirit as thy regenerator, indweller and seal, and eternal life as thy present possession. He will not cast you out, His pledged word guarantees your reception and retention.

(3) **"This Man**, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever

SAT DOWN ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD." (Heb. 10. 12).

"When He had by Himself purged our sins sat down on right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1. 3). What a contrast He is to every other priest who came with a sacrifice in his hand. They stood because their work was never done, for their sacrifices were not of sufficient value to put away a single sin from God's sight or the believer's conscience. But "this Man" sat down after He had offered "one sacrifice," for His sacrifice was of such infinite value because of His own glorious person as the eternal Word and eternal Son of God, that it satisfied every claim of God's eternally righteous throne, and met every need of all who will ever trust in its unfailing efficacy; therefore it needs neither addition nor repetition, but avails in its own infinite worth for the eternal salvation of "all who believe." They had many sacrifices which, being animals such as bulls and goats, could never take away sins or give the believer a perfect conscience. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls, and of goats should take away sins." But His one sacrifice of His own glorious person, in the shedding of His own precious blood—whose infinite value God alone can estimate, has put away and purged our sins from before the face of God and from our own conscience, so that the believer who knows the value of the blood of Jesus in any measure has "no more conscience of sins." Blessed truth! No sins upon my conscience because I know that He settled the whole question of my sins once and for all and for ever at Calvary; and I, the one for whom He died, am by His one offering, perfected for ever in my standing before God. The Jewish priest had a powerless sacrifice "which can never take away sins," a constant work "offering oftentimes the same sacrifices," a daily stand "every priest standeth daily—sacrifices—can never take away sins. But 'this Man' had a powerful sacrifice, "one sacrifice for sins" which put them all away and purged them all, a finished work, "one sacrifice"—one offering—was once offered to bear the sins of many; once in the end of the age hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself"; and an eternal seat. "But this man after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down. The fact that Christ is seated in the presence, aye at the right hand of the God against whom we had sinned, after having borne our sins in His own body on the tree, proves that salvation's work is completed, and all who trust in Him are eternally safe. Are you?

The Cause our Own!

By Wm. Luff.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.—Revelation 3. 20.

The following lines were written as the result of a true incident related therein in the life of the Author in 1896 (Editor).

THE preacher sat in the vestry calm
Choosing the evening hymn and psalm;
And he and his deacons waited long
To enter and start with the first glad song.
The time drew round, but no sound was heard
As the gathering people the still air stirred.

At length the preacher looked out to see
The cause of the silence, why could it be?
And strange was the vision that met his view,
For empty and vacant was every pew.
"Brethren, what can this vision mean,
No single worshipper can be seen,

The place is empty—no one is here?"
Then over them crept an explaining fear.
"Have the doors been opened?" They looked
and lo,
Both the fast closed portals answered "No."
The bolts were drawn, and through wide flung
doors,

A waiting crowd past the entrance pours.

Do we sometimes wonder at empty seats,
Where God with His waiting people meets?
Perhaps we have failed to open wide
Our doors to welcome the crowd outside.

Do we sometimes wonder our own cold heart
Is still and empty in every part?
Perhaps we have failed to open wide
Our door to the Master who stood outside.

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Book Reviews.

Studies in the Book of Genesis, Vols. I. & II., by Geo. Henderson (Author "Pearl of Psalms") Published by G. F. Vallance, Goodmayes. Paper 1s. 6d. each, Cloth 2s. 6d. each.

Our readers will no doubt remember an article last year by the Author, entitled "Justification" in its various aspects. These two volumes on the Book of Genesis are written in the same lucid style, and very clearly, interestingly and instructively present the New Testament truth from Old Testament record. As a handbook for students, and a guide to any believer, no matter how young in the Faith, this treatise is unique.

To any Assembly or individual who would like to place copies in the hands of young christians we should be pleased to make a grant of 12 Copies (Paper) for 6d. Post Paid, or Cloth for 20s. Carriage Paid.

The Soul does not Sleep.

By W. KELLY.

It is not true that between death and the resurrection the soul sleeps. The Lord, in the Gospel of Luke, has made the truth no less certain for both the wicked and the righteous. In chapter xvi. He shows us the beggar dying and carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom. This was certainly not the body but the soul; for the soul is the seat of personality. Whilst alive, soul and body are together. When death comes, the soul is the person till the resurrection, when they are together again for evermore; and, therefore, it is that only man rises from the grave; for he alone possesses a God-inbreathed soul—an immortal principle from God. As death is but an intermediate and incomplete state, resurrection (whether for just or unjust) will restore the full being, and in a condition for eternity. But, meanwhile, the beggar was, according to parabolic language, with the blessed beyond death. He was blessed with faithful Abraham and not asleep.

The rich man also died, and was buried. There was laid his body in the grave with what ever pomp. But in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. It is perfectly certain that this is a picture, not of resurrection, but of the intermediate state; for he is represented as entreating for his five brethren, that some startling testimony might reach them, "lest they also come into this place of torment."

When resurrection dawns, there will be no question of testimony to save. Besides, the Lord stands for the divine authority of Scripture. They had the inspired witnesses, and if these were not heard, neither would they be persuaded if one rose from the dead.

Again, in Luke xx. in answer to unbelieving Sadducees (who said there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit), the Lord lays down that the God of the fathers, is not a God of the dead but of the living; "for all live unto Him" (verse 38). It is not only that the saints rise for the first, holy, and blessed resurrection, but that meanwhile also they live for Him.

Most simple and instructive is the case of the converted robber in Luke xxiii. 43. He asked to be remembered by the Lord when He came in His kingdom, and received the answer, "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." That very day, through faith in Jesus, by virtue of His precious blood, should his soul be with Him in Paradise. The paradise of man was lost and cannot be regained. The Second Man, the last Adam, opens a new and better Eden, the Paradise of God; and the first soul to enter there after Jesus was the converted robber. Oh! what a testimony to the grace of God, and to the blood of Christ. The Lord will come surely in His kingdom by and by; but this newly converted soul has not to wait for that day. On the day he died he enjoyed the heavenly Paradise with his Lord and Saviour.

So Stephen when dying (Acts vii. 59, 60) says, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The Lord Himself when dying had said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." This, after suffering as He did, was His perfection; and He alone could properly use those words.

Stephen, fittingly, in his place, calls on Him and says, "Receive my spirit." To be with Christ then, is what departing from the body means; not sleeping, certainly, which would be far worse than the portion we now enjoy in His love. "To depart and be with Christ," as the apostle says ((Phil. i. 23), "is very far better." It is to be absent from the body, no doubt; not sleeping, still less non-existent, but "at home with the Lord." And, therefore, we are "willing" rather to be absent from the body, as compared with living here. But it is not what we are "longing for"; for verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven.

Therefore, now we groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed (that is, divested of our body) but that we would be clothed upon (that is, invested with our changed bodies), that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.

What is this but proof upon proof that the soul is immortal for man even though lost, and that the saint's soul, separate from the body, will have immensely increased enjoyment of, and with, Christ in heaven? The notion of sleep, still more of extinction, for the soul, is a baseless and wicked fable.

Principles of Scripture Interpretation.



By H. DENNETT.

Part IV.

The Symbolic Language of Scripture.

TO properly understand many parts of Scripture it is necessary to know the language in which much of the Bible is written. By this is not meant the Hebrew or Greek tongue, but rather the language of symbols that is often used in the Bible.

That it has pleased God to express much of His mind in Scripture in a symbolic way is evident to every reader of the Book, but the matter is more clearly stated in Revelation 1. 1, where the word "signified" literally means "made known by signs or symbols." In the land of the Bible, symbols have a much greater place in the speech and thoughts of the people than in this country, and there alone is an important reason for the careful study of Scripture symbolism.

THE VALUE OF SYMBOLS.

So far from detracting from the force of a passage in which it may occur, a symbol actually gives strength and clarity, and the statement becomes more vivid by being so illustrated. A certain well-known thing, having definite and clearly understood characteristics of its own, is used to bring to mind similar characteristics of the thing of which it is used as a symbol. The ideas to be brought to mind are sometimes physical as in the symbol, but more frequently the physical in the symbol points to a moral quality in the reality. We only find Scripture symbols hard to understand because we are largely unfamiliar with the properties and qualities of the things employed as symbols, whereas to an easterner they would immediately recall to the mind a wealth of ideas which would be applied to the reality.

A notable case of the value of a symbol is that of leaven. In Matt. 16. 6 the Lord Jesus said "Beware of the **leaven** of the Pharisees." In the east where every household had its own bakery, the properties of leaven were an everyday fact. It works underneath the surface, unseen, fermenting and distending the dough

to an unnatural size but at the expense of its very substance. In this case the Lord gives the application—"The **doctrine** of the Pharisees," and what a vivid picture of the corrupting influence of their teaching of human righteousness, does the leaven give.

To fully appreciate the value of symbols in the Bible try to paraphrase a chapter or two of the Canticles without using a single symbol.

Granted then that symbols have a large place in Scripture, how are we to interpret them? Happily there is one firm principle that comes to our aid—

THE BIBLE IS ALWAYS CONSISTENT

in its use of symbols. It is God using a special language, and He is not the Author of confusion. A classic instance of the failure of even learned men to appreciate this rule is found in many interpretations of the parable of the leaven in Matt. 13. How can this possibly be a figure of the beneficent spread of the Gospel, when everywhere else in Scripture leaven is definitely a type of evil?

What is known as the

"LAW OF THE FIRST MENTION"

in Scripture is of great help in elucidating the meaning of symbols. The first time the Scripture uses a name or symbol usually gives us the general characteristics of its meaning. There may be further development, but that development will be on the lines of the initial character given. In the case of leaven (Gen. 19. 3) is the first occurrence (there in the negative form "unleavened"). Lot is trying to gloss over his evil surroundings by that which is a symbol of piety. In Exodus 12. 15 the word occurs positively, which still more clearly sets the meaning. To determine the full meaning of a Scripture symbol every possible instance of its use should be examined.

VARIETIES OF SYMBOLS.

A symbol may be any of the following. A person, as in Rom. 5. 14; a thing, as the veil in Heb. 10. 20; an event, as the crossing of the Red Sea in 1. Cor. 10. 1; a ceremonial, as the Passover in 1 Cor. 5. 7; an act, as when Jeremiah marred his girdle (Jer. 13. 7).

It is quite impossible in a paper of this length to give a comprehensive list of Scripture symbols, so we will deal with three important ones, not so much for the sake of their particular meanings, but to show how other passages will explain them. In Judges 9 the sole surviving son of Gideon speaks a parable against the man who had sought his life, and from the very fact that he only explains one of the four symbols used, it is reasonable to assume that he knew that his hearers would easily understand what he meant. This indeed is the very essence of symbolism.

The

TREES

are depicted as electing a king to reign over them, and ask in turn the olive, fig, vine, and bramble. The last is explained as meaning the usurper Abimelech, who is himself a foreshadowing of the "wilful king" of the last days. The bramble, or thorn-bush, will be found associated with cursed and rebellious earth all through Scripture.

A careful reference to a concordance shows that the other three symbols frequently occur in Scripture.

In Isaiah 5. 1-7

THE VINE

is seen as a symbol of Israel in their failure to produce fruit for God—the "new wine" that gladdens God and man, so the Lord Jesus is introduced as the true Vine (John 15). The vine typifies Israel in the past. Also study the occurrences of "old wine" and "new wine" in the New Testament.

Jeremiah 24. 2-8 uses

FIGS

as a figure of the righteous and evil in Israel. The function of the fig is to produce "good fruit," but the first mention of this tree is in connection with its leaves as a covering for human righteousness. In Matt. 21. 19 the barren fig-tree is symbolic of Israel at that time and to the present day—withered because it provided the Lord Jesus with nothing but leaves.

Romans 11. 17-24 is a wonderful parable itself of

THE OLIVE TREE,

and is so plain as to need no comment. The olive tree also yields the precious oil that is so essential to life in the east, and is therefore an apt symbol of the Holy Spirit throughout Scripture. The tree speaks of the future fruitfulness of Israel.

It is a good thing to make up a list of Scripture symbols of your own. Such a list may need revision from time to time, but it will serve to fix the general meanings firmly in the mind.

The question is often asked, "are we to understand a statement literally or symbolically?" As already shown in reference to what is regarded as one of the most difficult books in this respect—the Revelation—there is no doubt at all, it is expressly stated to be symbolic. In other parts of the Scripture the context and view point of the writer must be taken into account, but it is well to remember that if what you are reading is but symbolic of something else, it does not for a moment detract from the wonder or reality of that something. The symbol of gold for the street of the New Jerusalem gives but a faint picture of the glory of that scene, just as the "fire" of the lake of fire tells of something infinitely more to be dreaded than the literal thing, which itself speaks so vividly to our minds.

(To be continued.)



Personal Requests.

The Ministry of Women, by Nathaniel West.

If any reader has for disposal a copy of the above booklet (believed to be published in America) please communicate with Editor, stating price and condition.

The Javelin of Phineas, by Wm. Lincoln.

The Editor has at his disposal a copy of the above, which he desires to place in the hands of a brother or sister beloved, who will make real use of same, and not simply place upon the bookshelf for the consolation of having this rare and treasured volume. The book will be given free to the most worthy applicant, taking into account the purpose for which it is required.



Bible Studies in Genesis.

By ROBERT LEE.

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Study No. 19. Gen. 8. 1-14.

The Lord's Remembrance.

1. Its Charm.
2. Its Character.
 - (a) Individual. (b) Universal.
3. Its Purpose Deliverance.

FIVE LONG MONTHS had passed since the waters had entirely covered the earth. Noah had been told when the Flood was to come, but not when it would go away. Had God forgotten them? He cannot forget. "And God remembered Noah." What charming language. This does not imply that God had forgotten and suddenly remembered: such language is used to describe some special act of God.

ITS CHARACTER. 1st, **Individual**—"Noah." 2nd, **Universal**—"every living thing." It was said of a wealthy busy-body "he could not legislate for an empire and keep his eye on the village pump." But God can and does.

THE DELIVERANCE WAS GRADUAL. Flood at its height in October and November. It was 150 days subsiding (8. 3). Ark rested in April (verse 4). "They felt the ground 40 days before they saw it." "Tops of mountains seen" (5) in June. Raven sent forth in July. Ground dry (verse 13) in September. Left Ark in October. Have you noticed Noah's patience? Verse 13 gives exact time when water dried off the earth. Yet Noah waited seven weeks until he received permission. The "face" of the ground was dry (13) and then the earth itself had to be dried (verse 14) and grass to grow before they left the Ark.

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Study No. 20. Gen. 8. 15-22.

The Earliest Known Altar.

1. Its Place verse 20.
2. Its Significance
 - (a) Their first act. (b) Worshipped Lord not Ark.
3. Its Value.

The one who formerly said "Come," now says "Go." This is the first time Altar is mentioned in the Bible. Sacrifices, of course,

were offered, but toward Eden where the symbol of God's presence was, and there was no need of an altar. The Flood had swept Eden away, and now sacrifices must be **lifted up**. The first thought and act of Noah was not to build himself a house, but to erect an altar. His first thought was of God. Superstition would have worshipped the Ark as the means of his salvation; but they worshipped God. Is not verse 21 a surprise? In Genesis 6. 5 we see the reason for the Flood. Why the change? Sacrifice made all the difference. When Jehovah saw not the sacrifice, but men's wickedness, it grieved His heart, and the Flood was sent. Now when He saw the sacrifice, "He said in His heart," etc. The smell of burning flesh is not pleasant. It prefigured the sacrifice of Christ, and that made it sweet.

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Study No. 21. Gen. 9. 1-17.

The Rainbow—Its History and Message.

1. Constant reminder of covenant mercy.
2. Proclaimed the friendliness of God.
3. Taught the desire of God for our happiness.
4. Taught the universality of promise.
5. Inspires us with hope in the dark days.

ITS WONDER. Who can intelligently look upon a Rainbow unmoved! The beauty of the blended colours is entrancing.

THREE COVENANT SIGNS. There are three great covenant signs—Rainbow for the Post-diluvian Dispensation; Circumcision for the Patriarchial Dispensation and Dispensation of Law; Sealing of the Spirit, for our present Dispensation.

CAUSE. The Rainbow is caused by the reflection (turning aside) of the sun's rays falling upon the drops of rain. If rain was unknown before the Flood (see Genesis 2. 6) then this must have been the first Rainbow.

MESSAGE. The Rainbow appearing at the tail of a storm would scatter all fear of a second Deluge, coming just when there was reason for fear. It was, and is, God's constant reminder of His covenant of mercy given to mankind through Noah (i.e., Preservation of life, 8. 21; 9. 11; Transmission of life, 9. 1 and 7; Government over lower forms of life, 9. 2; Sustenance of life, 9. 3). It would convey a message of hope concerning the dark clouds of daily life. What we most dread, God can illuminate.



Threshed Wheat.

EDITORIAL.

So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks : and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse : and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

And Elijah said unto her, Fear not ; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son."—1 Kings 17. 10-13.

ELIJAH'S LONELY MINISTRY. PART VI.

AH! says my reader, but do you not think that God was behind that meeting and that He had constrained that woman to be there just at that time? Indeed I do, and what is more I am equally convinced that God is thus behind many such strange meetings and happenings, whether in your life or mine. But do we sufficiently grasp the significance of them, or seek to perceive God's purpose in them? Quite recently I was spending a brief week-end in the south of Scotland, and walking the railway platform with a christian friend waiting for another christian worker, we were amazed to learn that the London Express in which our friend was travelling would be nearly an hour late—a most unusual happening on that line. So we had the best part of an hour to wait. But God had arranged a meeting for us of which neither knew anything. Standing on that same platform was the local postmaster, known to my friend but not to myself. He also being a christian we found a mutual topic of conversation. But that gentleman was to journey to London concerning a business matter with which I was intimately acquainted, and thus able to give some suggestions and remarks which would enable our friend to transact his business better. What the result of that visit has been I have not yet learned, but I am persuaded that God so ordered that week-end's happening for a purpose. Consider a few of the "strange coincidences" of that, my first, visit to that particular town at that certain week-end. Our friend journeying on that same train which the Postmaster was to join upon its arrival, and that in its turn delayed for an hour in order that one of God's children might be a help to another. All this was not by accident, but by divine overruling. The day will declare the "nevertheless afterward." I

mention this matter as one of many, to show that what happened in Elijah's case happens in your life and mine to-day, if we but have eyes to discern these things.

As Abraham's servant asked a drink of Rebekah, and as the Son of God asked similarly of the woman of Samaria, so Elijah asks this widow woman to fetch him a little water in a vessel. This she gladly proceeds to do, even though the drought was in the land, but as she goes he calls after her to fetch a morsel of bread as well. This seems to touch the extremity of her poverty as she replies, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and, behold I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, **and die.**" Elijah had gone to Zarephath at God's command **to LIVE**, this widow woman, not knowing God, was preparing, what seemed to her, the last meal before **DEATH**. Without God all is death, but when God enters, death gives place to **life**. Note she says to Elijah, "as the Lord **thy** God liveth," she does not claim the God of Elijah, as her God, at this juncture.

As the prophet had just previously been taught to look not at the failing brook but to God Himself, so now he sees not a widow woman, with a handful of meal and a little oil, but he sees all these

AND GOD.

So he can say to her, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

VIII CORNELIUS.

THIS is the first Gentile christian mentioned by name in the New Testament, and the first Gentile audience privileged to hear the Gospel of Christ assembled in his house. Cornelius was an attractive character. He is described in Acts x. 2 as "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." Seeing that he was a Roman officer, in garrison amongst a conquered people, he was surely exceptional as an alms-giver. His pleasure was not to extort and oppress, but to give. In approaching such a man first with the Gospel of Christ, God was tenderly considerate of Jewish feeling. His public dealings had been so long confined to Israel that those people naturally resented favour being shown to others. The time had now come, however, for the Gospel to be sent far and wide, but the goodness of God to Israel is seen in His selection first of all of the amiable centurion of Cæsarea rather than the brutal jailor of Philippi.

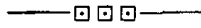
It is clear that Cornelius had some knowledge of God before Peter preached to him. Not only does the historian say of him what we have quoted above, but the angel who was sent to him bidding him call up the apostle said: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." Such words could never be divinely addressed to an unregenerate person. Even the "pious" deeds of such are "dead works" (Heb. ix. 14), and offensive to God. Scripture is relentless in its statements "they that are in the flesh cannot please God," and "without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Rom. viii. 8; Heb. xi. 6). As well look for grapes upon thistles as for works acceptable to God from the corrupt tree of "the old man." Cornelius was thus a man "born of the Spirit," and a worshipper of God as far as light had been vouchsafed to him.

What then was the purport of Peter's mission? It was designed to bring the centurion (and also his friends) into the full grace of Christianity — the knowledge of salvation through the once-sacrificed but now risen Saviour. The fact of Christ was already known to Cornelius (Acts x. 37), but until Peter's visit he had regarded Him only in the light of a Jewish Messiah. That he, a Gentile, might have an interest in Him he did not understand until Peter was sent along with his glorious "whosoever." Let us quote the emancipating passage: "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43)

To the outward eye it was a singular gathering to which Peter preached that day. A company of Roman patricians brought together by a military officer to hear a Galilean fisherman speak of a crucified Jew! Apart from the grace of God operating in human hearts, such a gathering would have been impossible. But the hand of God was clearly seen in every step. First, we have an angel coming to Cornelius instructing him to send for Peter; next we have Peter's trance in Joppa whereby the Lord taught His servant that those whom He regarded as unclean were as precious in His sight as any others; then we have that remarkable divine preparation of many hearts which enabled Cornelius to say to his visitor: "Now therefore are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." To address an audience gathered together in such a frame of mind would be an easy matter to any servant of the Lord!

Peter's theme was Christ. His business in Cæsarea was to tell Cornelius and his household words whereby they might be saved (Acts xi. 14), and men can only be saved by faith in Christ. The apostle told of His beneficent life in the midst of Israel, of His cruel death at men's hands, and of God's triumphant resurrection of His Son. Then he proclaimed Him both Judge and Saviour—Judge of the quick and dead by and by, Saviour to-day of all who believe in His name. What else Peter intended to say we do not know. His address was interrupted by the Holy Ghost falling upon the entire congregation. Receiving God's truth into their hearts word by word as Peter declared it, they obtained remission of sins upon the spot, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. There was no laying on of apostolic hands here, as in Samaria. In that case the circumstances were exceptional; here we have what is usual and normal for the christian era. It is God's way of grace to confer the Holy Ghost upon every person whose sins are forgiven. This priceless gift is the crown and finish of the work of God in the soul. Whatever might be the scruples of his Jewish friends concerning these Gentile believers, Peter now considered them fit and proper subjects for christian baptism. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" They were forthwith granted the privilege in the name of the Lord. This is the true divine order for our own time also; first, sins forgiven through faith in Christ, followed by the gift of the Holy Ghost, then the simple and expressive rite of baptism.

The Judgment Seat of Christ.



By F. C. BLAND (1869).

Dear Editor,

On looking through an old book of notes, etc., belonging to my mother-in-law, I came across this letter from the late F. C. Bland, of Dublin, written in 1869, of which I have made a copy and enclose herewith, thinking you might be able to use it for your "Threshed Wheat." I do not think it has ever been printed, it being a reply of his to some query as to the Judgment Seat of Christ. I am greatly enjoying Vol. 1 of your "Threshed Wheat" and pray it will be a help and blessing to many.

Yours sincerely in the Master's Service,

C.E.F.

GOD being judge of all, not only means everyone (Heb. xii. 23), but everything, and He has committed all judgment to Christ because He is Son of Man.

wronged, so misrepresented and misunderstood by our want of thoughtfulness about His honour, and by our well meaning blunders too, will be set to rights, and the great truth will be publicly established that God is true, though you and I be liars.

The first act of judgment will be a

DISCRIMINATIVE ONE,

that is, distinguishing between believer and unbeliever, and taking up the former, both living and dead, according to 1 Thess. iv., and leaving the lost dead in their graves a thousand years.

I don't think I ever felt so much as lately, the **absolute necessity** for the judgment seat of Christ. I do not see how God could be righteous if He did not require an account of all that He has given us. What about His days, and months, and weeks, and years of time, and health and strength and knowledge of His truth, which He has given to us? It humbles me in the dust to think of how it has gone! When we think of how much of public service there is which is for praise of men, and which gets the reward it seeks, but which has really little reference to God. How needful is it that it should be weighed in the balances of the Sanctuary, and on the other hand how much is there that no eye sees but God's, that has never yet had its public recognition. Must not Christ have His joy in owning it? "Verily there is a reward for the righteous, doubtless there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

The next judgment I call a

DISTRIBUTIVE ONE,

it is a judgment of the servants as to how they have occupied with their Master's goods during His absence, and is to settle the question as to what is worthy of a reward and what is loss. The question of salvation is not raised here at all, it is the faithfulness, or the reverse, of servants, about which we are told to judge nothing until the time comes when the hidden things of darkness are to be brought to light, and the **thoughts and intents** of the heart are to be made manifest and each act will then be measured not by the **amount** of good done, but by the **motive** which gives rise to it. A solemn thought truly! Now with regard to confessed sins not being gone into, I am sure this is true, for this confession can only arise from judgment of the sin solemnly in the light, that is, **in the presence** of God. In fact, it is virtually setting up the judgment seat of Christ **now** in our consciences and hearts, and being beforehand with ourselves with reference to that judgment. But I am solemnly pressed with the thought that a very small part of our sins are confessed at all. For we have sins of omission as well as commission, and for each we are accountable, and it is for the very things that we have taken no heed of here, that we must give account. Alfred Trench said that he had one great joy in the thought of the judgment seat of Christ, and that was that Christ would be done justice to then, and all in which He has been so cruelly

The next is the judgment of the lost, which is a

RETRIBUTIVE ONE,

and which Rev. 20 makes plain is for those who have no part in the first resurrection. They stand before the Great White Throne and are judged out of the things written in the books. The Book of Life is there with our names written in it, but there are no things written in it, because Christ Himself has been judged for our sins, and His judgment seat has settled the question of our services a 1,000 years before.

There is another judgment of the King sitting on the throne of His glory when He comes to reign, but this is of living nations—on the earth—as to the place they are to get, or to be denied in His earthly kingdom.

The Divine Purpose in Human Life.

By J. W. ASHBY.

PART II.

IN our former paper we described a first method of bringing to pass the great eternal purpose of God—conforming to the image of His Son—by what may be called personal contact; and illustrated it by the experience of David’s men in the cave of Adullam: who, having sought David as their deliverer, had gone on to admire and then to love him, and so to emulate his behaviour and were thus fitted to share the honour and reward of the day of triumph. Now we are to look at a **second method** by which the purpose is to be brought about, which we may describe as “conformity by means of the discipline of life.” The chief passage of Scripture we shall use to illustrate this method is the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; where we notice that the word “chasten” in its various forms of chastise, chastening, chastisement, occurs seven times, and represents an original word meaning to teach, or train or discipline. The same word forms part of our word “pedagogue,” meaning one who guides, or leads the feet of another; which was the name given in ancient Greece and Rome to the servant or slave who had charge of a boy almost from infancy, and who remained as guide, teacher, and protector till the boy attained manhood; therefore the training or discipline thus exercised was very different from the thought suggested by our familiar words chasten or chastise, which generally convey the idea of punishment for wrong-doing, as when Pilate said, “I will therefore chastise Him and release Him” (Luke 23. 16), using the same word. It may be helpful just here to quote from a good lexicon, “It Paideus—chastening) is instruction which aims at increase of virtue,” or, “whatever in adults cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing passions.” So that in reading the word chasten, or chastisement, in Hebrews 12 we must understand it as not merely the use of the rod for punishment, but

“Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him.”—Heb. 12. 5.
 O Thou, whose tender feet have trod
 The thorny path of woe,
 Forbid that I should slight the rod,
 Or faint beneath the blow.
 My spirit to its chastening stroke
 I meekly would resign;
 Nor murmur at the heaviest yoke
 That tells me I am Thine.
 J. D. BURNS.

rather the whole discipline of life under the hand of an ever-present, gracious, compassionate Father, Who pities them that fear Him, as a father pities his children. (May He make us all God-fearing people.) One writer, endeavouring to make plain the significance of the word, renders it “child-training,” “whom the Lord loveth He child-trains”; so we may conclude that the discipline of life is indeed one of the chief methods by which our gracious God seeks to accomplish His eternal purpose of producing likeness to His beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Does anyone ask, “By whom is the training carried on in the school of life ” The answer is, by the Father Himself, and not indirectly by some deputy. It is He Himself Who works all things together for good to them that love Him. And the “good” referred to in that precious verse (Rom. 8. 28) doubtless includes that complete fulfilment of His purpose which is man’s “chief end”—glorifying Him, and that by conformity to the image of His Son. In other words, that He Who is the Author and Upholder of all creation (Col. 1.) shall be in a very special and intimate sense “the Firstborn among many brethren.” Yet, while the great God and “Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” is the great Teacher and Disciplinarian of His people, there is a certain and limited sense in which His people may share this character, and be fellow workers with Him! This is made plain in 2 Tim. 2. 24-26, where we read, “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing (child-training or disciplining, our word of Heb. 12) those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at His will” (i.e., at God’s will). And this same service is attributed also to God’s grace, in

Titus 2. 11-12, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us (disciplining us) to the intent that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world (age) looking for that blessed hope," etc. (see R.V.). And if it be asked, what is the instrument used in this training, this discipline, in the school of life? Our answer is that it is the Word of God, see Gal. 3. 24, where the apostle, speaking of Jewish experiences, says, "the law was our school-master" (our pedagogue, trainer, teacher, chastener) to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master" (i.e., no longer under the law). But now, as our God and Father has a new family, a new creation, where Jew and Gentile are made one, we may well enquire if He has any school-master (pedagogue) to guide our feet in the path of obedience to His holy will? and the answer is not far to seek, for we read in 2 Tim. 3. 16, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction (child-training) in righteousness." But now it will be well to enquire "How is the divine purpose expressed in this important chapter of instruction?" Of course, it will be in harmony with the great expression of the purpose in Romans 8. 29, which we may regard as the centre of all teaching on the subject, and we find this to be the case, for we read, "For they (earthly fathers) verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12. 10), and again in verse 14, "follow peace with all men, and holiness (sanctification, R.V.) without which no man shall see the Lord."

Here, then, is a new statement of the purpose declared in Rom. 8. 29, likeness to "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is Holy" (Isaiah 57. 15), and this likeness is essential to any sight of Him! And did not the gracious compassionate Teacher say, in His great Sermon on the Mount, that the pure in heart are blessed "for they shall see God"? (Matt. 5. 8). We are not concerned at present to enquire what is this sight of God, which is dependent on purity of heart, but at least we must admit that Scripture teaches that it is not only the **divine purpose** that all believers should be conformed to the type of their Lord, but that it should also be the earnest wish (leading to practical effort) of every believer who looks for the return of our Lord Jesus. "And every one that hath this hope set on Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 John 3. 3, R.V.). In other words, he who holds, and is held by, the "Blessed Hope," having learned that He "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from

all iniquity," as a natural result (as a matter of course), seeks to do His will to the utmost of his power. As he took sides with his Saviour Lord, and pronounced himself guilty, when divine grace opened his eyes to his true condition, so now being saved, and made a member of the royal family of heaven, he must still take sides with his gracious Redeemer against all of sinful self, and be willing even to "lose his life" for His sake, Who so loved him. And in view of the glorious day of triumph set before him, to overcome "by the blood of the Lamb" and by the word of His testimony, and to love not his life unto the death" (See Rev. 12. 11). And all this, not as a matter of profit to himself but, as the least possible expression of his gratitude for that wondrous love shewn toward him.

But to proceed, all these uses of the living Word of God for the instruction of His children; all these explanations of the necessity of the likeness in order to see Him and to dwell with Him; and the repeated statements of the expectation that every believer will be seeking to walk worthy of such a wondrous purpose are followed by, or mingled with, definite instructions as to our behaviour under the discipline, in order that the purpose shall be accomplished as speedily and as perfectly as possible. Let us now look briefly at a few of them as given in the chapter before us (Hebrews 12). Verse 1, "lay aside every weight" (encumbrance, R.V. Margin) "and the sin which doth so easily beset us." Now we readily understand the weight or encumbrance, as that habit or indulgence in our lives which, while not necessarily sinful, is yet inexpedient; is not worth while for a believer; and so let us examine ourselves as to that which may be hindering the running of the race, which possibly may stumble others, and even may make them doubt if we know the Lord at all. But "the sin which doth so easily beset us," what can this be? In the preceding chapter (Hebrews 11) we have the wonders wrought by the heroes of the faith, and this suggests to us that the sin here referred to is none other than the too common sin of unbelief. And of this there can scarcely be a doubt, if we read the alternative readings given in the margin of the Revised Version, where we find for "easily besets," "doth closely cling to us," or "is admired by many," and these descriptions of unbelief will be recognised at once by the youngest believer, who very early in the christian life learns that the man is most popular to-day who throws most doubt on God's holy Word. So that our present responsibility is to cultivate simple unquestioning faith in that Word given to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, and through it to learn to trust

Him more and more Who said "ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14. 1, R.V. and Margin).

But now, **secondly**, we are to run the race "looking unto Jesus," "looking off," or "from" all other sources of inspiration and encouragement to Him Who is "Author and Finisher" of faith; and Who, "for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down (in triumph) at the right hand of the throne of God." And this "looking" is to be continuous and persevering, so as to "consider" Him and His patient endurance of the contradiction of sinners, as a preventative of soul-fainting (see R.V.), and to remember the exhortation "my son despise not thou the chastening (child-training) of the Lord, nor faint, when thou art rebuked of Him." His child-trainings do but prove His love, and are an evidence of real relationship; and so much so, that if the training be absent, we may doubt the sonship! And if, as dutiful children in an earthly family, we acknowledged the parental right to correct us, how much more ought we to "be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live," for our earthly fathers chastened (child-trained) us after their own pleasure" (as seemed meet to them), but "He for our profit that we might be partakers of His holiness"! and although the training at present seems grievous rather than joyous, it produces pleasing fruits to those who continually submit to it, as the athlete persists and perseveres with his training in view of the prize to be won.

But, **thirdly**, and as a sort of present conclusion to the subject (verse 12), as David encouraged himself in God, so the limp hands and feeble knees must be strengthened, and crooked paths must be made straight (i.e., consistency of life must be carefully sought for) lest that which is lame be made worse (dislocated), but rather let healing power go forth from the life; and pursue peace with all, and holiness (sanctification) which is essential to a sight of the Lord. And all of this is to be diligently attended to, lest others fall from grace (i.e., get into legal bondage, through being stumbled by the inconsistent behaviour of fellow believers). And again "lest" (as a further consequence) a root of bitterness spring up to the defilement of many (what a sad possibility to result from the careless walk of a child of God!); but yet again, once more, "lest" as a consequence of careless behaviour, causing weakness in an assembly, a profane person finds his way into the company of God's gathered-out saints to their sorrow and shame! (the profane person doubtless being an unconverted one, an "earth dweller" (see Revelation); a man-made brick, but not a "living

stone." Thus, by the discipline of life, by His child-training of His sons, does our gracious God and Father seek to accomplish His eternal purpose of having suitable companions for His beloved Son, and joint heirs with that Son of His, who through His rich grace, shall be one day with Him, "also glorified together" (Romans 8. 17).

(To be continued (D.V.) at a future date.)

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"They that are Christ's at His Coming."

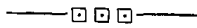
IT is taught by some that when the Lord comes, only those christians who are faithful and looking for Him will go, and the others will be punished for their unfaithfulness by being allowed to go through "the Great Tribulation" that follows the Rapture. One can only heave a great sigh of relief and say, Thank God that is **not true**. No! No! A thousand times no! Scripture teaches no such thing. It is "the dead in Christ" that rise, not **some** of them only. Then "we who are alive and remain" are to be changed, not **some** only. The Church, the body of Christ, is **one**. (Ephesians 4. 4).

You cannot divide the body. And to make **part** of the body suffer in the Tribulation would be to divide the body, and make Christ suffer in His members, **judgment from God** again. For the tribulation, remember, is God's **judgment** on apostasy, though He uses men as His instruments to execute it. It is simply unthinkable that any member of the body of Christ could thus suffer judgment from God. It is practically making a **purgatory** for unfaithful saints, ere they can be with the Lord.

Besides, how strange it would be to leave the living unfaithful ones to suffer, and allow the dead unfaithful ones to escape.

For those who teach this doctrine allow that **all the dead saints rise**, irrespective of their previous conduct. But why this difference? No, no! We again say, it is **the whole Church of God**, and all the heavenly saints; all embraced in that precious sentence, "**They that are Christ's** (not **some**) at His coming" (1 Cor. 15. 23). All are to be "caught up together" and ushered into the Father's house. It will be the greatest transformation scene in the world's history.

The Precious Book.



By G. HAMILTON (New Ferry).

THE Christ of God fills and floods the sacred Scriptures with His own glorious presence. Like the temple of creation, and the temple of the divine habitation, every whit utters His glory. Christ is the sum and substance, the centre and circumference, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last of divine revelation. Indeed, He is ALL in ALL. He is seen in picture and prophecy, in figure and fact, and in every man whether by contrast or comparison. As every piece of rope belonging to the British Navy bears the thin red line of the British Government, and can be seen and easily recognised though cut into the smallest pieces possible, so can Christ be seen and recognised in every paragraph and page.

He is seen from Genesis to Revelation, and He binds the sixty-six books and makes them One Book. Nothing more and nothing less is the grand secret of its unity. So perfect is the revelation that human subtraction or addition are strictly forbidden.

If the Word of God were imperfect would it not disgrace its Author? But, if this were so, it would be the only imperfect thing that ever left His hand. Men never dream of making perfect the sun, moon, or stars, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, or the fish of the sea. They readily recognise that perfection is stamped upon the blade of grass and upon the wings of every insect. And is it not just here that the work of God and the work of man is in eternal contrast? As for God His work, as well as His way, is perfect. As for man his work is imperfect. The power of microscopic vision only tends to raise into prominence the perfection of the work and Word of God, while man's work becomes more and more rugged. Men, who once were critics, have applied this test to the precious page of Holy Writ, and have been gloriously saved.

For centuries a ceaseless attack has been made against the Bible. But, like Israel, the more it was persecuted, the more it multiplied and grew. Bibles have been both burned and buried, but no fire ever kindled has ever extinguished them, and no grave ever dug has concealed them. It would appear as if the "fires of persecution" only loosened the bonds that tied it (c.f. Daniel 3) to give it a more widespread distribution, and that "the grave" only proved that, like the Man it presents, it could not be holden of death. Up from the grave it has come to live in the power of an eternal life.

Voltaire might say that the Bible, in a hundred years after his day, would be only a "relic of curiosity," and a "book of history," but, while he has passed into history, and his printing press, which published his infidel letters, is now publishing Bibles, is indeed a relic of curiosity, the Word of God liveth and abideth and multiplieth. Every year, with few exceptions, shows a decided increase in the publication and distribution of the Scriptures. And may this not be true till the Man of God's purpose puts all things under His feet?

In bygone pagan days men tried to destroy the Word, but without success; in more recent times the infidel world, such as Voltaire and Payne, have sought to deny it—this effort has decidedly failed. But now we are confronted with the religious world which seeks to overthrow and undermine the Truth. The Devil, once seen as the roaring lion, is revealing himself at the moment as an angel of light. He finds his dupes amongst the professors of theology (?) who are described as Reverends, but would answer far better to rebels. They cannot get rid of the Scriptures, and full well they know it, so they seek to decry and deride them. All that is possible to be said against them has been said. They roar and rage against them—they cut and carve them—but they remain impregnable and indestructible. Their sceptical hammers wear out, but the "Anvil" of the Word remains untouched and unconcerned. The waves of human fury may beat and lash hard upon and against "This Rock," yet they hurt or harm it not. He who sits in the heavens shall laugh and shall soon have them in derision. Their end shall assuredly be untimely, and their doom inevitable. The proud tread of the Modernist shall be brought low, his stout heart broken, and his blasphemous tongue forced to confess the profundity and perfection of the Holy Scriptures.

If Modernism has anything better than "the Word of God" to give us why not give it to us? On the other hand, if it has nothing better why seek to rob us of that which benefits and blesses us? Saints have drawn comfort from it down through the ages—they have tasted, and so have we—that the Lord is gracious. To us who believe, Christ is precious, how could we have ever known Him, or drawn from His inexhaustible fulness, but for the Bible. Beloved, it is indisputable to us, and we cannot afford to sacrifice one jot or tittle. Let us be thoroughly prepared to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto us, to continue to read its precepts, and to carry out its soul-emancipating principles in our lives. We know whom we have believed, and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day.

Principles of Scripture Interpretation.

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By H. DENNETT.

Part V.—The Figurative Language of Scripture.

IT is one of the peculiarities of almost every language that men seldom mean exactly what they say. If a book is written for tiny children and is read by an adult it will appear very flat and uninteresting. The cause of this is not only that very short words are necessarily used, but the language itself is practically devoid of all figures of speech which would not be understood by the little ones. At the other end of the scale is descriptive poetry which so abounds in the figurative that we often have to read a phrase more than once to be sure what is meant by the writer.

Some of the more ordinary figurative expressions are so familiar to us that to explain them borders on the absurd—for example, “the kettle boils,” or the “grate is smoking.” So frequently do such phrases enter into our every day speech that we are scarcely conscious that they are being used in any but their literal sense.

When, however, we come to the Scriptures we are faced with this problem in an intensified form. The original languages of Scripture employ figures of speech to a far greater extent than is the case with the English. The reader may ask, “How does this affect me, seeing we have such excellent translations into our own tongue?” It is, indeed, with thankfulness that we realise that one needs know but his own tongue in order to read the Word of God. At the same time a translation does but turn Hebrew and Greek words and certain phrases into English or some other modern tongue.

The idioms and figures of speech which are the very soul of a language are merely transliterated—put into an English dress, but retain their original form. There are certainly some “Modern Speech” translations of the Scriptures that do attempt to translate “ideas” as well as words, though with somewhat doubtful success. These will be discussed in a later paper dealing with Literal Renderings.

Even in English there is sometimes room for doubt as to whether an expression is to be taken literally or not, and we should therefore be doubly on the alert when reading a book such as the Scriptures where the basic frame of the language is as far removed from our native tongue as is Russian or Sanskrit.

Actually there are instances in the Scriptures where the native hearers themselves have misunderstood the sense, esteeming a statement to be literal when it was meant figuratively. There is a case of this in Matthew 16. 6 where the Lord Jesus, after a conflict with the Pharisees, said to His disciples, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.” The disciples reasoned among themselves thinking this was because they had forgotten to take bread with them, but the Lord had to explain to them that He had in view the “doctrine” of the Pharisees.

We will now briefly describe some of the principle figures of speech used in the Holy Scriptures.

In Hosea 12. 10 we read, “I have used **similitudes** by the ‘hand’ of the prophets,” and there we have a reference to the simplest of all figures of speech in any language—the **simile**. When we say that one thing is “like” another we use this figure. Matthew 3. 16, the Spirit descended “like” a dove. There are a very great number of instances of the use of this figure in the Scriptures. In our previous paper we considered the symbols of Scripture, and a study of similes will be found of great help in understanding them. A thing that is used as a symbol in one place—with no explanation as to its meaning in the context, will often be found employed as a simile in another passage. In S. of S. 5. 13, “His lips as ‘lilies,’” indicates that these flowers (they are really anemones) are symbolic of the redness of health and beauty—“whiteness” as our real lilies would be an unhealthy symptom. This helps us to understand Matthew 6. 28 where the robe of Solomon is likened to the same anemone indicating that the kingly robe of Israel was scarlet—not white. Link this with the scarlet found so frequently in the construction of the tabernacle and the priestly garments and there is an interpretation based on the varied use of the word within the Scripture.

There is no better way to appreciate the full force of symbol and figurative language combined, than to attempt a paraphrase of say a few verses of the Canticles so as to avoid every phrase and expression that is not absolutely literal. Not only would such a paraphrase be clumsy in the extreme, but it would be flat and uninteresting to a degree, as compared with the poetic beauty of the original.

Similes are simple to interpret because the parallel is always indicated by "as," "like," or some such word. The next figure, the **metaphor** is more difficult. A simile says that a thing is LIKE something else—a metaphor says that it IS that thing. "I am the door," said the Lord Jesus, and we all know what He meant. The amazing part is that the Romanists should be so blind as to fail to see the similar metaphor in "This is My body." That fearful contention as to transubstantiation (dreadful word) might have been saved. Any metaphor may be expanded into a simile, as "This is a figure of, or representative of my body." A metaphor, therefore, is necessarily obscure, and what has already been said as to the interpretation of symbols will apply to this figure also.

Sometimes a metaphor is merely implied, it being left to the perceptions of the hearers to rightly apply the figure. One such case has already been cited—the leaven of the Pharisees. In John 2. 19 the Lord said, "Destroy this temple," and all around thought that He was referring to the building of Herod, but "He spake of the temple of His body."

The juvenile definition of a **parable** as "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning" is fairly accurate if not exhaustive. The object of parabolic speech (also allegories which are a very similar figure) is to give greater point and more vivid imagery to a discourse. Apart from the inimitable parables of the Lord Jesus in the Gospels the following are worthy of careful consideration—Jotham's parable in Judges 9, the beautiful little allegory of the thistle and the cedar in 2 Kings 14. 9, and the self-explained instance of Galatians 4. 24.

The figures mentioned up to now are all based on some resemblance between the literal fact and that which is used to represent it, but there is another class founded on some property or association of the thing in question.

Of these figures the simplest is the **Metonym** (which means a change of name). A thing is described not by its own name but by that of some accomplishment or incidental circumstance connected with it. Song of Sol. 1. 8 is a good instance of its use. To express the same thought without the figure would be "Go thy way following those who have preceded you," but how much more striking is "Go thy way in the **footsteps** of the flock." Isaiah 6 is another of many instances of this figure. "The **voice** said cry."

A similar figure to **Metonym**, one with rather a long name, is that of **Synecdoche**, or the putting of a part for the whole—or the reverse. Isaiah 6, "**All flesh** is grass," meaning, of course, specially human beings and the duration of their life. In S. of S. 4. 8 the "lions' den" would refer to **every** place of danger. Under this figure come cases where the exact number is put for a general quantity, or the reverse. 1 Cor. 14. 19 is an instance of the former.

There are other kinds of figures that depend on an apparent contradiction, as **antithesis**. "I am black, but comely," "I die daily." Under this heading comes the **epigram**, many choice specimens of which are found in the Scriptures.

Finally, there is yet a class of figure of speech which appeals not so much to the intellect as do those already cited, but rather to the imagination. These have an important place in the Scripture which, with its colourful description and fervent exhortation powerfully stirs the mind and heart of the reader.

Hyperbole. This is a figure that means "exaggeration," and is sometimes a fault in ordinary composition, but in certain cases it is used intentionally to heighten the effect and give a very strong impression of magnitude or degree. "They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions"—David's lament for Saul and Jonathan.

Personification. Here inanimate things for the sake of vividness are credited with life and action. "The **voice** of thy brother's blood." It was pointed out in the first paper that one of the difficulties in understanding the Scriptures is the way in which the theme suddenly changes. This may sometimes be accounted for, by a figure known as "Apostrophe" (meaning "turning away"). Isaiah 14. 12-20 is a case. In between other matter one Lucifer is addressed.

In "**Vision**" a thing or scene yet to come is described as before the eyes of the speaker. Isaiah 24 is a singular mixture of this visionary and prophetic style which together make a powerful appeal to the reader. Ezekiel is specially given to this style.

In considering whether or not a statement should be taken literally, respect must be given to the setting of the passage, the speaker, and the object of the statement. If the literal statement is contrary to logical order and sense or above all, in conflict with other portions of Scripture, then a figure may be suspected. Isaiah 1. "Your hands are full of blood" is a clear instance where the use of a figure is obviously to be understood, giving as it does power and vigour to the thought.

Finally, never let us think that to take a statement figuratively is to "water down" the force of the exhortations of Scripture. It would be easier far for many a man to go to the hospital and have his right hand amputated than to resolutely deal with a besetting sin that is constantly causing him to stumble.

Could the necessity for drastic action be more graphically set forth than in the words "If thy right hand offend thee cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Matthew 5. 30).

Bible Studies in Genesis.By **ROBERT LEE.****Study No. 23.} Gen. 11. 1-9.****The Tower of Babel.****ERECTED:-**

1. For self-glorification.
2. To thwart God's purposes and commands.
3. To unify humanity.
4. To establish idolatry.

ESTABLISHED—CALLED OUT. In this eleventh chapter two outstanding facts are recorded—the building of Babel and the call of Abraham, or man's attempt to establish himself upon the earth, and God calling a man out of it to find his portion and home in God and in Heaven.

SOME POINTS TO BE NOTICED. A special unity (verse 1) "one lip and of one word," i.e., not only same language but a striking oneness. "Journeyed" (2) literally, "as they pulled up their tent stakes." "They found" (2)—contrast this with Noah's find (6. 8). "A city and a tower" (4) deciding to abolish Tent for City life. "A city and a tower," not "a city with a tower." The remains of the tower can be seen to-day, 6 miles from the site of Babylon. "The Lord came down" (5) always associated with special judgment. Man said "Go to" twice (3 and 4) God but once (7). Here in verse 7 is the origin of divers languages. God gives various tongues as an expression of His judgment, but in Acts 2 He gives various tongues as an expression of His grace. In Rev. 7 all tongues are gathered round the Lamb in Glory.

WHY TOWER BUILT. (a) To force their way into Heaven? No; Heaven had no attractions for them. (b) For refuge in case of Flood? No; else they would have erected it upon a mountain, not on a low plain. (c) "Make us a name"—(4) self-glorification. (d) Thwart God's purposes. God said "scatter" (9. 1), they said "lest we be scattered" (4). (e) To unify humanity: "Which they have imagined to do" (6). Implying that the building of Babel and Tower was only the commencement of a further source of rebellion. God's ideal is a world-union through Christ (Eph. 1. 10), this was the first of many subsequent attempts to found a world union by war and diplomacy **without** Christ. What about Psalm 127. 1.

Study No. 24.} Gen. 12. 1-9.**Abraham—The Emigrant.****A CHRISTIAN LIFE, AS ABRAHAM'S, IS A LIFE--**

- (1) Saved by the Lord -- Acts 7: 2.
- (2) Of Separation -- Gen. 12: 1.
- (3) Of Obedience -- . . . 4.
- (4) Of Faith -- Heb. 11: 8.
- (5) Confronted by obstacles Gen. 12: 1.
- (6) Of sacrifice. Exchanging a palace for a tent.
- (7) Full of compensations.
- (8) Fruitfulness in service (12: 2)
- (9) Lived in midst of enemies (12: 6)
- (10) Can be a life of Communion (12: 7)

ABRAHAM THE HEBREW (14. 13) means literally "The man from the other side." It was the Canaanites who thus christened the Patriarch.

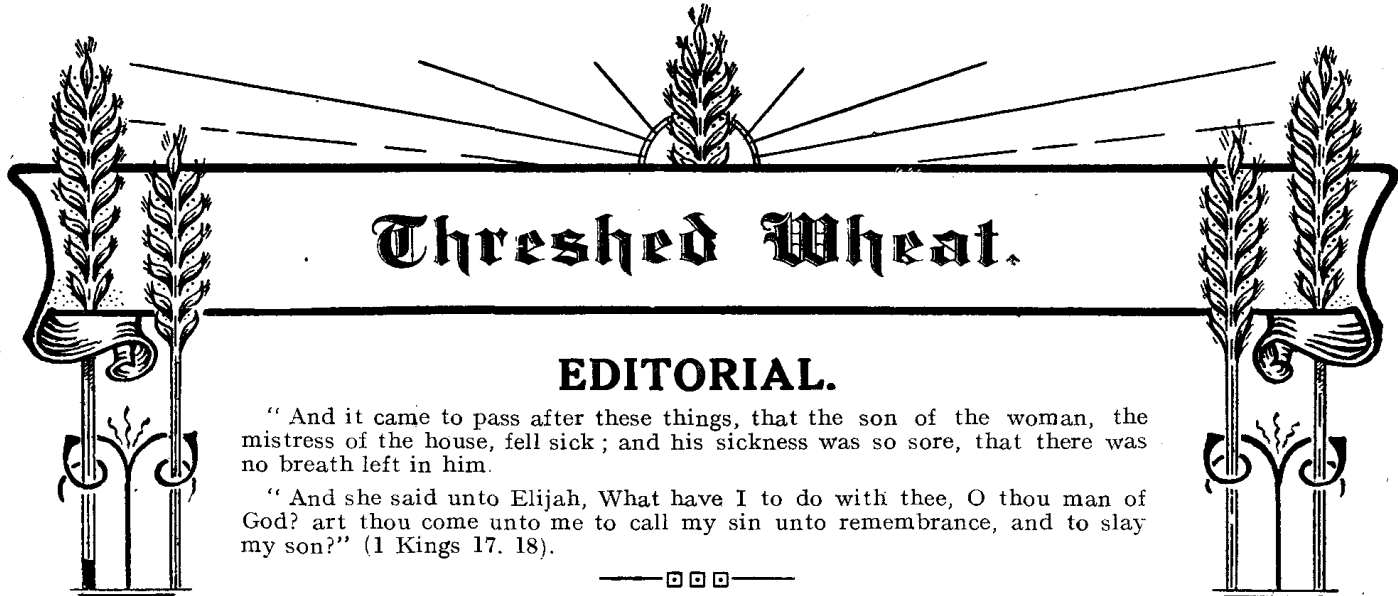
BLESSING. In turning from the world to select one man it was to bless the world through that one (12. 3). Ur, Abraham's native city, was a wealthy place with a lending library, devoted to worship of the Moon god, Hurki, from whom it derived its name. The Temple of Ur was a wonderful structure—made of plastered bricks, and beautifully coloured marble. On top was a platform for the study and worship of Heaven. To Abraham an idolater (Joshua 24. 2) whose soul was shrouded in the awful darkness of heathendom, the Glorious Lord revealed Himself in wondrous grace (Acts 7. 2).

COMPENSATION. He was taken from his own people, only to become the head of another; gave up one country to receive promise of another; he lost his good name only to become greater (12. 2).

Study No. 25.} Gen. 12. 10-20.**Abraham in Egypt.****SOME RESULTS OF ABRAHAM'S FALSE STEP.**

- (1) Loss of Communion.
- (2) Unnecessary difficulty - verse 11.
- (3) Led to a policy of deception.
- (4) Brought others into trouble - Sarai & Pharaoh 14&17
- (5) Exposed a godly man to the rebuke of the ungodly.

IN EGYPT. Why he had just entered Canaan! Yes, only too true. Egypt is never far away from any of us. It was Tennyson's firm conviction that "worldliness is one of the most besetting sins of the age, and one harder to root out than untruthfulness and impurity, because while none harbour those sins without their presence betraying itself, worldliness could exist unsuspected until it has possessed the whole nature."



Threshed Wheat.

EDITORIAL.

“ And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick ; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

“ And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin unto remembrance, and to slay my son?” (1 Kings 17. 18).

ELIJAH'S LONELY MINISTRY. Part 7.

ALONE WITH THE DEAD CHILD.

THE portion of the narrative which we have now to contemplate, is a striking exemplification of that saying of our blessed Lord, “Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth that it may bring forth more fruit.” Zarephath, the name of the city where Elijah found a refuge with the widow and her son, means **a smelting furnace.** And it was to prove a furnace in very truth to the prophet himself as well as to his hostess.

Elijah appears to be spending a very inactive life at Zarephath and one which most of us would fain avoid, but this man of God made no attempt to run before the Lord, no more than he did to lag behind when the command came “Get thee to Cherith.” How blessed it is to keep in step with the Master, who never is before His time and never is behind.

Whoever is circumstanced, as it were, like Elijah at Zarephath; whoever is precluded from outward activity and usefulness in the world by want of means and opportunities, or of gifts and influence, or by weakness or age, let him think with Elijah, that it is the Lord's hand which has thus laid him aside; and instead of inwardly repining, let him keep the noiseless tenor of his way with thankfulness to God. And if indeed he lean on the bosom of the Lord Jesus, and can rejoice in the blessings of God's house, let him

sit under His shadow with great delight, and be only the more thankful for it. **Let us not think it necessary to the evidence of our sincerity, that we should be sad and sorrowful, much less gloomy and desponding.** Continue at Zarephath, fellow-christian, as long as God pleases.

God would here reveal Himself not only as the Sustainer of life in time of famine, but as the Giver of life when in a condition of death.

In order that God's purposes may be fulfilled very strange happenings befall the children of

men. But whatever comes to the child of God, of two things we may always be assured: that it is all for God's glory and our good. When Lazarus whom Jesus loved was taken from his sisters by death Jesus said, “This sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God,” and so in this Old Testament record we perceive a similar purpose behind all its strange surroundings.

The natural would have expected that because this dear widow woman had given to the prophet out of her scanty store and had indeed put God first in the material things of life, that **BECAUSE** of this she should be exempt from further trial and sorrow. Indeed, how often do we not reason thus, but the Saviour said, “Every branch that **beareth** fruit, He purgeth that it may bring forth more fruit.”

I Have Commanded.

“I have commanded the ravens ;
There they shall feed thee.” . . . For days
“Bread and meat morning and evening ”
(This, for the one who obeys !)
“Go hide thyself.” And he **TRUSTED** ;
Though it was sent in strange ways.

“I have commanded a widow
She shall sustain thee.” . . . God's love
Never will leave His dear children ;
One way—or other, they'll prove.
“Ravens ? ” or “Widow ? ” What matters ?
HE gives **COMMAND**, from above.

Each time he went, when God **SENT** him,
Let us each one, then, obey.
Sometimes our life-plans may force us
To go where we choose not—to **STAY** !
BUT—still our **HEARTS** may obey **HIM** :
Since it is **HIS** chosen way.

L. M. WARNER.

It is

THE FRUITFUL BRANCH

that is purged. Thus, not only is she asked to part with her last meal as it seemed, but now also with her only son. Sorrow upon sorrow appeared to be her portion and may be, dear child of God, your condition to-day is similar to that of this dear woman. **"BUT** God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted (tried) above that ye are able" (1 Cor. 10. 13).

For what purpose, then, was this painful visitation sent? We may ask such a question, though we must never pry too minutely into the reason of everything that befalls us; for now we can know but in part. We cannot interpret all God's dealings at present. His way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters. But of this we may be assured, that "all His works are truth, and His ways judgment," or righteousness; and we shall see this more clearly in a better world.

Of one thing we can speak with certainty and that is that the voice of the Lord to her soul was heard in this latest sorrow and it pierced her conscience more deeply than the trial of the famine, showing her firstly her condition, and secondly the person she had been entertaining. Does this not show the power of a godly life. Some sin of years ago lay hidden in her breast and it is called to remembrance by the Lord's hand being then laid upon her. Oh, how trial and sorrow draws us closer to our Lord and as we thus get nearer to Himself how it simultaneously reveals all that we are apart from Him. How vile and unclean we see ourselves to be. The nearer we are to Christ the more conscious we shall be of our own failure and shortcomings, and the more we shall wonder why it is He loves us so. She made two great discoveries that day—"My sin" "Thou man of God."

As the believer grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ so he or she likewise learns in a far deeper measure than ever before what the human heart is—deceitful and wicked—and what Christ is—the Son of God.

THE DEAD CHILD.

Elijah took the dead child, laid him upon his own bed and cried unto the Lord. Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and again cried unto the Lord.

Here we learn that the effectual fervent prayer is neither elaborate nor lengthy. Elijah cried to the Lord—there was much in that cry which was never expressed in words. Some prayers are never framed in words at all, they are heart expressed to God. Elijah had prayed before, as we saw earlier in our study, and the

Heavens were sealed, and the rain ceased to fall. He petitioned God for something which it had never been known for God to do before—but God did it. Elijah had prayed and Elijah had believed God. Now again he asks for something which God had .

NEVER DONE BEFORE.

Again he prayed, again he believed God, and again God answers his prayer. Beloved we **HAVE** a God—a Father—who does **hear** and who does **answer** prayer. But do we pray? Do we **believe God** when we pray? God cannot fail—where then is the failure? Mark you this second prayer of Elijah **cost** him something as did his first prayer. Not only does he cry to the Lord, but he stretches himself three times upon the child. That wanted doing, you know. It was no easy task. No doubt many of our readers are either parents or Sunday school teachers. We are daily having dealings with the dead child (spiritually). We long for our children to be saved—to become possessors of eternal life. Well then

DO WE PRAY?

Pray, I mean, not mere repetition of words. Do we really PRAY—cry to the Lord? If we do, then let us remember that **that of itself is not enough**. There must be the stretching of ourselves. Ah! yes, it **will** take time, it **WILL** take energy and spiritual life to do this, it **WILL** cost us something, it **WILL** mean a consistent godly life lived before that child, but it must be done if we are to accomplish that which we desire, and have really prayed for. The child must feel contact with life. Must **see** in evidence—feel the WARMTH of a real christian life. There will be much to be done which to us is so elementary, so foolishly simple we may think, but only as we

STRETCH OURSELVES TO THE CHILD,

will there be anything really accomplished for God.

"And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah and the soul of the child came into him again and he lived" (Margin).

I am quite sure that were it not for this verse this prayer of Elijah's would not pass uncensured by us, for the language of the prayer of this man of God has many striking features about it. "O Lord my God," cried he, "hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?" What! does Elijah speak before the living God, of bringing evil; does he venture to approach Jehovah's throne with such a question, and with such a complaint? Yes: he speaks as his heart dictates.

But how does this agree with all our notions and maxims concerning acceptable prayer? Here we have an unconditional prayer—a prayer too for something temporal—a prayer for a miracle—a prayer without limitations; yet the Lord heard and answered it. Yes, our gracious God does not bind Himself to our maxims, nor suffer Himself to be limited by our rules.

I am persuaded more than ever, beloved brethren and sisters, that the more we take God at His word, the more we really treat Him as a "Father"; the more we become as little children in these matters, so the more we shall be blessed and enjoy our inheritance in the Lord. We have become **too advanced**, we are **too educated spiritually**, and have in consequence lost our simple childlike confidence. May we all, more and more, get back to the bed-rock of faith. God says it—I believe it—just because

"GOD SAYS IT."

—□□□—

**WHAT THE MISSIONARY THINKS OF
"THRESHED WHEAT."**

BANGALORE,
S. INDIA,

JULY, 1930,

MY DEAR BROTHER VALLANCE,

I don't know how you found me out or why you posted me "Threshed Wheat," but I must tell you I have looked out for it each month, for it is just fine and being cut off from saint fellowship, and giving out to both saint and sinner I have found much seed thought in all you wonderfully crowd into its pages.

One is perfectly sure of not being side tracked by any of the articles, for they are sound, lucid, condensed scriptural and helpful, and a word also for saved, unsaved, backslider, young and old. I am glad to have it in my home and I bless God that He has raised up such to give us the counsel of God untarnished and unfettered.

Go on dear brother the time is short, and scatter such literature to all you can. I am nearly 40 years in India and enjoy such papers to-day as I did in my first years, yea more now, for there is so much spurious stuff being issued from so-called christian presses.

With hearty greetings in our Lord.

Yours in Him and for Him,

WYLAM H. KING.

—□□□—

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Honesty in Small Things.

"**J**OHN, you might fetch me up some of these big nails with you at dinner-time." John was a joiner; and it was meant that he should put some of his employer's nails in his pocket, and bring them up. But John was a child of God, and had been taught out of God's Word to "steal no more." Although many a one would not call that stealing, yet it was quite clear to John that he would be taking what was not his own. At dinner-time John produced the nails, which were declared to be the very thing that was wanted. "But of course," said John, "I got these in Mr. So-and-so's the ironmongers and paid for them." But this was not what had been intended, and all the thanks John got was, "What a simple fellow you are!" Yes, John was "simple concerning evil," as all God's people ought to be. Beware of drawing your pen through the word "steal," and writing "take," because it is a small thing, which the world calls "neither here nor there." Taking a "small thing" which is not our own, is "stealing." Faithfulness in that which is little was plainly taught by the Lord Himself. He called the servant a good servant, to whom He said, "Thou hast been faithful in a very little; have thou authority over ten cities" (Luke 19. 17). When you see a man faithful in little things, you can trust him to any extent. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much" (Luke 16. 10). This reminds us of a believer who was first aroused to concern about separation in rather a strange way. He was in a public work where much mahogany wood was used; and every night, just before the work closed, he was astonished to see not only the world but professing christians filling their pockets with little blocks of the wood: a thing which they would never have attempted had their master been standing by. The brother referred to, saw that a separation of some kind was urgently needed. This caused him to think; and, one step after another, the Lord led him, until he could praise God for the separating power of the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. What reproach is often brought on that name by doing mean things for the sake of a few paltry pence! But no matter what the sum involved, let us, as servants, be delivered from every thing that will not stand the light of an earthly master's eye; and, if we are walking before our heavenly Master, and seeking to serve Him, it shall be so.

WM. SHAW.

Notes of a Bible Reading on Phil. 2. 1-11.



By A. R. THOBURN (Late of Singapore).

IN this passage we see divinity becoming humanity, and humanity becoming humble. Self-effacement is at the root of all virtues. In the Lord Jesus we do not see self-denial but an emptying of self, and if we desire to follow His footsteps we must go beyond self-denial, and practice a **denial of self**. God's way of promoting is for one to go down. In verses 1 and 2 of this chapter there are five links in the golden chain of unity.

1. If there be any consolation in Christ.
 2. Any comfort of love.
 3. Any fellowship of the spirit.
 4. Any bowels (or compassions).
 5. Any mercies.
- (Or "the tender cheer that love gives").

Man looks for outward signs of unity, but these things are God's essentials.

From this chain there are many pendants or results.

1. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory. There will be no party spirit.
2. "In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves." This is the tone and spirit of humility. The original Greek word means **tapestry**, and the thought is that we should be content to be like the tapestry carpet to make things smooth and comfortable for those who walk over it.
3. "Look not every man on his own things," etc. We are thoughtful of others, our prayers will be characterized by their **breadth** (not their length), and our interests will not be covered by our own umbrellas. At the same time it does not tell us to neglect our own things, our own households, etc., and this is a danger with some.

Verse 5 says, "Let this mind be in you." The word means **disposition** or **temperament**. In 1 Cor. 2. 16 we read, "We have the mind of Christ." Here the word means **knowledge** and not temperament.

Verses 6-11. The Lord Jesus took seven steps **downward**, and God has given Him seven steps upwards.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. He did not seek equality with God. | (1) God hath highly exalted Him. |
| 2. He made Himself of no reputation. | (2) God hath given Him a name above every name. |
| 3. He took the form of a servant. | (3) God hath made Him Lord of all. |
| 4. He was made in the likeness of man. | (4) The beings in Heaven bow to Him. |
| 5. Being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself. | (5) Beings on earth bow to Him. |
| 6. Became obedient unto death. | (6) Beings under the earth bow. |
| 7. Even the death of the cross. | (7) Every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord. |

Verse 10. At the name of **Jesus** every knee will bow. This is the last name by which He speaks to us in His Word (Rev. 22. 16). "I **Jesus** have sent Mine angel to testify unto you."

Notes for Bible Readers

The Old Testament contains:—
929 Chapters (including Psalms).
23,214 Verses.

The New Testament contains:—
260 Chapters.
7,959 Verses.

It has been computed that the total number of words in the Bible amount to about 773,700, and the total number of letters to about 3,566,500.

Three "Sine Qua Nons."

1. Of forgiveness. **"Without** shedding of blood, no remission."
2. Of pleasing God. **"Without faith,** impossible to please Him.
3. Of seeing God. **"Without holiness,** no man shall see the Lord.

W. H. BEGBIE.

Principles of Scripture Interpretation.

—□□□—

By H. DENNETT.

Part VI.

Find out the Literal Meaning.

WE English folk are in rather a peculiar position in reference to the Holy Scriptures. For over 300 years one version has been so standardised that until recently it has hardly had a serious rival. Such a wealth of affection and admiration has gathered around the translation of the time of King James that in the eyes of many it amounts almost to heresy to depart from it in any way.

That the Authorised Version of the Scriptures is a masterpiece of English literature that well entitles it to such admiration all will agree. There are many men of letters who regularly read it—not that they believe its teachings but on account of its unsurpassed grandly simple Anglo-Saxon. But the devout student of the sacred page has far deeper interest than that in his Bible. For him it is the unfolding of the mind of God, and what he seeks is not so much rhetorical effect but clarity and fidelity to the original.

The frequent changes that speakers are apt to make in the renderings of the A.V. when commenting on Scripture may puzzle some who have learned to regard that version as an almost final authority in the things of God. It is therefore of the utmost importance that there should be a closer understanding of the relative values of the various translations in English to the original languages of the Scriptures.

No better insight can be had of the difficulties of making a faithful translation from one language to another than by listening to the ludicrous mistakes that a foreigner will make in speaking our language—or to note the amused smiles of the natives when **we** air our French.

If corresponding words had exactly the same meanings in any two languages there would be no difficulty whatever in making a translation from one to another. All that would be required would be a dictionary and a lot of patience. This unfortunately is not the case, and an attempt to translate from Greek into English in such a manner would be absolutely unintelligible to the ordinary reader.

There are two chief reasons why the A.V. of 1611 is not adequate at the present day.

1. The critical facilities at the disposal of King James's translators were few as compared with those available to-day. They were perforce guided to a large extent by preceding versions, Latin and others, and in many cases that basis of all English translations—Tyndall's immortal work of centuries before. Three, at least, of the oldest and most correct manuscripts of the Scriptures have been discovered within the last century or so, and these have made possible a better rendering of the Scriptures based, to commence with, on a more accurate Greek text. It is quite evident that if the copies in the original tongues are faulty, owing to copiests errors, then any translation made therefrom will be likewise unreliable. Here it is very important to distinguish between "higher critics" who presume to pronounce upon the veracity and worth of Scripture, and "textual critics" whose object is the purification of the text in the original tongues from minor blemishes and errors of transcription that have crept in.

2. English being a living language has developed and changed considerably since 1611. There are quite a number of words in the A.V. that are strange to our ears to-day. We now "prevent" by obstruction, but in the A.V. it still retains the original sense of "anticipation," which the French equivalent has to this day in "prevenir." No a few passages will seem obscure unless this is realised. An important case is "atonement" which then literally meant "at-one-ment," or reconciliation, by which it should be replaced in several passages. "Atone" in modern English has more the idea of "propitiate."

In view of these difficulties of translation, no version can hope to convey to the English reader exactly those ideas and expressions that the original would represent to the first readers of the Book. It is here worth mentioning that the Bible was written in the common dialect of its day, which would correspond to our "newspaper English" apart from the occasional vulgarisms that sometimes mar those specimens of our mother tongue.

The various translations of the Bible into English may be classified thus:—

1. Those that adhere more or less closely to the original text and thus are somewhat strange sounding to English ears.
2. Those in which the translators have not attempted an exact representation of the Greek or Hebrew words, but have endeavoured to give the sense of the passage more clearly by a paraphrase or what is called a "free translation."

The "New Translation," by J.N.D.; the Authorised Version and the Revised Version would be in the former class and represent the original more or less closely in the order named.

In the latter class would be such versions as "The New Testament in Modern Speech" (Weymouth).

While the advisability of reading any other but the A.V. in public is a moot point, in private read as many versions as you can—provided they are not infidel productions. Perhaps one of the most useful editions of the Scripture for the diligent student is the "Newberry Bible." Here the text of the A.V. appears unchanged but with copious marginal notes and corrections that are wonderfully illuminating. Signs are also inserted indicating the actual tense, etc., in the original.

It is not given to many to have either the time or opportunity to study the original languages of Scripture, and it is good therefore to know that very much can be done apart from this. The intelligent use of a good concordance, together with reference to various versions will frequently throw a flood of light on the Word of God.

Here a word of warning may not be amiss. Avoid the habit of "looking it up in a commentary" when in doubt as to the meaning of a passage. Seek out the things of God for yourself and you will be benefited thereby. These notes have therefore nothing to do with **Exposition**. Search the Scriptures and you will get light from them. Search the commentaries and you will but acquire a parrot-like set of phrases.

Concordances vary considerably in plan and design and come into three main classes.

1. CRUDEN'S. This work simply groups each occurrence of words in the A.V. in alphabetical order, irrespective of the word which they represent in the original. Despite this it is a very useful book when a reference cannot be called to mind.

2. YOUNG'S is basically the same plan as Cruden's except that each word in the A.V. is subdivided into groups according to the different words in the original represented by the one in English. As an example "depart" in the A.V. stands for no less than 22 different Greek words. The references, therefore, to this word "depart" are split up into 22 sections with the Greek word at the top of each section which is translated "depart" in the places below. This arrangement enables it to be seen what is the most common meaning of a word. Also the **literal** meaning of the various Greek (or Hebrew) words is given. In the example given some of the Greek words have the special meaning of "to loose anchor" or to "depart secretly" (Jas. 2. 16). Then by a cross-index at the end of the book it is possible to ascertain how words in the original are variously translated into English—which is just the opposite to what is given in the body of the book—the various **English** words representing a single word in the original.

3. WIGRAM'S. This concordance is compiled on exactly the opposite principle to Young's. Each word in the original Hebrew and Greek is listed (in the order of the spelling in the original) **irrespective** of how the word is translated in English. The references however are given in full in the words of the A.V. A glance down a column will show at once the various renderings of any given word in the original. In this way the amazing fact comes to light that a Greek word may be represented in the A.V. by as many as FORTY different words. One of the best ways of getting an insight into the full meaning of a passage is to take the leading words in it and look them up in this concordance. See the first time a word occurs and in what circumstances.

In a paper of this length we must be content to give a few examples illustrating the point brought out above. Further search in this direction will be well repaid.

In both Greek and Hebrew (as also Latin) the pronouns I, we, thou, etc., are included in the verb. When they do occur separately it is to indicate special emphasis. The whole of the latter part of Matthew 5 depends for its point on the emphatic "**I**" that the Lord Jesus employs. "It hath been said of old time . . . but **I** say unto you."

In Isaiah 65. 13-14 there are four emphatic **“Ye’s”** contrasting the portion of the wicked with that of Jehovah’s servants.

The tense of the verb in Greek conveys finer shades of meaning than is easily expressed in English, or at any rate, than is the case in the majority of A.V. renderings. The Hebrew verb also has some important features which are not produced in the ordinary versions. Quite apart from any knowledge of the original languages, a great deal of help can be obtained in this direction by the marginal notes and special signs given in a Newberry Bible.

In Ephesians 4. 31, **“Let all bitterness . . . be put away,”** the force of the verb is to put away instantly, and that once for all, but in the following verse the sense is literally **“be ye continually kind one to another”**—keep on at it.

Another tense has the sense also of continued habit or action in the past. This is called the Imperfect, and it is of frequent occurrence. Acts 2. 44-45 is an instance. The **“having in common”** was not just a sudden impulse or **“flash in the pan,”** but a **settled habit** in the early church.

We learn from an exact rendering of Matthew 27. 5 that Judas in his awful remorse rushed right into the **Inner** Temple—the Holy Place itself—where none but the priests had right of entry. This was a thing that no sane Israelite would dream of doing.

The **poor** widow of Luke 21. 2 was a woman who supported herself by daily work, and what she cast into the treasury represented her whole day’s wages.

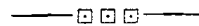
In Luke 9. 58 the Lord Jesus says, **“The birds of the air have nests . . . but the Son of Man hath not where to recline His Head”** (the actual Greek word is KLINO), but in John 19. 30 we read when the work of redemption was accomplished **“He reclined His head and gave up the Spirit.”**

The meaning of proper names in the Scripture is often a great help in interpreting a passage. So also is a study of the various names of the Deity, such as Jehovah, Elohim (God), El-Shaddai (the Almighty).

The much misunderstood 6th chapter of Hebrews is a good example of the value of the principles developed in this paper. If the literal and exact meaning of the principle words in the early verses is considered it will at once be evident that this portion can in no wise teach that a believer can possibly be lost. It will be

seen that those who were in danger of **apostasy** from which there is no recovery, were mere professors; whereas a believer though he may backslide can always count on grace to grant recovery.

The word **“partakers”** probably presents the greatest difficulty in the passage. The literal meaning is **“companions,”** or **“one that goes along with another.”** It does not follow that companions are alike in all points. The fishermen in Luke 5. 7 who had such a wonderful catch called to their **“partners”** to help them. In Psalm 45 it speaks of His **“fellows.”** Who they are we are not told, but certainly they could not be His peers in any sense. In each case it is the same word as is employed in several places in the Hebrew epistle for **“partakers.”**



On Seeing the Likeness of an Absent Friend.

It is her likeness, but it is not she:

Something is lacking only life can give:
The portrait cannot hold the witchery
Of face and form that live.

Go through its details, it is hard to tell
Where the resemblance fails; so like is it
The portrait shows you the original
Varying not one whit!

But yet it is not her we know and love!
The life—that is herself—it is not there.
The portrait cannot speak and cannot move;
And life we cannot spare.

Is it not thus with Jesus Christ our Lord?
We have His likeness in the Sacred Book;
But well He knew, much as we love the Word,
’Tis not on Him we look.

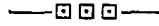
So—blessed, ever blessed be His Name!—
He sent His Spirit that we might have Him:
For with the Spirit’s Advent Jesus came*—
The vision is not dim.

WILLIAM OLNEY.

*John xiv. 17, 18.

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.



IX.—SERGIUS PAULUS.

ANOTHER Roman officer—this time the Governor of Cyprus, having his residence in Pathos. Paul and Barnabas met with him at the commencement of their first missionary tour. Called by the Holy Ghost, and commended to God with fasting and prayer by the brethren at Antioch, these devoted men were now going forth to assail the universal darkness of Gentile heathenism. Marvellous have been the results; ourselves in the West being the indirect fruit of their labours.

Landing at Salamis, the preachers passed through the island of Cyprus to Paphos (Acts 13. 1-12). There they were sent for by the Governor, Sergius Paulus, who desired to hear the Word of God. This is suggestive of previous preparation of heart by the Holy Spirit. But Paulus had a great difficulty to overcome. A false prophet and sorcerer named Elymas, or Bar-Jesus, a Jew, had acquired some influence over him, and this agent of Satan earnestly sought to divert him from the faith of Christ. The unhappy man is a remarkable type of his people. Israel should have been God's prophet to the nations. Possessed of the divine oracles, Israel should have been able to declare the mind of God to the world. Instead, this once-favoured people have fallen under the power of the devil; and in the early days of the Gospel they were his most useful instruments for the hindering of God's work of grace. Not only did they spurn the Gospel of Christ for themselves, but in every quarter they sought to prevent others from listening thereto. Many of the riots from which the apostles suffered were created by Jewish disturbers. The consequences of this for the Jewish people are stated in 1 Thess. 2. 16: "Forbidding us to speak unto the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." The smiting of the Paphos sorcerer with blindness is thus a picture of what has happened to the nation at large. This judicial blindness must continue until the Lord Jesus returns. He will then remove the veil which lies upon Israel's heart, and as the Sun of righteousness He will

dispel their darkness for ever. A ministry of comfort is in store for Israel when her iniquity is pardoned, and she has received from Jehovah's hand double for all her sins (Isaiah 40. 1-2).

Paul and Barnabas were thus withstood by Elymas the sorcerer. It is a terrible thing for anyone to stand in the way of the salvation of a man's soul. How often this happens even in our own time! Realising the mighty issues that were involved, Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, turned upon the wretched Jew, denouncing him as "full of all subtlety and all mischief, son of the devil, enemy of all righteousness," and telling him that the hand of the Lord should be upon him, so that he should be blind, "not seeing the sun for a season." The thing happened forthwith, and the opponent of the Gospel was led away by the hand from the Governor's presence.

The miracle was a striking one, and necessarily impressed Sergius Paulus; but there was a deeper work still divinely wrought in his soul. It is described thus: "Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." Faith founded on miracles only is worthless, as our Lord's experience in John 2. 23-25 shows us; but with Paulus there was more than this. "The doctrine (i.e., the teaching) of the Lord" laid hold of his heart. Romans 10. 17 says: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." In the Gospel message God presents to men a testimony concerning His Son—His God-head glory, His spotless manhood, His atoning death, and His triumphant resurrection, and this testimony God requires men to believe. Uprightness and morality and religious zeal are impossible substitutes for simple faith in God's published testimony concerning the Lord Jesus. The position, as it affects us all, is clearly stated in the following passage: "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).

Bible Studies in Genesis.

By ROBERT LEE.

Study No. 28.

Gen. 14. 17-24.

The Mysterious Melchisedec.

THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDEC IS:

- (1) A ROYAL One
- (2) "Made" not inherited Heb. 7. 21.
- (3) Made with an OATH Heb. 7. 21.
- (4) Is a SUPERIOR order Heb. 7. 4 to 10.
- (5) An order WITHOUT A SACRIFICE.
- (6) An EVERLASTING order. Heb. 7. 3, 16, 17, 23, 24.
- (7) A USEFUL order.

MELCHISEDEC is mentioned eleven times in the Bible. He is a historical character as tablets in Egypt prove. He was Pharaoh's viceroy, all other Kings recognizing his supremacy. Psalm 110. 4; Hebrews 6. 20 invests this narrative with doctrinal value.

SOME INTERESTING POINTS. The King's Dale (verse 17) is $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from Jerusalem. The old King of Sodom had fallen in the battle (verse 10), and the one mentioned in verse 17 was his successor. Why is there no mention of Lot showing any gratitude? Note the peculiar break in the narrative (verse 18); all give way before Melchisedec.

THE NEW ORDER OF PRIESTHOOD. (1) **Royal.** Known in Egypt, but prohibited in Israel (Numbers 16. 40; 18. 7.) This was Christ's prerogative. To anticipate and usurp Christ's office was to incur the brand of a leper, 2 Chron. 26. 18). (2) **"Made,"** not inherited. He was elected to that position, whereas the Aaronic priesthood was by birth. (3) **No sacrifice offered** by Melchisedec—he offered to Abraham that which pointed to a past sacrifice. (4) **Useful order** (1) bestows a blessing on God and His servant (verse 19). (2) Drew the attention of the successful servant, from his success, to the God who gave it. (3) So strengthened God's servant that he was enabled to keep a decision made in secret (verse 22).

Study No. 29.

Gen. 15.

A Message to those in Spiritual Darkness.

- (1) **WEARINESS** met by refreshment through worship.
- (2) **LONELINESS** met by the Word of God coming (verse 1).
- (3) **FEAR** met by assurance of Lord as shield (verse 1).
- (4) **REGRET AT LOSS** met by fresh revelation of God Himself.
- (5) **DISAPPOINTMENT** met by God's pledged Word (verse 4).
- (6) **VICARIOUS SUFFERING** met by Lord's presence and revealing will (verses 12 to 21).

Study No. 27. Gen. 14. 1-16.

Abraham at Hebron.

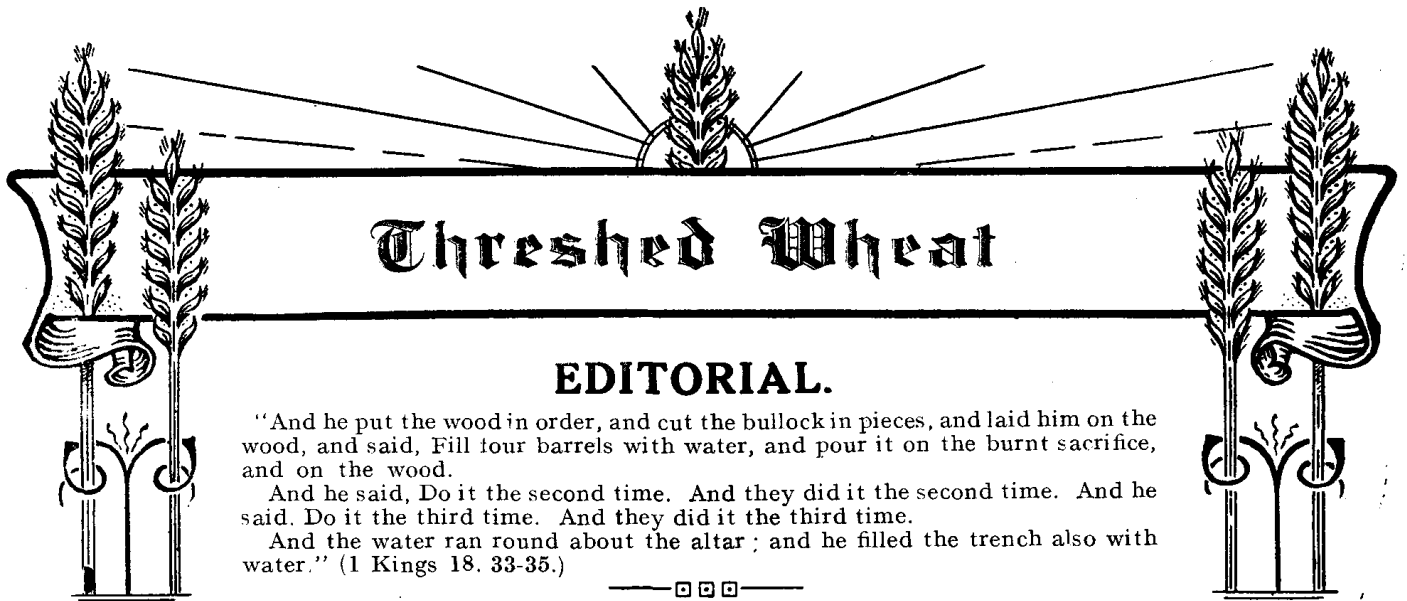
(FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD).

WAS THE MAN

- (1) Distressed ones fled to — v. 13.
- (2) Trusted by his neighbours — v. 13.
- (3) Exhibited marvellous courage.
- (4) Also a forgiving spirit.
- (5) Rendered conspicuous service to all.

FIRST BIBLE WAR. In our former study we saw Abraham as peacemaker, now we are to see him as warrior. This is the first recorded war in the Bible. This is the only military action we ever find Abraham in, but this showed he possessed real military ability, and that he could have conquered the land by his sword, only he was willing to wait God's time and way. This military confederacy (verse 1 and 2) is now a well known historical fact, though long attacked by critics. "Shinar" is Babylon; "Ellasar" is Greece; "Elam" is Persia; and "King of Nations" is Rome. Chedorlaomar, a mighty conqueror, had subjected the five Kings of the Vale of Siddim. For twelve years they paid tribute, but refused in the thirteenth (verse 4). This was serious to the mighty King of Babylonia, for through that valley the great caravan and military route to Egypt lay. One year after this great conqueror, assisted by three Kings, carried out a brilliantly planned campaign. Amongst those captured was Lot, so soon did he lose his wealth and liberty.

HEBRON. Remembering that Hebron stands for Fellowship, we see how useful those living in fellowship with God become to their day and generation. The world knows where to go when in trouble—to men and women of God (verse 13). The man of God exhibits a tender forgiving spirit. Note how tenderly Lot is referred to in verses 14 and 16. Some find it easier to forgive their enemies than their friends.



Threshed Wheat

EDITORIAL.

"And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water." (1 Kings 18. 33-35.)

ELIJAH'S LONELY MINISTRY.

PART VIII.—ALONE WITH THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

THE three and a half years are drawing to a close and Elijah is coming out from his hiding place, for he has had word from the Lord to "Go shew thyself." Ahab has scoured the country to try and find the missing prophet, but all to no avail. But now Elijah is to meet him, and lay to his charge the cause of the awful drought. Noble words of sincerity fall from his lips (see 1 Kings 18. 17, 18).

Such language as this is seldom heard upon earth. The world is full of flatterers and dissemblers, not only in palaces, but also in ordinary society. Faithful servants of God, who are dead to self-interest, who so love their brethren as to be unwilling to suffer sin upon them are rare indeed. O ye ministers of Christ, among high and low, let us not complain of the little fruit of our labours till we have first complained of our own too great love of the praise of men!

We should see greater things, were not the salutary and awful, "Thou art the man!" so entirely unknown amongst us. Gather together all the people of Israel, and the 450 prophets of Baal, says Elijah, and to that august assembly rings out those memorable words. "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God follow Him, but if Baal then follow Him."

Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. You are aware, brethren, how much there is in the feeling of being overpowered by numbers, to inject the doubt, "Am I then the only person in the right, and all these in the wrong?" How easily are we thus induced to make the gate of the way everlasting somewhat wider, and the narrow way somewhat broader; to give up this or that particular portion of the truth, and not to be so very precise and exact in the cause of the gospel. But Elijah was above the influence and operation of

circumstances like these. He was sure of the justice of his cause, and though the whole world had thought differently from himself, he had no mind to compromise, or to give place; no, not for an hour; and why? Because he was able to say, "I know in whom I have believed." He was an experimental believer, whose faith was interwoven with his existence and happiness. (Please read here 1 Kings 18. 23-40 to get the connection.)

In this test, of the God who can answer by fire, Elijah achieves another mighty victory for Jehovah. Baal's prophets having failed to call down the fire, he takes his sacrifice and with all eyes upon him requests that they take four barrels of water and pour it on the sacrifice and on the wood. No darkness is to hide the movements of this servant of God, and none shall say this thing was done in a corner or falsified in any way. Now do it a second time! Now do it a third time! and then Elijah himself filled the trench up with water and so abandons any thought of a pre-existing fire. Then Elijah prays. Notice the simple, plain, straightforward prayer; less than one hundred words.

And now, what ensues? Mysterious moment! The whole revelation of God is at stake. If no answer follows, the whole fabric falls in, and the ground of our hope is gone. Then all that Elijah has testified—all that the prophets have spoken before him, and which Elijah has confirmed, will be accounted a delusion; and the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, will be no longer regarded! The prayer is uttered. The silence of death reigns in the assembly—every heart beats high—in every face is the extreme of expectation; when, lo! the answer comes; the Amen is given; the fire of heaven descends in the sight of every one, directly upon the altar, consumes the burnt-offering, the

wood, the stones, and the earth, and licks up the water in the trench. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, Jehovah, He is the God; Jehovah, He is the God." Elijah's faith is crowned, the foolish priests are put to shame; and all the gods, which are not the God of the Bible, are confounded and annihilated.

We have already observed, on two past occasions, Elijah asking God to do something He had never done before. He asked God to seal the heavens for 3½ years, and He did it. He asked God to give life to a dead child and He did it. Now he asks God for fire from heaven and He does it. We stand and we marvel at the faith of that man of God, but he had that for which he asked because he did not ask amiss. All that he asked for was in **accordance with God's will**. Beloved, if we have God's mind when we pray and ask according to His will, He heareth us. You and I can have exactly the same confidence and boldness that Elijah had, but to do so necessitates a life lived in close communion with the Saviour so that we know His mind and ask in accordance with His will.

"Hear me, O Lord, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord." There was no selfish motive in this prayer. The fire from heaven not only consumed the sodden sacrifice, but also the stones and the wood. I venture to suggest that Elijah was a popular man at that moment. But that was not all. He now goes to the top of Carmel and with his face between his knees, he again bows before God. To his servant he says, "Go up now, and look toward the sea." And he went up, and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go again seven times." When he came back the seventh time he said, "There ariseth a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand." Then Elijah said, "Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." After 3½ years drought, at long last the rain comes. The hand of the Lord is surely with Elijah, for first he brings down fire from heaven, and now rain at his word. (See 1 Kings 17. 1).

At the commencement of our study of Elijah (see page 63) we observed that the child of God is never so weak as immediately after some spiritual victory. Then it is that the Adversary seeks to gain the advantage. And thus it was after the excitement of Ahab's court that God told His servant to get hence to Cherith and hide himself. But this time, alas, in the aftermath of victory, we find Elijah falling a victim to the Devil's snare at the moment of his greatest spiritual weakness.

(To be concluded in next issue.)

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
 "How Often."
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

HOW often do we murmur here (Ex. xiv. 12).
 When all seems dark as night,
 When foes beset us all around,
 And press us in the fight.
 Then realize God is our guide (Psa. xvii. 7)
 Until our race is run
 And with a hope renewed, we say,
 "Not mine; Thy will be done."

How often like the patient Job, (Job iii. 11)
 We long to leave this life,
 When God seems to have "hedged us in"
 And all is useless strife. (Job iii. 23)
 Then realize; God is our Guard, (Job i. 10)
 Until our crown is won,
 And with a hope renewed, we say,
 "Not mine; Thy will be done."

How often like the man of God
 (1 Kings xvii. 6, 7)
 We sit beside the brook,
 When drop by drop, the waters fail,
 And for each meal we look,
 Then realize; God will provide, (1 Kings xvii. 14)
 Until the drought is gone,
 And with a hope renewed, we say,
 "Not mine; Thy will be done."

How often like the Psalmist king (Psa. 51. 12)
 We lose salvation's joy,
 When God reveals some hidden sin,
 And dark clouds veil our sky.
 Then realize; God is our light (Psa. xxvii. 1)
 Our great eternal sun,
 And with a hope renewed, we say,
 "Not mine; Thy will be done."

How often like the fisherman (Luke xxii. 62)
 We weep with bitter tears,
 When our dear Lord we have denied,
 And life is filled with fears.
 Then realize; God is our strength (1 Peter v. 10)
 For just, "the weakest one."
 And with a hope renewed, we say,
 "Not mine; Thy will be done."

How often like our blessed Lord
 (Luke xxii. 41-47)
 We kneel in sorrow's hour,
 When friends forsake; or lie asleep,
 And Satan shows his power.
 Then realize; God is our all, (John xvii. 10)
 The Cross we will not shun,
 But with a hope renewed, will say,
 "Not mine; Thy will be done."

John Elson.

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The Gospel of Matthew consists of twenty-eight chapters, and these may conveniently be grouped in our study of the Lordship of Christ as follows:—

	Chapters.	Subject.
1.	1 to 4	Royalty.
2.	5 to 7	Rule.
3.	8 to 9	Regard.
4.	10 to 12	Rejection.
5.	13 to 15	Resources.
6.	16 to 20	Riches.
7.	21 to 23	Rights.
8.	24 to 25	Return.
9.	26 to 27	Redemption.
10.	28	Resurrection.

Each of these groups has a key verse, and in each is indicated the practical result of accepting these various characteristics of the authority of Christ.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□ 1. ROYALTY (Chapters 1 to 4). □
□ Key Verse, Chapter 2. 6. □
□ Practical Result, Worship. □
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

The true thought conveyed by the term Royalty is the right of the best to rule, and when that royalty is divine it demands worship in a far higher sense than any homage that is paid to the rule of men. Seven things in these four chapters bear witness to the excellence of of the royalty of the Son of God (c.f., Micah 5. 2).

1. **The Old Testament Scriptures.** There were never so many concurrent prophecies as the Scriptures afford, given at different times, spread over a period from Abraham to Christ, culminating in one supreme Person. This evidence to the royalty of Christ is overwhelming.

2. **His Birth.** A child born, yet a Son given, truly a sign in the depth and in the height. Without human generation, yet truly man. Having neither beginning of days nor end of life, for He inhabits eternity. Entering this world by the way of the virgin's womb. Emmanuel, God with us.

3. **The Magi.** Consider how great He is. Gentiles come to His light and kings to the brightness of His rising, to lay the tribute of their worship at His feet, for their royalty was derived, His was inherent, He was born King.

4. **Sonship.** In relationship how transcendent, "My Son." In presence of such a lineage earthly genealogies pale and fade. Here is One whom the Highest establishes, and salutes by the name of Son. Great as angelic principalities undoubtedly are, to none of them has it been said, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee."

5. **Baptism.** All the Father's delight centred on Him when on that eventful day He entered upon His royal Messianic mission by the way of Jordan's waters.

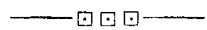
6. **Temptation.** Royal victory was His as He cast aside with scorn the offer of world dominion at the hand of His Satanic adversary, and in so doing asserted His supreme right to the inheritance as the Servant of the will of God.

7. **Government.** "A Governor that shall rule," using His Shepherd authority to set at liberty Satan's captives, heal the broken-hearted and in sovereign grace call those who were held in the thralldom of sin, to be His own bond slaves.

Result. "Thou shalt worship." This must surely follow from the acknowledgement of His claims. He asserted this as belonging to God alone, and such is He the Son. The thought of His humiliation deepens the adoration of hearts that know Him, who assuredly will lay their worship at His feet and acclaim Him Lord of all. How immense the sphere comprehended in "all" and yet sometimes we forget, or may-be refuse to let Him have control over the small things, and in our foolishness seek relief in our own resources, and try to bear our own burdens, and find our own way.

Let the above consideration of the royalty of His Lordship humble us before Him for our unbelief in His sufficiency, that we may confess Him as did one of old, "My Lord and My God."

(To be continued.)



Book Reviews.

THE COMING OF OUR LORD by R. W. B.
Price One Penny. 1/2 Per Dozen Post Paid.

We desire to draw special attention to this most useful little pamphlet. Its title scarcely suggests the character of the contents. It is not so much an unfolding of the precious truth of the blessed Hope as a warning against certain notions in connection with it which are being assiduously pressed in some quarters. It is affirmed that a "faithful and wise servant" may become ultimately a "wicked servant," and be cast out and committed to the tormentors, to the serious hurt of all who pay heed to such teaching. Divine affections are injured thereby, and also the enjoyment of divine grace. Poor human nature loves "works" intensely. In the first century the Apostles had to fight the principle in every quarter, and in various forms it crops up in our own day also. Our Lord's words in Matt. 24. 45-51; 25. 1-13; 10. 32-33; and in Rev. 2 and 3 are all plainly dealt with in R. W. B's. pamphlet. It is published under cost price in order that those who wish to help disturbed souls may make free use of it. God grant that as it runs its course the pamphlet may be useful in delivering many of His beloved saints from the mischievous errors which have distressed the heart of the writer.

W. W. FEREDAY.

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

—□□□—

X.—SILAS.

SILAS (or Silvanus) was successor to Barnabas as the chosen fellow-labourer of Paul the apostle, and is associated with him in the heading of his two epistles to the Thessalonians. At a later date he seems to have become linked with Peter in service in Babylon (1 Peter 5. 12).

His name suggests that he was a Jew of foreign birth. His Roman citizenship is expressly asserted in Acts 16. 37. He first comes before us in connection with the Jerusalem decree concerning the attempt of some to put Gentile believers under law. Not only were letters addressed by the apostles and elders to the brethren at Antioch who had been thus harassed, but they sent with Barnabas and Paul two of their own number to confirm everything by word of mouth. The men thus chosen were Judas and Silas, both prophets of the new christian order (Acts 15. 23-32; Eph. 4. 11). After a ministry of considerable help and comfort these labourers returned to Jerusalem.

Shortly after, there arose the unfortunate quarrel between Paul and Barnabas, which resulted in these devoted men serving apart henceforward. Paul, needing a co-worker, chose Silas, who was presumably on a visit to Antioch at that time. Commended by the Church to the grace of God, the pair then started out upon a tour of missionary labour (Acts 15. 36-41).

All went smoothly until Philippi was reached. Various places in Syria, Cilicia, and Lycaonia were visited; then, after a time of deep perplexity as to where next they should preach Christ, they were led (through a vision granted to Paul) to cross into Europe. Timothy and Luke appear to have accompanied them (Acts 16). A grave difficulty arose in Philippi. A demon-possessed slave-girl who brought much profit to her owners by fortune-telling, cried after them along the streets: "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto you (not "us" as in A.V.) the way of salvation." Some may perhaps wonder why Paul should be grieved at this. Was it not a useful advertisement of their work? Some might think so, but Paul would accept no patronage from Satan, let the great adversary cloak it as he pleased. Between Christ and Satan the cleavage is absolute. Christendom has not yet learned this lesson. Satan's patronage is not only accepted, but sought, in a hundred ways (veiled, of course) for the sake of outward

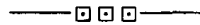
advantage. The girl's testimony, be it remarked, was not to the Lord Jesus, but to His servants. In like manner, Satan has no objection in our own time to crying up preachers for his own evil ends, but he neither can nor will magnify Christ.

After much patience ("many days") Paul exorcised the evil spirit. Then the would-be patron showed himself in his true colours. Persecution followed. It is always safer for God's people when the enemy takes this line. Presently Paul and Silas were falsely accused of sedition by the owners of the girl. The magistrates, regardless of righteousness, forthwith flogged and imprisoned them. But how wonderful are the ways of God! The result was the conversion of the jailor, with all his house!

Unsubdued, Paul and Silas passed next to Thessalonica. Men who could sing in prison, even though their backs were bleeding, were not to be daunted by anything they might meet elsewhere. 1 Thess. 2. 1-4 reveals to us their feelings as they entered together upon this new sphere of labour. They were soon hunted out of Thessalonica by a Jewish riot, and so they went on to Berea (Acts 17). There they found the Jews "more noble than those in Thessalonica," for they examined the Scriptures (Old Testament) daily to see whether what the preachers stated concerning Jesus was of God or not. Many believed, but presently certain of the Thessalonian rioters came upon the scene, and Paul moved away, Silas and Timothy remaining in Berea still. Urged by Paul to join him in Athens, they were unable to reach him until he had arrived in Corinth. There again they laboured together (Acts 18). The apostle refers in 2 Cor. 1. 19 to the unequivocal character of the Gospel preached by them in Corinth. Wonderful were the results in that licentious city. From amongst fornicators, idolaters, and sodomites, they picked up those to whom Paul could write thus: "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6. 11). Nothing but the Gospel of Christ is capable of producing such results. Surely the crying need of the twentieth century is a revival of confidence in the old-fashioned Gospel on the part of the religious leaders of the people! All pulpit utterances are powerless, as far as eternal good is concerned, that fail to give a true ring concerning the Christ of God.

After this good work at Corinth, Silas disappears from the history of the Acts of the Apostles.

Principles of Scripture Interpretation.



By H. DENNETT.

Part VII.

Eastern and Historical Setting.

ONE of the most difficult things for us to do is to detach ourselves from our own circumstances and see a matter from another's viewpoint.

This applies not only to the individual in his inability to see the other person's case, but still more between nation and nation. The Englishman views with considered disdain the siesta of the Spanish and Portuguese peoples—until he chances to go to one of those countries, where under the influence of a most oppressive climate he is just as glad of a mid-day rest.

The increasing complexity and artificial character of our civilisation makes it more and more difficult for us to appreciate the customs, institutions and manners of a simple pastoral people as was the Israel of the Scriptures. Even agricultural life in this country is a complete contradiction to that of the East, while the hurry and scurry of City life in England might be another world as compared with the solemn deliberation of the Orient.

The writer of any book takes for granted the local circumstances of the country in which he lives, but a hundred details in his writing will manifest their existence to the reader who is on the look-out for them. In fact a book can only be natural as it is written in the fullest sympathy with its proper environment. This is the case to the fullest extent with the Holy Scriptures. The Bible is an **eastern** book, written by **eastern** men and primarily for **eastern** people, and it is only as we learn something of the view point of the original readers that the deeper truths of Holy Writ enter our hearts and minds.

The national traits and customs of any people are not merely of accidental growth, or the outcome of the whims of the individual. Deep and fixed physical conditions of environment are important factors in moulding the ways of any people.

Perhaps there is no greater contrast between England and Palestine than that of the climate. This alone would account for many differences of living conditions detailed in the Scriptures and as seen in Palestine to-day, as compared with those to which we are accustomed in this country. Though our average rainfall is by

no means excessive it is distributed throughout the whole twelve months, whereas in Palestine all the rain falls in six months of the year—scarcely a drop in the other half year. Consider how this one fact must needs affect not only the agricultural methods of the people, but also their dress, sayings, and even buildings.

As to geographical situation, bounded by desert on two sides, a mountain chain on the third and a sea on the fourth, Palestine is curiously isolated and admirably adapted for the home of the chosen people of God whom He would have separate from all other nations. Note also the complete lack of navigable rivers, and the extremes of climate—from that of Scandinavia in the Lebanon mountains, to that of tropical Africa in the Dead Sea depression, a basin which is unique in the whole world.

One of the supreme proofs of the veracity of the Scriptures is the fidelity with which every tiny characteristic of local setting and historical circumstance is depicted, yet that very truthfulness constitutes one of its greatest difficulties when the Book is placed in the hands of us Westerners.

Let us now consider a few passages which owe their point to the climatic conditions already cited. In Isaiah 40. we read, "All flesh is as **grass**." During spring time the very wilderness in Palestine is covered with a literal carpet of greenery and small flowering plants—beautiful in the extreme. But when the scorching summer sun arises with no refreshing showers to alleviate the power of its rays, this "grass" of the field is burnt and withered up in the course of a few days—how clear a picture of the short span of human life.

In England we cannot say that a cloud in the west will bring rain, but in Palestine it is a sure sign, and in Luke 12. 54 the Lord refers to this. The easterner, too, has learned to dread the "south" (actually south-east) wind, for it is the **sirocco**—a burning wind that sweeps across from the Arabian desert, and cuts down the vegetation like a red-hot knife. The terrific violence of the storms in the rainy season, so heavy that sometimes the whole road is washed away, is aptly set forth in Matthew 7. 24-27 the houses on the rock and on the sand.

While speaking of climatic conditions Egypt should be mentioned, for that country differs from almost every other, in that it is almost rainless, yet is prosperous and fertile (see Deuteronomy 11. 10-11). This is solely due to the annual overflowing of the mighty Nile that flows from one end of the land to the other. In the hottest months of the year, when in a rainless country a river would normally be lower than usual, the Nile suddenly rises and floods all the surrounding country with rich fertilising mud. The land of Egypt thus **independent** of the rain that comes down from heaven is consistently used in Scripture as a type of the world in its self-sufficiency and independence of God. Its wonderful fertility also explains its complete suitability to be the granary of the world in the days of Joseph.

The scarcity of rain during six months of the year will account for many expressions in the Bible—e.g., Prov. 26. 1; 1 Samuel 12. 17; Job 29. 23; Jeremiah 14. 4. To conserve the rain when it **does** come, underground "cisterns" form part of the equipment of every sizeable house. This word "cistern" is often wrongly rendered "well" or "pit" in the Authorised Version. It was in such a cistern that Joseph was thrown (Genesis 37. 24). The dungeon into which Jeremiah was put was also a cistern in a filthy condition with mire at the bottom. To go down into such an enclosed space and tackle a lion would be no common act of valour (see 2 Samuel 23. 20). No one would willingly drink the brackish stored rain water from an old cracked cistern if the pure sweet water from a fountain was available—hence the point of Jeremiah 2. 13. "They have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out **cisterns**, broken cisterns that can hold no water." The shortage of water supply, causes that commodity to be **sold** in the streets and the regular cry of the water seller is the key to Isaiah 55. 1. "Ho ye thirsty ones, come and BUY." To enable the land to be cultivated in such a climate, aqueducts have been constructed from the earliest times. The expression "watered gardens" has its origin in these. The tree of the first Psalm has been **trans-planted** beside these irrigation streams and therefore does not wither, despite the scorching heat of the sun.

It is impossible to cover the vast ground of this subject in a short article, so all we can do is to give a number of brief examples and hope that these will whet the appetite of the reader. There are plenty of books on Palestine and the people, and the more that can be learned of the actual conditions of life in the land where the Scriptures were written the better will the Book be understood.

Fishing is normally conducted in the shallows and at night time, hence Peter's surprise when told to launch out into the **deep** in the morning light (Luke 5. 4).

Tents are made from goat's or camel's hair and are always **black** (see Canticles 1. 5). Bottles are made from complete skins of animals the limbs of which have been cut off and the holes sewn up. New skins will stretch as new wine put into them ferments, but old skins already stretched to capacity would burst if wine yet to ferment is placed in them (Luke 5. 37).

Measuring corn is a regular profession in Palestine, and the difference between an ordinary measure full as we should measure and one "shaken down, pressed down, and running over" is as much as 30 per cent. (Matthew 7. 2) "With what measure ye mete."

The shepherds in the east walk **before** the flock and actually call their sheep by name. The fold is not made of hurdles but of a stone wall over which a thief must "climb up" to get in. For a "door" the shepherd himself lies across the gap in the wall and is **himself** the door of the fold (John 10).

The man who was told by the Lord Jesus to take up his bed did not have to negotiate a four-poster. He simply rolled up the thick rug on which he was lying and threw it over his shoulder. The water pot was universally carried by **women** and a MAN doing so would be conspicuous to such an extent that the seeking disciples would instantly notice him. The "floor" that the Lord is to "thoroughly purge" (Luke 3. 17) is the **threshing floor**. This was generally situated on the flat top of an elevated mound. When the grain is **trodden out** by the patient oxen, the labourers came with their "fan" (a winnowing shovel). A shovelful of the mixed grain and chaff is cast up into the air and the breeze blowing across the hilltop carries away the light empty chaff while the good grain falls down again on the "floor." "The ungodly are not so, they are like the chaff" (Psalm 1). In a land of no wheeled vehicles the "burden-bearer" is in great demand. These men still carry almost inconceivable weights on their shoulders—a piano for instance! The application to the burden of sin is striking in the extreme.

The open manner in which subjects, which with us would be considered indelicate, are discussed in the Scriptures has proved a stumbling block to many. It is important to see that this is in strict accord with the universal manner of the east. In modern Arabic one may hear open conversations that would crimson a European cheek. To the pure all things are pure, and if the mention of these things were lacking, the Scriptures would be spurious as an Eastern book.

Some have wondered at the action of the Lord Jesus in defending the disciples when charged with eating without washing (Mark 7. 2). The point is that the "washing" merely consisted in pouring water on their dirty hands from a vessel—no soap was used and at the end of the ceremonial (for such it was) the hands remained as filthy as ever.

Quite apart from customs and manners of the people of the Scripture, some knowledge of contemporary history will often throw light upon the fuller meaning of the Word of God. Not indeed, that the Scripture depends on the writings of men for its confirmation, but its original readers would be fully acquainted with and appreciate every allusion to what we now term "ancient history."

A single example must suffice. A little time before Joseph was sold as a slave into Egypt, the national dynasty of that country had been displaced by the Hyskos or Shepherd Kings who appear to have descended from Canaan. A Pharaoh of such an origin would be favourably inclined to Joseph and his family, also from Palestine. During the period of the first few verses of Exodus this usurping line of kings was thrust out and a native Egyptian dynasty again ruled. The "other king who knew not Joseph" would be such a native prince, having every cause to view with apprehension and hostility the multiplication of the alien people within his borders—a people brought there and befriended by his usurping predecessors—the hated Shepherd Kings. This also explains Genesis 46. 34, "Every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."

(To be continued.)

Grains Worth Threshing.

Seeds of kindness sown by the wayside often bring forth abundant harvest.

Speak kindly in the morning, it lightens the cares of the day.

May no whisper that would offend the Holy Spirit be heard in house or heart.

God always takes whatever we offer to give Him, but He takes it only to give it back enriched, increased and sanctified.

There is a personal magnetism streaming from a sincere character and a consecrated life.

Always have something in reserve; spiritually, mentally and physically.

Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God.

Ye should Follow His Steps.

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12. 1.)

Thine eyes, O Lord, beheld sin's blight,
Darker than deepest shades of night,
Beheld with grief man's sore distress,
His gropings in the wilderness.
O may my eyes with pity see,
Earth's sin, and wounds, and misery.

Thine heart, O Lord, o'erflowed with grace,
Towards a lost benighted race,
Deepest compassion filled Thy breast,
For all the erring and distressed.
O may my heart with grace o'erflow,
Thy loving kindness I would show.

Thy feet, O Lord, trod pathways drear,
The poor to aid, the sad to cheer,
Going about at such a cost
To free the captive, seek the lost.
O may my feet, Leader Divine,
More closely follow after Thine.

Thy lips, O Lord, spake healing grace
To all who sought Thy loving face,
Thy perfect speech fell as the dew,
Such gracious words in season too.
O may my lips speak truth and love,
With wisdom coming from above.

Thy hands, O Lord; spread blessings round,
Where hungering, thirsting souls were found,
Broadcasting through a barren land,
Thy loving gifts with bounteous hand.
O may my hands Thy gifts dispense,
Unmindful of earth's recompense.

Thy life, O Lord, laid down I see,
In sacrifice at Calvary;
Accomplishing redemption's plan,
To bring salvation unto man.
O may my body yielded be,
In life, in death, my Lord to Thee.

A. Gardner.

The above verses can be supplied as a very Chaste Verse Card similar to "Thou shalt know Hereafter," which so many friends appreciated last year. Both cards uniform in size and style. 9d. each Nett, 1/- Post Free. 9/- per Dozen Carriage Paid.

COME, AND WELCOME.

I saw the word "Welome" on the mat of an hotel, and said mentally, "Yes, if you've plenty of money to pay your bill"; and I rejoiced in the assurance that "he that hath no money" is welcome to partake of all the riches of Gospel blessedness.

GRAIN FOR GLEANERS.

SUGGESTIVE OUTLINES FOR PREACHERS.

Bible Stones.

- A **pillow** stone that became a **pillar** stone. (Genesis 28. 18).
- A **brook** stone that became a **death** stone. (I Samuel 17. 49).
- A **resting** stone that meant victory. (Exodus 17. 12).
- A **rejected** stone that became **Head** of the corner. (Psalm 118. 22; Mark 12. 10).
- A **stone sealed** that was **rolled away** (Matt. 27. 66; 28. 2).
- A **stone falling** or **fallen upon** (Luke 20. 18).

A **stumbling** stone and **rock of offence** (I Peter 2.8).

A **foundation** stone, tried and **precious** (Isaiah 28. 16).

A stone **cut out** of the mountain (Daniel 2. 34).

Desert stones that became stones of **temptation** (Matthew 4. 3).

Dead stones that became stones that **lived** (I Peter 2. 4-5).

Precious stones fixed in the breastplate of the High Priest (Exodus 39. 10-14).

Go to a man who is carving a stone for a building; ask him where that stone is going; to what part of the temple, and how he is going to get it into the place; and what does he do? He points you to the builder's plans. This is only one stone of many. So when men ask where and how is your little achievement going into God's plan, point them to your Master, Who keeps the plans, and then go on doing your little service as faithfully as if the whole temple were yours to build.

William Luff.

Christ.

- Christ creating our world.
- Christ creating man.
- Christ crucified for man's sin.
- Christ crowned in glory.
- Christ coming to the human heart.
- Christ coming for H's saints.
- Christ confessing them at last.

W. LUFF

Deuteronomy 26

- Worship (verses 1-10)
- Household worship (verse 11).
- Benevolence. (verses 12-14).
- Prayer (verse 15).
- Command to Obedience (verse 16). (See Joshua 1. 8).
- Consecration (verse 17).
- The Lord's claim and portion in us (verses 18 and 19).

J. . .

His.

His stone am I—
 To set as He shall please;
 In arch or vault or pediment,
 In cornice or in frieze;
 A pillar in His temple made,
 Or in the lowly pavement laid;
 The socket where a torch may rest,
 Or jewel flashing on His breast.
 He needs them all, each does His will,
 Each has its purpose to fulfil.
 The stones on which the walls are built—
 Deep hidden out of sight,
 Have honor as the airy spire,
 That springs to meet the light.
 It matters not where I may be.
 So He doth set and polish me.

Annie Johnson Flint.

Time.

1. The swiftness of time.
2. The value of time.
3. And best use of time.

"The moments fly, a minute's won,
 The minutes fly, an hour is gone;
 The day is fled, the night is here,
 Thus flies a week, a month, a year."

The Treasure and the Pearl.

(Matt. 13)

—□□□—

By W. KELLY.

THE kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field, the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" (verse 44). This is the first of the new parables within the house. The Lord is there shewing, not the state of things found under the public profession of the name of Christ, but the hidden things, or those which require discernment. It is a treasure hid in a field, which a man finds and hides, and for joy thereof sells all that he hath and buys the field. I am aware that it is the habit of persons to apply this to a soul finding Christ.

But what does the man in the parable do? He sells all that he has to buy the field. Is this the way for a man to be saved? If so, salvation is "to him that worketh." It becomes, then, a question not of faith, but of a man giving up everything to gain Christ, which is not grace, but the law carried to the greatest excess. When a man has Christ he would doubtless give up everything for Him. But these are not the terms on which a man first receives Christ for his soul's need. But this is not all. The whole field is bought; what do you make of that? "The field is the world." Am I to buy the world in order to obtain Christ? This only shows the difficulties into which we fall, whenever we depart from the simplicity of Scripture. But when we really search, and try Scripture by Scripture, the meaning is made plain. The Lord Himself confutes such an interpretation. He shews that there is one Man, and only one, who saw this treasure in the midst of the confusion. Who? It is the Lord—the Lord who gave up all His rights in order that He might have sinners washed in His blood and redeemed to God; it was He who bought the world in order to acquire the treasure He valued. The two things are distinctly presented in John 17. 2.

"As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him." There is the treasure—"as many as thou hast given Him." But "all flesh" is no treasure at all. It is the outside that goes along with the bargain, if I may speak thus familiarly; but it is not the treasure for His heart. He buys the whole, the outside world, in order to possess this hidden treasure.

But, moreover, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (verses 45, 46). The parable of the hidden treasure did not sufficiently convey what the saints are to Christ. For the treasure might consist of a hundred thousand pieces of gold and silver, and how would this mark the blessedness and beauty of the Church?

The merchantman finds "one pearl of great price." The Lord does not see merely the preciousness of the saints, but the unity and heavenly beauty of the Assembly. Every saint is precious to Christ; but He "loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." Without in the least doubting that its spirit may be applied to every christian, I believe it is intended to set forth the loveliness of the Church in the eyes of Christ. It could not be fully said of a man awaking to believe the gospel. If we consider a sinner before he has received Christ, is he seeking goodly pearls? Is he not rather feeding on husks with the swine? Here it is One who seeks "goodly pearls," which no unconverted man ever really sought. There is no possibility of applying these parables, except to the Lord Himself, or to the working of His Spirit in His own people.

How blessed it is that in the midst of all the confusion which the devil has wrought, Christ sees the treasure of His saints, and the beauty of His Church, spite of all infirmities and failure!

—□□□—

Three Vital Points.

The infinite demerit of sin.
The infinite glory of the Redeemer.
The infinite value of the Atonement.

—□□□—

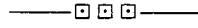
Never go beyond your faith.
Never lag behind your conscience.

—□□□—

From Cross to grave.
From grave to God's own throne.
Proved Him the Victor.
Him, and Him alone.

Bible Studies in Genesis.

By ROBERT LEE.



Study No. 30.

Gen. 16.

Study No. 31.

Gen. 17.

The Lord Who Sees

- (1) **IS A GOD WHO GRIEVES**, hence the warning to the impatient and impetuous.
- (2) **IS THE GOD WHO CARES**, hence the comfort to the sad and lonely.

WHAT GRIEVED THE LORD IN ABRAHAM, SARAH AND HAGAR was 1st **Their Impatience**. Patience is linked with Faith in Hebrews 6. 12. In chapter 15 Abraham exhibits faith, but in chapter 16 impatience. It had been revealed to him who was to be the father of the promised seed (15. 3 and 4), but nothing had been said as to who would be the mother. Instead of waiting for further revelations they resorted to the custom of that time with regard to childless wives (16. 2 to 4). 2nd **Their unbelief**. Faith without patience generates unbelief. This was an act of unbelief. 3rd. **Their neglect of Him** (never consulted the Lord). 4th. **The despising of the less fortunate** (verse 4). 5th **The spirit of recrimination** (verse 5). 6th. **Indifference to lawful rights of protection** (verse 6). Hagar was his inferior wife and therefore under his protection.

A STRIKING FACT OF HISTORY. In this chapter we have laid bare to us the origin of one of the most striking facts of history, viz., that from one person, Abraham, has sprung Christianity, and the religion which has been, and still is, its formidable rival and enemy, Mohammedanism. Little did Sarai think when she persuaded Abraham to take Hagar, that she was originating a rivalry which has run with keenest animosity through all ages, and which oceans of blood has not quenched.

ISHMAEL was the first man to receive his name before birth (verse 11). Affliction has a voice God can hear (verse 11).

HAGAR. God cared sufficiently to put Himself to inconvenience—"Found her" (verse 7), though she did not care for Him. This was the fact that amazed her. "Thou art a God that seeth, for she said have I ever looked after Him that seeth me?" (R.V.).

How to Believe and Live the Apparently Impossible.

1. The revelation by God Himself as the God of infinite resource, as the All-sufficient One, is the message of this chapter.
2. Only as we grasp the significance of this can we believe and live and do the apparently impossible.

NOT CROWDED. Reading hastily through Genesis we are apt to get the impression that Abraham's life was crowded with revelations of God. As a matter of fact they were thinly sown in his experience. Thirteen years had passed since the last appearance and message of the Lord. Of course all these years he had communion with God. That had become the habit of his life. Fellowship is not a rapture but a habit. The raptures are given; but we may have unbroken fellowship without it.

TWO OBJECTS OF THIS APPEARING.
1st. To give additional particulars of the covenant. All truth is never revealed or discovered in a day. First announcement Genesis 12. 2 and 3; second, 13. 14; third, 16; now, in 17. 5 and 6. 2nd. To give a timely fresh revelation of Himself. Before God gives His commands He more fully reveals Himself. The word Shaddai, translated here Almighty, is formed from the Hebrew word Shed, breast, invariably used in Scripture for a mother's breast. "I am the breasted God"—"as a fretful unsatisfied babe is not only quieted but nourished and strengthened from the mother's breast, so El-Shaddai is that name of God which sets Him forth as the Life-giver, Strengthener, and Satisfier of His people. It could, therefore, be rendered, "I am the God of Infinite Resources, the God mightily sufficient."

"Fell on his face." Here we have pointed out to us how to get more light. It is only when we are in the dust God can talk with us as He desires. How impossible verses 15 and 16 seemed. His touching prayer for Ishmael (verse 18). Note the seven "I wills" (verses 2 to 8).

Bible Difficulties.

QUES.—I shall be glad if you will explain St. John i 29. Does it mean that Christ took away the root principle of sin of the whole human race and that men are only responsible for sins actually committed?

ANS.—Our correspondent must endeavour to approach this Scripture from another point of view altogether. John i 29-30 gives us a succinct statement concerning the person and work of our blessed Lord. In verse 30 we have His person (God and man in one), and in verse 29 His work—presented in the abstract way that is so characteristic of the writings of John. The full and final result of the great sacrifice is before us—the absolute banishment from the world of that intrusive element called “sin.” The Baptist does not say how and when the thing will be done; he simply draws attention to Jesus as the doer of it. He was not at that moment bearing sin. As the Lamb of sacrifice He accomplished at the cross of Calvary that mighty work which will result at last in a world entirely cleared of sin. This, of course, is the eternal state. The present result of His sacrifice is the pardon and blessing of christians; shortly, Israel and the nations will be reconciled to God, and finally, new heavens and a new earth will appear wherein righteousness will dwell (2 Peter iii. 13).

The fact that the work of Christ is ever before the mind of God explains His present attitude of forbearance towards an evil world, as the blood continually on the mercy seat was the basis of God’s dealings with Israel in the dispensation that is past.

W. W. FEREDAY.

QUES.—“ In Psalm 75. 6, we read ‘ promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.’ Why does the writer thus pointedly omit the north? ”

ANS.—The Book of Psalms is largely prophetic in character, and is occupied very considerably with the world’s last crisis, which will introduce the Kingdom of God and of His Christ. For example, the second Psalm speaks of men’s opposition to God’s King, and of the certainty of God’s purposes concerning Him; the forty-fifth describes the King Himself, and His coming forth in martial array; and the seventy-second deals in glowing terms with the righteousness and peace of His reign.

During the last crisis, the condition of things in Immanuel’s land will be deplorable. The Antichrist will be in power there, with the mass of the returned Jews supporting and worshipping him, and the pious remnant of God-fearing ones will be hunted and persecuted. Their piteous cry: “ How long? ” is heard frequently throughout the Psalter (Psalms x.; xiii.; xliii, etc). A scourge is preparing for the apostate Jews in the person of the King of the North (Dan. xi. 40), the Assyrian of Isaiah and Micah, and of him they are in great dread.

Their league with the Western power; described sarcastically in Isa. xxviii. 15, as “ a covenant with death,” and an “ agreement with Sheol ” will be entered into for protection from their terrible adversary. But it is all in vain. The “ overflowing scourge ” will indeed pass through, and its depredations are detailed in Psalms lxxiv. and lxxix. and many other prophetic Scriptures.

The answer to the question is that help is not to be found in any quarter. The terrified apostates will look in vain east, west, and south. The Northern army (Joel ii.) will do its awful work, as retribution from an offended God.

W. W. FEREDAY.

CONCERNING 1931.

With our next number, Volume 2, will be completed, and we have decided to issue the bound volume, uniform with Volume I. **Free from all advertising matter** so that it will only contain Expository and Devotional material. There will be two styles of binding.

Leather Paper Board Cover 2/6 Nett. 3/- Post Paid.
Blue Cloth Board Cover ... 3/- ,, 3/6 ,,

Volume 3 will commence with January number, and in next issue we shall give a brief note of the good things in store for 1931. We have MSS. sufficient for several more Volumes, which with the constant flow of new MSS. assures our readers of receiving only the cream of ministry. The goodness of God in this direction should be a cause of deep thankfulness from all our hearts.

PRAYER has been a mighty force in the success of our paper and we do indeed desire to thank all those kind friends who remember Editor, Contributors and Readers daily at the Throne of Grace.

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION.

We continue sending to all subscribers the same number of copies as for this year until we hear to the contrary. But it is a real help to us in keeping our records correct if subscriptions are renewed during November or early December. Your personal help in this matter will be appreciated.

FREE SUBSCRIPTIONS.

If present subscribers order 10/- worth of our own Calendars and Cards before December, 1930, remitting Cash with order, we will

RENEW THEIR SUBSCRIPTION FREE

for another Twelve months. Just mention this paragraph when ordering. If they order another copy as well, they will be entitled to free gift Calendar. See below.

“ Threshed Wheat ” to Missionaries :—

Will those readers who have this year paid for a copy of “ Threshed Wheat ” to be sent to Missionaries and who desire to continue this much appreciated service during 1931, please advise Editor in good time.

Friends desirous of having fellowship in this noble work send 1/3 to which we add a like amount for a year’s subscription to one Missionary.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS. As an introductory offer to new readers we are presenting **absolutely free** to every new subscriber for 1931, who orders direct from this office, a magnificent 2/6 Block Calendar, called “ Threshed Wheat,” and to all old subscribers who order an additional copy, or pay 2/6 for a copy to be sent monthly to a friend, we will likewise send this **2/6 Calendar ENTIRELY FREE.** **Please remember to send 8d. for Box and Postage on Calendar.**

GOSPEL LITERATURE FUND.

Evangelists at home and abroad can often use many more Tracts than they can afford to purchase, whilst other friends who can spare a little for this good work, may not have the time and opportunity to distribute. This fund links the two together and Editor supervises every parcel sent out.

Address all orders and communications :—

EDITOR, “ THRESHED WHEAT,”
2, BROOMHILL ROAD,
GOODMAYES, ESEX.

Of all the times Elijah was alone this was the worst, for it was wrong. He was **alone with himself**. A bad condition for any christian to get into. **He** was quite assured, of course, that he had done the right thing—the only thing he could do, and here we find the second reason for his flight, a sure outcome of loss of communion.

SELF-OCCUPATION.

Verse 3 says he WENT FOR HIS LIFE. Verse 4 says he requested for himself that he might die, for **"I am no better than my fathers."**

WHO EVER SAID HE WAS? Spiritual blessing often tends to exalt self and we have to beware. If self does get magnified it will lead us off the pathway of faith. It will sidetrack us, we shall fall victim to the enemy's suggestions, and thinking more of ourselves than we ought to think, we shall backslide. That is where we now find Elijah, and hand in hand with self-occupation is sleep. The backslider is a sleeping christian. This is the first time we read of Elijah asleep! How sad. Let us take warning then.

Do not look at circumstances, even if Satan is in them, and

Do not look at self, for we are indeed no better than those who were before us.

How easy it is to get into the place where Elijah was. We assume a superior spirituality to our brethren, leaving this one here and another there, we are going alone, we will tread our own path, and then isolated we sit down under the Juniper Tree. Maybe we give up our Sunday School Class. We can no longer speak in the open air. We give up this service, and we give up that service for God, and we go to sleep under this terrible tree. Dear christian reader, beware of giving up any service for your Master. The time is very short now and can never be regained. If this message comes as a warning voice may I implore of you to heed its cry.

There is Elijah fast asleep, but please observe now God's care for His child, even though he has stepped aside and seems to be in a backsliding state. At Cherith, God sent the ravens to feed him, but now He sends an Angel. Oh! the grace of our God. An angel from heaven, not to rebuke, but to feed him, and with similar fare as at Cherith. Note please! that he ate and drank and then laid down again. Yes, and it is fully possible for a backslider to read his Bible. In fact, this often serves as a cloak. It is not necessarily those christians who, when you call to see them, are always reading their Bible, who are the most spiritual. Often far from it. The mere reading of a daily portion may become so mechanical as to lose all effect. Although Elijah ate and drank he was soon asleep again, and so are many of God's dear people to-day. A second time does the angel touch him, and again does he eat and

drink, and goes in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, and lodges in a cave, but his spiritual condition remains the same although God in His infinite grace is bringing him unconsciously to Himself, at Horeb—the Mount of God—where Moses saw his wonderful vision of a bush unconsumed.

WHAT DOEST THOU HERE ELIJAH?

What doest THOU here Elijah? says the word of the Lord. Is my reader conscious of being recently in some place where God would not have you be? Then listen to His pleading in personal tones. What doest THOU here? But again, "what DOEST thou here?" Elijah was an idle servant. He had been asleep—doing nothing. Young christian "What DOEST thou?" The Vineyard needs labourers, and the fields are white, but what DOEST thou? Have you given up? Oh, then may you here and now hear God's voice in this message. Out comes the truth now, Elijah fully, frankly and unhesitatingly tells the Lord exactly what he thinks of himself, but please notice **he does it in a cave**. So God has to say to him, "Go forth and stand upon the mount."

Is it not remarkable the striking similarity between this incident on Mount Horeb and that of Moses in Exodus 3 on the same mount. Moses dared to draw near to God with his feet (typical of his walk and ways) covered, and God says to him "Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground," and now on that same mount we find Elijah hiding from God in a cave and daring to assert his self-importance. "Go forth," says Jehovah, "and stand upon the mount before the Lord." All must be naked and open before the God with whom we have to do, and just as Moses when he uncovered his feet hid his face, so now Elijah, when he does come forth, wraps his face in his mantle for he has heard the still small voice of a thrice holy God, who yet again says to him "What doest THOU here Elijah?—go return." We cannot have dealings with God if our feet are covered, nor can we talk with Him in a cave. In other words, our whole life must be transparent before the Lord. We must stand unshod and exposed, whilst He passes by.

Do you want to hear your Lord's voice? Then beloved hearken to this. Have you anything in your life covered? Are you seeking to keep in the dark from God?

GO FORTH AND STAND UPON THE MOUNT.

Note what Elijah saw that day.

1st. **A STRONG WIND** rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rock. Have you witnessed the Lord's strong wind? Have you trembled in your soul as you have seen his dealings with some of His dear ones? The wind of adversity has blown and well nigh broken them but it has left **you** unmoved. You have failed

Some Early Christians.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

—□□□—

XI.—TIMOTHY.

THIS was a fellow-labourer very dear to the heart of Paul. In the Revised Version of 1 Timothy 1. 2 he calls him "my true child in faith." In a moment of sad depression as to other workers, he could speak of Timothy to the Philippians thus: "Ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the Gospel" (Phil. 2. 22).

It is interesting to observe the moment when the apostle first took this young man into association with himself. It was immediately after his rejection of John Mark as one altogether unfit for the work of Christ. The gracious heart of Paul was doubtless pained that fidelity to Christ should demand so stern an action. Passing from Antioch, where the incident occurred, he presently found himself with Silas at Derbe and Lystra, and in one of these places he picked up Timothy (Acts 16. 1-4). Timothy thus, in a manner, stepped into the shoes of John Mark. Happily both were an equal comfort to the apostle at the end (2 Tim. 4. 11).

Timothy had been blessed with pious ancestry. In 2 Timothy 1. 5 the apostle recalls the unfeigned faith which dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and in his mother Eunice. Piety is not hereditary, and so cannot be transmitted like a family fortune. Every man must have to do with God for himself, and apart from new birth by the Spirit and the Word none are fit for God, let the ancestry be what it may. But the value of family piety cannot be over-estimated. Timothy had from a child known the Holy Scriptures (2 Timothy 3. 15), and this fact doubtless prepared him for the reception of Christ. In these days of bustle even true christians plead that they have no time for family Bible reading and prayer; and yet time is found for breakfast, and for everything else that flesh desires! The neglect of united spiritual exercises in the home is largely responsible for the open ungodliness that is seen in some quarters, and for the shallow christianity that is observable in others.

Before taking Timothy into his company Paul circumcised him. Being the fruit of a forbidden marriage between a Gentile and a Jewess, Timothy stood in an invidious position in the eyes of Jews everywhere. Circumcision in such a case was a gracious concession to Jewish prejudices for their blessing, and it was not at all inconsistent with the strong stand taken by Paul and Barnabas at Antioch when

some sought to put Gentile believers under the yoke of the old ritual.

Paul, Silas and Timothy formed a happy trio in earnest service for the Lord Jesus. Silas seems to have laboured elsewhere after a time, but Timothy continued in the yoke with Paul until the latter was martyred. Both were imprisoned together in Rome, but whether Timothy was put to death for Christ's sake is not recorded.

He was evidently a sensitive soul. Paul refers to his tears in 2 Timothy 1. 4, and in the same chapter there is a suggestion of timidity. Hence the exhortation, "be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner." Hence also the passage: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." He who has on various occasions enabled frail women to suffer and die for Christ's sake is well able to strengthen the most timid of His saints for whatever service and testimony He may require at their hands.

The unauthorised postscript to Paul's second epistle describes Timothy as "the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians." This is folly. A single bishop in any city was an officer unknown in apostolic days. In every place where bishops existed there was a plurality of them, as Phil. 1. 1; Acts 20. 28; Titus 1. 5-9 show conclusively. Spiritual lords over Christ's servants were the invention of a later date, when the Church had wandered far from the revealed will of the Lord, and had fallen into worldly ways. Timothy's charge in Ephesus was a temporary one. There was a tendency with some in that city to teach strange doctrine. Accordingly when Paul passed thence into Macedonia he besought Timothy to remain a while in Ephesus in order to safeguard the truth (1 Timothy 1. 3). Upon so slender a foundation would the uninspired postscript build up the absurdity of a diocesan episcopacy.

In the early days of Christianity it was not titles and emoluments that were sought by the labourers, but openings to make Christ known, that men might learn to appreciate Him, and find rest for their consciences in His wondrous cross. Hard blows and bitter words were too often their earthly reward. But in such a path, so uncongenial to the flesh, Timothy was enabled to persevere, through the abounding grace of God.

Principles of Scripture Interpretation.

By H. DENNETT.

Part VIII. Accurate Observation and Careful Comparison.

A CHILD playing with a valuable watch; an ignorant man tinkering with a piece of intricate and expensive machinery, either of these may well be used to illustrate the treatment that the Holy Scriptures receive at the hands of many. Quite ignorant of the delicacy and absolute accuracy of the Book that they take in their hands, such men boldly pronounce upon the "inconsistencies" of the Bible or dilate upon the "mistakes" of Stephen.

Though, indeed, they are only pouring ridicule upon difficulties of their own devising, at the same time discredit is brought on the Word of God in the minds of the unlearned and unstable.

How many exponents of science falsely so-called have inveighed against the account of the creation in Genesis 1. How many a dishonest dodge has been adopted by those who profess the name of Christ in trying to "defend" His Word. It is difficult to say which is the more blameworthy—the critic who points to the geological strata and ridicules a creation in seven days, or the apologist who tries to bolster up the Scriptures by talking about a day "being as a thousand years." Neither can have troubled to read and note what the Scripture actually DOES say, or what is even more to the point to observe that Genesis 1 does NOT state that the original creation took place in six, or any other number of days. In passing it might be mentioned that in the original, two distinct words are used for "create" and "make." Exodus 20. 11 is the latter. That the marred earth was "reconditioned" in six literal days is the absolute statement of Scripture.

If a man of the world has a book by an eminent authority placed in his hands—a book dealing with a subject of which he knows but little—then it is with a certain respect that he reads that volume. If he finds statements therein that he cannot fully understand, then he concedes that the author knows best and he looks for fuller light.

The Scriptures treat of a subject of which the natural mind is absolutely ignorant, and being God-breathed throughout, the statements found therein are precise and accurate in every detail. The points brought out in a previous paper on the "Eastern setting" of the Scriptures should act as a warning to us Westerners lest we rashly assume difficulties that are non-existent to the original and oriental reader of the Bible.

One or two general principles will be of help at the outset of this article, after which we will examine some examples in detail.

The writers of Scripture were themselves familiar with all the books of Scripture written before their time, and they presume that their readers have a similar acquaintance with the Word of God. The Hebrew epistle is a notable case of this. The letter cannot be read with understanding unless the reader is also acquainted in detail with the book of Leviticus.

This leads to another point. Certain books of the Bible are specially "complementary" one to another. Leviticus and Hebrews as above; Exodus and Romans; Joshua and Ephesians; Genesis and Revelation, and so on.

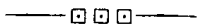
The Bible, though a collection of writings spread over a number of centuries, is the single product of the Divine Mind. It is therefore important to compare one passage with another. It is in finding the explanation of one statement in its re-statement in another place that the Scripture is truly interpreted. Accurate observation, careful comparison of similar things and of contrasts will unfold much that is mysterious and difficult to the casual reader of the Bible. The whole point of the argument in Galatians 3. 16 turns upon a certain noun "seed," being in the singular and not in the plural. Men have spent very much time trying to make a "harmony" of the four Gospels—trying to "fit in" the many puzzling variations. Another with more spiritual intelligence has written a book called "The differences of the Gospels" (A. Jukes).

There is one principle of Scripture that perhaps gives rise to more misunderstanding than any other, and therefore calls for the closest observation and analysis. It is the principle of "special condensation" and "local elaboration" which are rather long terms for quite ordinary phenomena. A single event, thing, or person is intentionally magnified out of all proportion to its local importance or natural environment so as to occupy the very centre of the stage in the passage in question.

Other things and circumstances are "condensed" or even omitted entirely. This principle is found in operation in an erratic manner in our dreams, but in Scripture there is Divine method in its application.

Bible Studies in Genesis.

By ROBERT LEE.



Study No. 32.

Gen. 18.

A Message to Intercessors.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| 1. Providing refreshment for | } THE LORD. | (verses 1 to 8). |
| 2. Receiving refreshment from | | (verses 9 to 16). |
| 3. Full communion with | | (verses 17 to 22). |
| 4. Interceding for others before | | (verses 23 to 33). |

A DYING BOAST. It is said that when Scott, the Commentator, lay dying, he spoke much to those around him on the way in which his prayers for others had been answered. He thought he had failed less in the duty of intercessor than in any other. Of how many of us could that be said?

WHY APPEAR AS IN VERSE 1? It was as a test to Abraham and to Sodom. By the kind of treatment meted out to these visitors, their moral state would be detected.

"RAN TO MEET THEM." When visitors are of the ordinary rank the Oriental simply rises to receive his guest; if the visitor is of superior rank, the host advances a little towards the stranger, bows low before him, and then escorts him in. The fact that Abraham did this, proves that he recognised the visitors to be of superior rank.

FOUR SPECIAL PRIVILEGES. In this chapter we find Abraham in the enjoyment of four special privileges, as per outline at head of this study. I cannot be a successful intercessor unless I am living in communion with the Lord; I cannot enjoy full communion with Him unless He refreshes me; and I ought, before seeking refreshment from Him, provide Him with refreshment. "The morsel of bread" meant 56lbs. of same and a whole calf! We can minister refreshment to the Lord by ministry to others ("Inasmuch," etc.) and by living lives of consecration and devotion to Him. Before Abraham can enjoy communion, his heart had to be refreshed by being set at rest as in verses 9 to 15. As we read verse 23 to end are we not reminded of our Lord weeping over Jerusalem, with this difference—the pity of Abraham was pity for the righteous, whereas the pity of our Lord Jesus was pity for the sinners.

Study No. 33.

Gen. 19.

The Gains and Losses of a Worldly Believer.

1. WHAT HE GAINED. (a) Position. (b) Town-house.
2. WHAT HE LOST. (a) Communion. (b) Peace. (c) Influence. (d) His head. (e) His family. (f) His all (1 Cor. 3. 15).

WHAT LABEL? It is not easy to find the right label for Lot. Many would deny to him the right to the sacred name of believer. Happily for Lot the Holy Spirit has settled for us that question—just and righteous, i.e., justified and living a clean life (2 Peter 2. 8). He must be viewed as a worldly believer.

GOD'S MERCY TO SODOM. God was gracious in permitting Lot to live in Sodom. He was there as a final testimony for God. It was not God's direct will that he should go; it was His **permissive** will; and thus was an act of grace to these sinners. **His gains**—He prospered in business. He now had a town-house, and was Mayor of Sodom ("Lot sat in the gate").

His losses. Never once do we read of the Lord appearing to Lot. He lost communion. He lost his peace. His soul was vexed (2 Peter 2. 8). He lost his influence. He addressed them as brethren (verse 7); they addressed him as "fellow" (verse 9). Thus we behold the world's contempt for a worldly believer. He evidently lost his influence over his own (verse 14). He lost his head. He lingered when he ought to have run (verse 16); he ran when he ought to have lingered (verse 30). He lost all sense of reverence for the Lord (verse 18) and dictated to Him (verse 19); he thought only of self (verse 20). He lost his family. Why was Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt? was a question asked of a company of children, and one boy replied "To keep her fresh." That fact certainly has kept her sin fresh in our memories. Though a woman of extraordinary privileges her act was one of wilful disobedience.



BREAD EST, but not to be EAL, and not to be EARLY to be sought and BUNDANT, and for DIVINE, and saved from

Bought. Rejected. Eaten. All. Death.

W. LUFF.

THRESHED WHEAT.

General Index.

Title.	Author.	Page.	Title.	Author.	Page.
About the Bible		68	Paul and Silas	J. H. McCormick	65
Acts of the Apostles	W. Scott	90	Paul's Seven Wishes in Philippians		74
An Appeal	Professor F. Bettex	10	Philip	W. W. Fereday	34
Ananias	W. W. Fereday	67	Plain Answers to an Important Question	Quartus	72
At His Feet	J. J. V.	122	Precious Book	G. Hamilton	106
Attention Please		122	Precious Portions	Quartus	86
Barnabas	W. W. Fereday	6	Principles of Scripture Interpretation	H. Dennett	55, 68, 83, 95, 107, 116, 128, 139
Behold I have caused thine iniquity to Pass		64	Redeemed and Bought	W. Kelly	144
Behold My Servant	Alb. Payne	71	Rich Fool		74
Bible Difficulties	10, 33, 42, 60, 66, 86, 110, 134		Sabbath and the Lord's Day	W. Kelly	54
Bible Stones	Wm. Luff	131	Saul of Tarsus	W. W. Fereday	43
Bible Study		16	Sergius Paulus	Do.	119
Book Reviews		93, 126	Seven Aspects of Christian Life		56
Books of Scripture (Besor, Cherith, Elah, Eschol, Kidron, Jabbok.)	Chas. Hickman	77, 89	Silas	W. W. Fereday	127
Cain	Robert Lee	61	Some Early Christians	Do.	6, 18, 34, 43, 53, 67, 91, 101, 119, 127, 138
Called, Chosen, Faithful	J. J. V.	122	Some Things Thy Word Does	Quartus	12
Casual Notes on 2nd Timothy	O. Speare	7, 19	Songs in the Night	J. H. McCormick	65
Children of God	T. Robinson	25, 35, 41, 59	Soul Does Not Sleep	W. Kelly	94
Come and Welcome		130	Source of Power		39
Cornelius	W. W. Fereday	101	Stephen	W. W. Fereday	18
Crucified through Weakness	P. Wilson	17	Studies in the Psalms	C. H. Darch	36
Daniel	W. H. Begbie	76	Suggestive Outlines	5, 56, 74, 76, 86, 114, 131	
Devil Revealed		74	They that are Christ's at His Coming		105
Devotional Study	J. H. McCormick	92	This Man	J. H. McCormick	92, 115
Deity Manifested	W. H. Begbie	79	Three Downgrade Steps		56
Divine Purpose in Human Life	J. W. Ashby	80, 103	Three faithful ones	H. A. Woolley	24
Do You Know?		62, 70, 140	Threefold Cord		56
Dorcas	W. W. Fereday	91	Thy Brother	S. L. Jacob (Col. R.E.)	13
Editorial	3, 15, 27, 39, 51, 63, 75, 87, 99, 111, 123, 135		Timothy	W. W. Fereday	138
Elijah's Lonely Ministry	G. F. V.	39, 51, 63, 75, 87, 99, 111, 123, 135	Treasure and the Pearl	W. Kelly	132
Enoch	Robert Lee	73	Unity	A. C. Rose	32
Ethiopian Eunuch	W. W. Fereday	53	Well Water	Mark H. Prior	11, 23, 31
Facts about the Bible		55	What God has Given		54
First things First	Ephaim Venn	44	What Saith Joel the Reubenite	Frank Mansfield	57
Gave Himself	J. J. V.	122	Wise Words	W. Scott	70
Genesis	Robert Lee	9, 21, 37, 61, 73, 85, 97, 109, 121, 133, 143	Words on Reverence		98
Giving		140	Words of Wisdom		60, 84, 98
Good Beginnings		9	Words of Wisdom for last Days	O. Speare	7
Gospel in Isaiah 53		76	Ye are the light of the world	G. F. V.	3, 15, 27
Grain for Gleaners		122, 131			
Grains Worth Threshing		130			
Helps from an old Source	A. R. T.	38, 50			
Homeward Bound	J. B. Stoney	30			
Honesty in Small Things	Wm. Shaw	113			
I Will Trust		5			
If you have a kindness Shown		100			
Illustrations Picked up in Hop-picking	Wm. Luff	120			
Is this not True	Wm. Shaw	29			
Is Tract distribution worth While?	Malcolm Forbes	76			
Job	J. H. McCormick	65			
Joel	Frank Mansfield	57			
Joseph	J. H. McCormick	65			
Judgment Seat of Christ	F. C. Bland	102			
Lordship of Christ in Matthew's Gospel	James Green	125, 141			
Man Greatly Beloved	W. H. Begbie	76			
Matthew		74			
Melchisedec	Robert Lee	121			
New Year Message	J. J. V.	5			
Not by Bread Alone	Arthur Woolley	52			
Notes for Bible Readers		114			
Notes on a Bible Reading	A. R. Thoburn	114			
Notes on the Acts of the Apostles	W. Scott	90			
Notes Worth Noting		14, 26, 38			
Nothing but the Bible	W. Shaw	26			
New — Then	W. Luff	122			

POETRY.

Believer's Longings	Gladys Tolley	16
Beloved let us Love		44
By Nature and by Practice	S. T.	76
Despise not thou the Chastening	J. D. Burns	103
Forget not all His Benefits		100
From the Palace of His Glory		92
Go Forward	A. G.	60
God Careth for All	Gladys Tolley	22
God's Unspeakable Gift	L. M. Warner	140
His Own	A. W. B.	30
Hew Often	J. Elson	124
I Have Commanded	L. M. Warner	111
If you fail Him		120
It shall not come nigh Thee		72
Just for To-day	A. Gardner	75
Lift up your Heads	Quartus	58
Love of God	H. W. T.	74
Meet for the Master's Use	L. J. Vallance	82
Mount of Seeking	H. Dennett	144
No Labour in Vain	E. Ellen Trusted	5
On seeing the likeness of an Absent Friend	Wm. Olney	118
Only little Sparrows	A. W. B.	58
Paradoxes		12
Text for New Year	Wm. Luff	4
The Cause our Own	Do.	93
Ye should follow His Steps	A. Gardner	130

Scripture Reference Index.

		Page		Page.		Page.
Genesis	1	9, 69		33	Acts	13, 90, 92, 119
"	2. 17	21	"	86	"	14, 90
"	2. 18	37	"	69	"	15. 23, 127
"	3	49	Proverbs	69	"	21. 8, 34
"	4. 1-26	61	"	38	"	22. 12, 67
"	4	73	"	129	"	24. 5, 38
"	5	73	Eccies.	69	"	26. 11, 43
"	6	74, 85	"	21	Romans	1. 14, 62
"	7	85	"	98	"	3. 24, 62
"	8	97	"	21	"	6. 14, 60
"	9	97	"	86	"	8, 29, 80
"	11	109	Song of Sol.	69	"	10, 12, 64
"	12	109	Isaiah	69	"	11. 17-24, 96
"	13	110	"	96	"	11. 25, 42
"	14	121	"	5	"	12. 1, 130
"	15	121	"	11	"	14. 15, 13
"	16. 11	11	"	128	1 Corin.	3. 17, 60
"	16	133	"	71	"	6. 19, 62
"	17	133	"	76	"	7. 11, 13
"	32. 22-32	77	Jeremiah	69	"	15. 9, 43
"	49. 5-7	32	"	129	"	15. 49, 80
Exodus	4. 2-3	76	"	96	2 Corin.	3. 18, 80
"	12. 2	69	"	31	"	5. 15, 62
"	14. 15	60	Lamentations	69	"	5. 17, 21
"	25. 10	50	Ezekiel	69	"	7, 14
Leviticus	1. 1	69	Hosea	42	"	8. 9, 62
"	27. 30	62	"	50, 107	"	11. 3-14, 74
Numbers	1. 1	69	"	21	"	12. 1, 91
"	13. 23	77	Joel	57	"	12. 9, 4
"	13. 33	38	Zechariah	64	"	13. 4, 17
Deut.	1. 1	69	"	50	Ephesians	2. 5, 26
"	1. 28	38	"	84	"	4. 4, 105
"	10. 22	31	Malachi	62	"	5. 16, 26
"	11. 21	31	Matthew	126	Philippians	2. 1-11, 114
"	26	131	"	44, 141	"	2. 22, 138
"	32. 42	38	"	10	"	3. 10, 74
Jeshua	1. 1	69	"	3, 15, 27	"	4. 7-9, 56
"	2. 4-5	10	"	45	"	4. 18, 62
Judges	21. 25	69	"	74	Colossians	2. 9, 60
Ruth	4. 10	69	"	22	"	3. 10, 42
1 Samuel	1. 15	69	"	66	"	4, 24
"	17. 38-40	77	"	38	2 Thess.	2, 7, 110
"	22. 1	80	"	132	1 Timothy	1. 15, 43
"	30. 8-10	77	"	95	2 Timothy	7, 19
"	49. 51	77	"	45	"	2. 3-18, 56
2 Samuel	23. 8	81	"	54	"	2. 21, 82
1 Kings	1. 1	69	"	38	"	4. 4, 56
"	17	39, 51, 63, 75, 77	Mark	66	Hebrews	1. 7, 50
"	18	87, 99, 123	Luke	38	"	9. 26, 33
"	19	38, 123	"	38	"	10. 12, 98
"	4. 9-10	16	"	74	"	12. 23, 102
1 Chron.	1. 3.	69	"	129	"	13. 13, 62
Ezra	1. 3.	69	"	74	James	1. 26, 38
Nehemiah	1. 3	69	"	38	"	5. 17, 39, 51
Esther	1. 1	69	"	6	1 Peter, Chpts. 1 to 5	25, 72
Job	11. 7	24	"	26	"	1. 23, 15
"	12. 2	38	John	134	"	2, 35, 56
"	22. 21	24	"	38	"	3, 41
"	29. 23	129	"	140	"	3. 18, 85
"	37. 23	24	"	60	"	4, 41
"	42. 5	69	"	38	"	4. 10, 59
Psalms	1. 1	89	"	129	"	5. 7, 5
"	23. 2	5	"	110	"	5. 12, 127
"	23. 4	36	"	29	2 Peter	2. 5, 85
"	34	65	"	62	"	3. 11, 72
"	46. 4	23	"	77	1 John	1. 1-5, 4
"	75. 8	134	Acts	18	"	4. 3, 35
"	85. 10	38	"	53, 86	"	4. 7, 44
"	119	12, 48	"	91	Revelation	2. 13, 24
"	119. 162	29	"	101	"	3. 20, 9
"	121. 3	5	"	6	"	17, 23

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