

# NEEDED TRUTH.

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*They read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.—*  
NEH. viii. 8.

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## Fragment.

WE are saints by the call of God in sovereign grace ; and as such we are called to walk blamelessly and harmlessly before the world. The one who boasts much of the title by which he is called is not likely to be showing forth much of the character of a saint in his life and ways:—just as one who speaks often of “love” is apt to be most unloving in his conduct.

So again, if the same grace of God which has made us saints individually has made us church of God collectively, it is not for us so much to be pressing our claim to the title as to be patiently and prayerfully endeavouring to act as church of God, and thus to bring glory to the name of Him by whom we are called into church position in a present evil age, and in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

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## ERRATA.

Page 84, line 3 of footnotes, *for* auton *read* autou.

Page 236, line 13 from top, *for* ןךָ *read* ןךָ.

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## ABBREVIATIONS.

In order to secure economy of the space at our disposal, the following abbreviations are made use of in these pages where quotations or references are given.

A.V. Authorized Version.

A.M. Margin of A.V.

R.V. Revised Version.

R.M. Margin of R.V.

A.C. Rendering preferred by the American Committee of Revisers.

LXX. The Septuagint Greek Version of the Old Testament.



# NEEDED TRUTH.

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## REMNANT TIMES.

**M**ANY efforts have been made to press upon the attention of believers in Christ the importance of the three last books of the Old Testament for those who have to-day as a remnant people been gathered out and gathered together in much weakness (keenly felt) to do the will of the Lord.

In these three books we have the Word of God coming to a people that were in a right position, yet who were negligent in doing the work for which they had been delivered. It was not that they weren't the called-out ones of Jehovah from the Babylonish captivity, for indeed they were as much a people prepared of God in heart for a special work as was the nation when called out of Egypt. It is well to mark this very specially in a day when position is being made so much of, and a right condition as essential to a godly fellowship lost sight of.

Our dear brethren in the various sections of those once led by the late Mr. Darby have taught for years the gathering "on the ground of the one body," although no sooner is this position taken up than it has to be abandoned, and some such qualification made as—we receive all those who hold no fundamental evil doctrine. Yet such may be and often are "in the body," so that reception "on the ground of the one body" is at once virtually abandoned. The fact is, it

is an entire misnomer associating the thought of discipline or reception with the body, all such action having its proper place in the church or churches of God. So again with "open brethren," they have followed on the same line. "We receive," say they, "all Christians, all the children of God, to the Father's table." But, again, no sooner is this statement made than there has to be the qualification, and the fellowship and table has to be guarded by some such statement as the following: "With such name and centre only this communion of saints is manifestly *open*, as is the heavenly communion, to *every member* of the body of Christ, always supposing consistency of life and doctrine, and may be, and is, as broad as the whole body of believers can make it."<sup>1</sup> "Always supposing"! Here again we have a limitation that quite sets aside the first position assumed, and brings the whole matter to this point, what are the qualifications for a divine fellowship of saints upon the earth, and what disqualifies members of the body from the fellowship of the churches of God? It must, we believe, be clear to all, that those who have followed Mr. Darby's teaching, and those who agree with Mr. Müller and Bethesda principles, are pretty much at one on this matter, although so strongly opposed to one another in some points. Nay, more, we believe that "open brethren" have taken their practice from those called "close," and that both have missed the present purposes of God in calling out a prepared people among whom the truth should be preserved.

We have not come to the time of the restitution of all things whereof God spake, and that time will not be till He comes whose right it is to reign. Meanwhile God, by His Spirit working in men both to will and to do of His good pleasure, is calling out a people to His name fitted in heart to do His will. Had this been seen from the first, what

<sup>1</sup> "Principles and Doctrines of the True Apostolic Church." By W. J. M. Page 10.

disaster might have been avoided; and how much might still be accomplished were the people of God awakened to see that this is truth that is indeed needed to-day.

John in his testimony to the kingdom did not baptize all that came to him on the ground of their being born Israelites. There was a selection of repentant ones, and these we find were in a condition to receive a further revelation of the Lord's mind.<sup>1</sup> Any increased nearness of walk and fellowship with the Lord must arise from an inwrought condition of soul. If the last book of the Old Testament is read carefully, a remnant will be found there: a people separated in heart, speaking often together.<sup>2</sup> And although *at this point* not outwardly separated from their brethren, yet there was the preparation for that further separation under the preaching of John the Baptist, continued by the Lord and His apostles, until finally a remnant is again separated from the remnant restored from Babylon; and this ever seems to have been, and still is, the Lord's way. He does not restore as a whole that which departs from Himself, but works in some hearts both to will and to do of His own good pleasure, so that such in the hands of the potter may be moulded and fashioned according to the will of God. We would press these thoughts upon the attention of our readers, as some affirm that there is no going beyond the position of the remnant in the land, that no failure would have warranted the separation of their brethren from those who were walking in ungodliness. So they argue that to-day we cannot go beyond the position that "open brethren" occupy of professed separation from the spiritual Babylon, but must bear with the evil that we find ourselves in association with. As we have sought to show, this line of reasoning is incorrect, for a time came when a company was gathered afresh unto Him who had redeemed them.

<sup>1</sup> Luke vii. 29, 30.

<sup>2</sup> Mal. iii. 16.

But there is yet another way of looking at this matter. Whilst Ezra and Nehemiah days are most instructive to us—and unquestionably there is much in common between those who are to-day gathered out to the Lord and these in the remnant days of olden times—still we must not exclude other scriptures which equally have their bearing upon the matter. Take, for instance, the breaking away of the ten tribes from the rule of Rehoboam, and then the return from amidst the apostate Israelites of all those who desired to do the will of God,<sup>1</sup> and to strengthen the kingdom unto Rehoboam. Here we have another most interesting and instructive lesson. There may be division amongst God's people, and in such division He may free His people that desire to do His will from the power of those who, like the ten tribes, are lapsing again from the true worship of God.

Yet another case. David has fled from Saul, the anointing oil is upon him, he is God's man; but how many know this, how many recognise the coming King of Israel? The mass of the people remained with Saul, and only a few take the place with the rejected one. David is seen receiving such, but he does not receive them simply because they are born Israelites, or on the ground of their belonging to the nation; on the contrary, he receives them as fellow workers to the setting up of the kingdom.<sup>2</sup> Here we find a special reception, and a complete separation for the time being from those who were David's brethren according to the flesh. They came to the place where David's will was done, they owned him as their lord and God's anointed, and when David came into the kingdom those who came out to him were specially remembered by their lord. The world is the Lord's; He has purchased and redeemed it; and it shall yet again smile in the sunshine of His favour. The curse removed and earth yielding its strength, toil-stricken man shall find rest.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xi. 14-17.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Chron. xii. 17, 18.

So when David claimed the kingdom that God had given him all Israel made him king, but those who had taken their place with him in rejection, were specially remembered by him in his triumph. Thus we believe all these scriptures have most important teaching for us, and the one cannot be used to the exclusion of others. If being gathered by the Spirit to-day unto our Lord, we are where His will can be carried out, we cannot receive Christians simply as such, but we can receive those who are seeking in sincerity of heart to turn the kingdom unto David; and when He comes into His kingdom those who have for the time being separated even from their brethren in seeking to be faithful followers of their Lord, will come in with Him, and be remembered by Him, we believe, in a special way, although all saints will then be with Him in His kingdom.

Before concluding this paper we may be permitted to refer to a manuscript sent us by an aged brother who sat down at the Lord's table with the early disciples who were separated to the Lord. There is much in it most instructive and interesting, and it goes to confirm the thought, that whilst those who were first gathered out according to the word of God, were those who had been separated in heart to Him, leading men who had led out from the various denominations those whom the Lord had stirred up in heart to do His will, yet that when these gathered-out and gathered-together ones commenced to act in Church responsibility they seemed never to have fully realized the exact operation of the Spirit, and therefore commenced to gather unrepentant saints, who could not be moulded to the will of God, and so, as the writer says, their troubles commenced at this point.

That which we have referred to is to the following effect: that these early gatherings were very ignorant of much of the mind of the Lord, appointing a president and choosing who should break the bread. But by degrees they saw that

these things were unscriptural, and ceased to practise them, for, with all their ignorance on some points, there can be no question that these gatherings of saints were those with whom the Lord was working, and from whom in after years fresh light was to be diffused amidst the darkness of professing Christendom. But the writer goes on to state that their meetings attracted the attention and interest of Christians in the denominations. These were received into the fellowship, and *with their reception trials commenced.*

And so it must ever be. God only can give that repentant condition in which one can be moulded to His will; and if we receive those who are not in this condition, with the hope that they will eventually be brought to see the truth, we are following much on the lines of sectarianism, which gathers sinners, hoping that they will eventually become saints.

J. A. BOSWELL.

## FAITH THE GIFT OF GOD.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God*” (Eph. ii. 8).

It has been through attempting to build up a system of doctrine that many have gone wrong in their interpretation of different passages of Scripture. With the system in view (though, perhaps unwittingly to themselves) they have come to Scripture to find support for it; and thus certain passages have become a battle ground on which with opposing thoughts persons have striven, to their own loss and to the hindering of many Christians from learning the simple truth conveyed by them.

In writing a little in connection with this verse, therefore, it is with no desire to make it do service for any system, but that it might be seen in its true and proper teaching. In Ephesians i. God is seen choosing, “according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world” (Eph i. 4). In this second chapter the people chosen are shown in their true character before God. Whereas in the Epistle to the Romans man is viewed as alive in sin, and therefore the necessity of dying in Christ; in Ephesians he is presented as dead—absolutely dead, and therefore needing life. No words could describe more vividly the awful condition of the sinner as “dead in trespasses and sins” (ii. 1); controlled by a threefold power, “this world,” “the spirit of the power of the air,” and the flesh, “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind” (vers. 2, 3). “By nature the children of wrath,” “children of disobedience,” whether fulfilling the grosser tendencies of the flesh, or satisfying the intellectual desires of the mind, always dead, and always in the pathway of trespasses and sins. And yet in Christ one so thoroughly guilty, so actually dead, is presented as quickened, raised up, and seated together with Him in heavenly places. The means of this

mighty change being God's infinite grace through faith, the gift of God; and lest any man should boast, it is added, "and that not of yourselves," and "not of works." With what a firm hand is swept away everything of man; he owes nothing to himself but the death in which he lies; and if he is no longer found dead, it is only because of God's abounding grace.

"Through faith." In saving faith, the mental operation, that is, the exercise of the faculty of believing, is the same as in all real faith in any subject. The action of the mind is the same; it cannot be otherwise. The mental act by which one believes God is the same as when one believes man. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son" (1 John v. 9, 10). But it is not the same thing to believe God as it is to believe man. In the one case it is man's testimony and the power he uses of argument, etc., to lead one to believe; in the other it is God's testimony, then the power (the needed power, for the natural man receiveth not the things of God—1 Cor. ii. 14) is the power of the Spirit of God, Who convinces of sin and leads to Christ: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John i. 12); words at once followed by others that show how all blessing originates with God alone, "Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God" (John i. 13), corresponding with John iii., only the "born again" comes first, the believing next, because of what led to it.

The third chapter of John properly begins with verse twenty-three of the previous chapter: "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day many believed



in His Name when THEY SAW the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them because He knew all *men* and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man."

Faith by seeing. Mark this carefully, for chapter iii. results from it; the natural man can see things in the natural world because he has natural eyesight; the spiritual man can see things in the spiritual world because, being born again, he has spiritual eyesight. The necessity for the new birth is all told out in those words, "IN MAN." Men may not deny God's Word, men may give an intellectual assent to it, and form systems of religion upon it, but this is not faith divinely given. They may believe because they see the miracles, but there is no new birth, and therefore no faith that lays hold on Christ unto eternal life. Thus Nicodemus comes before us as a man who had seen and therefore believed, and impressed with the greatness of the One Who had done these mighty works, he comes to Him making reference to the miracles. What does Jesus answer him? Does He express satisfaction with His sight-produced faith? Nay, verily, but at once tells him his need of the New Birth.

Repentance and faith alone result from God. His gift. Thus we read, "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for TO GIVE repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins" (Acts v. 31). "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted (same Greek word as is translated given) repentance unto life" (Acts xi. 18). "If God peradventure WILL GIVE them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim. ii. 25). To Jews, Gentiles, and to "devil-ensnared" children of God, repentance must needs be given, for it never can be the product of the natural man, nor of the flesh which is in him. And that which is true in respect of repentance, is equally so of faith. It has been stated that "gift" refers not to "faith"

but to "grace," and that it should be read with the emphasis on the word "grace." But if one who thus thought considered more fully the only meaning that can attach to the word "grace," he would see how absurd it would be to say that grace was the gift, because grace is gift! Who for a moment could imagine that grace was anything but the free, unmerited favour of God, bestowed simply out of the love of His own heart. This, apart from the fact that as a matter of grammatical construction it would be wrong not to take the nearer word "faith," instead of going behind it to the word "grace."

Faith is the gift of God, then agrees with passages as to repentance, and further agrees with the similar expression in 2 Peter i. 1: "To them that have obtained like precious faith." Obtained? From whom did they obtain it but from the One Who gives it. If a man could believe apart from God, then such a word as "obtained" would never be used in connection with it. "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance" (1 Thess. i. 5), are words addressed by Paul to the saints at Thessalonica, utterly unsuitable, if because the mental act of faith was the same when believing God and man, therefore man could of himself believe God as man when he chose so to do. Not word only, drawing out simply mental or intellectual assent, but power, the power of God in the Holy Ghost working in the soul, bringing the sinner into God's presence, the word then working in the conscience and heart by the Spirit's power. No mere effort of the mind on their part could have enabled them to receive Christ. The power of God and the Holy Ghost, then God becomes the object of the heart by faith. There is a living power exerted. True, the mental act taken alone, that is, regarded by itself, is the same when a man believes his friend as to any statement he may make, and when he

believes God's Word concerning His Son; but, having said that, never lose sight for a moment of the immense difference between the two things. The first simply leads me to accept what I have been told as true, but there is no spiritual power at work in my heart, for I might at the very time be meditating evil, and such belief would not check it nor disturb me. But when in conversion the Spirit's operations are found in exercising, and the like precious faith is obtained, then the soul is stirred to its depths. Sin is seen in its true colours as hateful to Him; love unto death is displayed at the cross, and made known in the heart; this is not nature, nor is it natural, but above and beyond it, outside and apart from it, yea, impossible to it. Now, although the mental act viewed by itself is the same, yet for all the rest that of necessity accompanies it, it is high above mere belief in man's word and action resulting from it, and therefore we are not to narrow our vision or limit our thought to the mere mental act, but we are to view faith (as also repentance) and its necessary attendant consequences in God's presence, and then we learn that it is His gift, a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 23), and result of the operations of God; "Ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (1 Thess. ii. 13).

We should not, therefore, narrow this immense, all-important subject down to the *mere* question of "whether there are two kinds of faith."

An expression often used is, "I am not sure whether I have the right kind of faith," result generally, if not always, of the Spirit's work being preached, and not the finished work of Christ. Thus the sinner is occupied with himself, waiting and looking for a work within; signs, and evidences, and feelings they are led to believe they ought to possess. From preaching thus disastrous some have gone to the other extreme, and so preached as if man had will and power in himself, and that to speak of faith as the gift of

God was to deny the sinner's responsibility; thus confounding responsibility and power, or imagining that there could not be the one without the other. Whereas God's Word clearly shows power lost, yet responsibility remaining. Sin entered. Man as the result is away from God, his "heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9), "None good" (Luke xviii. 19), "None that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. iii. 12). A will bent to do evil, and therefore man's will could never bring him in faith to Christ. The Spirit must will and work, thus giving repentance and faith. Faith is not in the natural man to be drawn out, but in spite of the natural man, prone to do evil, is to be as the gift of God wrought in him. "Faith cometh by hearing" (Rom. x. 17); "The word of faith which we preach;" said Paul, "that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 8, 9).

Such Scriptures as this and kindred ones (John iii. 16; v. 24, etc.), all present a precious aspect to the sinner, and we cannot make them too plain or be too anxious to sweep away all cobwebs of unbeliefs, all trusting in prayer, feelings, or works, so as to lead such unto Him, that they may believe in Him and be saved. But when saved the very first thing such will do with us will be to praise God for His gift, not only the gift of His Son to die, but for God-given repentance and faith. Thanks will ascend to Him. Glory will be ascribed, as it is clearly seen that if He had not thus wrought and given we should never have believed unto salvation, though we might have given our mental assent of faith to religion, to doctrines, and to the death of Christ. If this were not so, there would be no point in praying for the conversion of men. We pray. Why? Because we recognise God must begin, to admit that is, to admit all. Therefore in prayer you never get man's will named, save as an evil thing and an opposing force.

R. T. HOPKINS.

## THE FOUR GREAT MONARCHIES.

## V.

THE foolishnesses of a wise man are commonly very foolish, and the weaknesses of a strong man are generally weak indeed. Cyrus was unquestionably a great and a strong man, yet, in the disposition of his kingdom, he made the weakest and most foolish of efforts to guide and control posterity, and thus bequeathed to his successors a legacy of contention, of bloodshed, and of misery, as far reaching as it was lasting, and as disastrous in its effects as it was momentous in its consequences.

Cyrus left at his death two sons, Cambyses and Smerdis, and three daughters. He desired to accomplish a double purpose, of which the one component part was absolutely inconsistent with, indeed antagonistic to the other, for he wished (1) to maintain the unity of the empire, and (2) so to divide its government as to make his second son practically an independent, even if a subordinate ruler; he therefore left the kingdom generally to Cambyses, but decreed that Smerdis should be placed in authority over several great and important provinces.

The inevitable result followed; at a very early period of Cambyses' reign he, recognising that if he did not succeed in having Smerdis put out of the way, that ambitious young ruler would perform the same brotherly (?) office for him, caused Smerdis to be secretly assassinated, so secretly indeed, that the fact of his death was known to few, and its manner to fewer still; and Cambyses resumed the government of the province that had been willed to Smerdis, and thus became the sole and uncontrolled monarch of all the vast Medo-Persian empire.

Animated by the love of warlike adventure, and the desire for conquest which characterised his father, Cambyses

then turned him to an old project of Cyrus, for the execution of which that great chieftain had never found opportunity—the reduction of Egypt and the domination of its people.

After lengthened preparations, and after negotiations which ended in the attachment of the Phœnicians to his cause, thus giving him the command of their great fleet, he invaded Egypt with a powerful force and met Psammenitus, who was then Pharaoh, in a pitched battle, which was remarkable, not only because that in it the fate of the ancient African land was decided, but because in it Greeks, for the first time, took part in the conflicts of those eastern lands which they were yet to subdue and subjugate.

Psammenitus had in his host a large and compact brigade of Greek mercenaries, who fought to the bitter end, but who failed in the attempt to stay the course of the victorious Persians. The Egyptians were worsted with great slaughter, and their defeated monarch was shortly after besieged in Memphis, into which he had thrown himself, and which after some resistance submitted to the conqueror.

Cambyzes at first treated both the fallen Pharaoh and his subjects with the clemency which was so admirable a characteristic of the Persian kings, but finding that during or subsequent to a disastrous expedition which he undertook into the Libyan desert, and in which nearly all his troops perished by famine and sickness, Psammenitus had engaged in a widely spread conspiracy for the shaking off of the Persian yoke, Cambyzes entirely changed his policy and (after events lead to the supposition that his mind was failing at the time) acted with the ruthless cruelty of a madman.

Beginning with the execution of Psammenitus and his principal chieftains, he pursued his policy of vengeance until he had ground the Egyptians into the very dust, trampled upon their institutions, degraded their religion,

and desecrated the most holy of their places of the dead ; and having thus brought Egypt into the place of a mere province of Persia, and crushed all spirit out of its people, Cambyses set out for his own land and capital.

His way lay through Syria, and in that historic land strange tidings met him. Without warning or notice, proclamation was made in his camp and amongst his soldiers, by a herald who had secretly and swiftly passed into the midst, that Cambyses had been deposed, and that his brother Smerdis, whose death he had compassed, was reigning, having been recognised as the true and lawful successor of Cyrus, and king of Persia.

A very brief inquiry convinced Cambyses (1) that his brother was indeed lying in the nameless grave to which his treachery had consigned him, and that therefore an impostor was personating Smerdis in the palace, and amongst the multitude of the capital, and (2) that a powerful faction was interested in, and was supporting the imposture: and then, either because his cruelties and his rashnesses had alienated the minds of his soldiery, and left them in ready state to desert and depose him, or because, as already suggested, his mind had failed, or perhaps from a combination of the two causes, he lost heart and hope, and giving up all effort against his fate, all fight for his crown or for his life, he did himself to death in his tent, so wounding himself with his own sword that he sank two days after.

This collapse of Cambyses left the impostor, known to history as the Pseudo-Smerdis, in undisturbed though uncertain possession of the throne, with the result that a second religious revolution, counter in its every influence to that initiated by Cyrus, took place in the Medo-Persian empire ; for to a great extent Magism resumed the sway, and the Magi recovered the influence which was lost when the great conqueror achieved his first decided success.

For the Pseudo-Smerdis was indeed a Magus and a creature of the Magi, and his imposture owed its success to their influence and their support. These astute and ambitious minds, never accepting except perforce the place of obscurity to which they had been relegated by Cyrus, saw in this little known personage a fitting instrument through which they might smite down the worship of Ormazd, and take to themselves once again the guidance of affairs for (1) whether by accident or by relationship he bore a decided resemblance to Cyrus and to Smerdis, and (2) he had been brought up in the palace and was thoroughly well versed in the ways of the court.

Although the Magus Gomates—for such was his name—had thus secured undisputed possession of the throne, his position was almost an impossibly difficult one, for he had on the one hand to act so that his Persian subjects would rest in unsuspection of the fact that he was *not* the son of Cyrus the Persian and the overturner of Magism, and on the other, to satisfy the hopes and aspirations of the Magi to whom he owed his elevation, and upon whose assistance he had of necessity to rely.

Various devices were adopted by the impostor and his priestly advisers, in order to strengthen his hold upon the people, and to divert their thoughts from affairs of state: taxation was remitted, compulsory military service was temporarily abolished, and last but not least, the Pseudo-Smerdis took to wife *en bloc* the widows of Cambyses, such being in accordance with Eastern custom, though in Gomates case it is not easy to decide whether the peril which was involved was greater in adopting or in refusing to adopt it, as one at any rate of Cambyses' wives (he had married his sister Atossa) was intimately acquainted with the true Smerdis.

To meet this, and to free himself from the danger of inconvenient recognition without, he adopted a policy of



seclusion for himself, and of isolation for his unfortunate wives, shutting himself up in his palace, and shutting each of them in to herself and to her immediate attendants.

This of itself was sufficient to provoke remark, but there was no uprising, no overt attempt to dispute his right to the name and place he had taken; and presuming upon this, his advisers grew more bold and less patient, less inclined to wait for the spoils of their successful conspiracy, and as a consequence thereof began to display their colours and to show their hand; the effect being that the Pseudo-Smerdis proceeded first slowly and afterwards violently to displace Zoroastrianism and its leaders and teachers, and to reconstitute Magism as the national religion, giving its priests and votaries the place of supremacy which they held in Media before the defeat of Astyages by Cyrus.

The inevitable result followed: mutterings of discontent were heard on every side amongst the displaced though yet powerful Persian party, to which the Magi responded by the initiation of a veritable reign of terror, which for a little time seemed to have the effect of crushing the threatened opposition. But for a little while only, as it soon appeared; for the great nobles of Persia, feeling that their very lives were not worth a day's purchase, cast about for a leader in whose name they might with good hope of success call upon the nation to rise, and quickly found such a leader in the person of a young Persian who, though not a descendant of Cyrus, whose male line was extinct, was undoubtedly the lineal representative of the Achæmenian kings, and of whom Cyrus himself had at times had no small jealousy.

Under this bold and politic leader as he soon proved himself to be, whose name in history is Darius Hystaspes and who was the "Darius, King of Persia" of Holy Writ,<sup>1</sup> the conflict was but short, though for a while sharp, and was decisively terminated by the triumphant entry of

<sup>1</sup> Ezra iv. 5, 24.

Darius into the capital with the head of the Magus in his possession, the impostor thus ignominiously falling after a reign of little more than seven months.

With him fell the last hope of Magism as a force in the world's politics, as a power in the kingdoms of the earth; for though it remained as a potent influence in the minds of many many men, it ceased to be an element or a factor in the conflict between "the four winds of heaven" as they "strove upon the great sea;"<sup>1</sup> and therefore it may here disappear from these sketches, with the remark that the "Gnosticism" against which Paul's Epistle to the Colossians was directed was the lineal descendant of this evil cult of Magism, which in a modified form sorely disturbed and harassed the Church in the later days of the apostles, and in the times of their immediate successors.

The accession of Darius to the throne was signalized by a fearful vengeance upon the Magi, and was also more happily followed by a great change in the fortunes of the returned remnant of Judah, who had essayed to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem.

That effort had ended in failure, as might well have been expected, seeing that it had been begun in division, for "ancient" men found an occasion for weeping, and vociferous weeping too, in that which was to younger men a cause of joy and gladness. "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom," but it cannot be said that they always do. And in not a few cases the intervention of an "ancient" man<sup>2</sup> in affairs, whether they be of the state or of the churches of God, is a cause for dread and oftentimes of disaster, wherever that ancient man may be.

Owing, it may be, to this division the work of the build-

<sup>1</sup> Dan. vii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> That is to say, an "ancient" man who is incapable of the reception of new ideas, or of the apprehension of new truths.

ing went on in a feeble and perfunctory manner; but still, something was done and the adversaries of Judah were provoked. Their first effort in the way of frustrating the builders took the significant form of an offer of assistance and co-operation in the work. This met with an uncompromising refusal: "Ye have nothing to do with us, to build an house unto our God," upon which the opponents openly declared their hostility, threw every kind of local difficulty in the way of the Jews, and bribed certain of the officers of the court of Cyrus to endeavour to poison the mind of the monarch against the people he had favoured.

This was all to no purpose, and by-and-by, when Cyrus died and Cambyses succeeded him, the venomous accusation which was formulated in writing and presented to him was equally barren of result. Cambyses would not reverse the policy of his father; and therefore, though he does not seem to have favoured the remnant in any way, he would not allow them to be interfered with by envious Samaritans.

With the accession of the Pseudo-Smerdis everything was changed. There was a degree of sympathy between the worshippers of JEHOVAH and of Ormazd with which the Magi had nothing to do, and in which they had no part, while on the other hand it is certain that Magism had many adherents amongst the mongrel people who had been "brought over and set in the cities of Samaria."

When, therefore, these appealed in plausible terms to the alien king, the impostor, who had no regard for the memory of Cyrus, no concern as to the continuance of his policy, and no fellowship with his religious views, they obtained without difficulty and without delay—by return of post, as we would say—the decree which reversed that of Cyrus and "went up in haste to Jerusalem, unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power."

So "ceased the work of the house of God which was at Jerusalem" some fifteen years after the issue of the decree

which authorized its commencement, and about fourteen years after it had been begun.

This interruption of a work which had been begun in division and carried on in indifference, or at the best half-heartedness, lasted for nearly two years, and then a revival of interest and a renewal of activity was brought about by the words of warning and encouragement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, and an effort was put forth, this time in earnest. The "ancient men" were silent—probably because they were dead—there was no division, and the "house was finished" in four years.

This was not accomplished without further attempt at obstruction on the part of the Jews' old foes. But circumstances were now very different, the counter-revolution had taken place in Persia, the Magus lay in a dishonoured grave, and Darius Hystaspes reigned in his stead. The Samaritans recognised clearly that they had lost their position of vantage, a new governor was in power, west of the Euphrates, and all that they ventured to do was to cause him to inquire by what authority the remnant carried on their work.

It is interesting, and in view of present controversies as to the accuracy of the earlier part of the Book of Ezra, important to notice that no reference whatever was made to the decree of the Pseudo-Smerdis by which the work had been so recently arrested; evidently it was now looked upon as worthless, and that on the contrary, when the Jews claimed to be proceeding by virtue of a warrant of Cyrus, all that was requested by the governor was that there should be verification of the decree by search in the royal archives at Ecbatana.

The verification arrived in due course, and with it a mandate of Darius, couched in most decisive terms, endorsing and extending the privileges granted by Cyrus, and that because of the value that the king set upon the sacrifices

“unto the God of Heaven” which would be offered for him upon the rebuilt altar in Zion, and upon the supplications that the restored priesthood would make on his behalf; thus the efforts of the opponents ended in their own confusion and in the strengthening of the hands of the people of God.

In all this it has been assumed that the “Ahasuerus”<sup>1</sup> of the text was Cambyses, the son of Cyrus; and that the “Artaxerxes”<sup>2</sup> that followed him, was Gomates the Magus, the Pseudo-Smerdis.

Such a hypothesis has been, until recently, accepted almost unanimously by the scholars whose judgment on the matter is of real value, even including a historian whose bent was so rationalistic and whose views were so radical, as the great German critic Ewald; but within late years the students of what it has become fashionable to speak of as the “higher criticism” have rejected it principally because of the confusion in the names of the rulers concerned, and have therefore placed the period dealt with in Ezra iv. and v. much later.

It is unwise for those who regard not the tradition of the elders, and who desire only to “know the truth” that the truth may make them free, to ignore or to deride the work of the “higher critics,” or the results which these scholars claim to have arrived at; it is at least equally unwise to accept their results without something approaching to positive certainty of demonstration.

In this case it is not enough to say that the names in Ezra iv. 6, 7, “are elsewhere regularly the Hebrew forms of the names which we know as Xerxes and Artaxerxes respectively,” and that “these two kings lived long after the age of Cyrus and Darius;”<sup>3</sup> hence the words of the passage in question must be held to apply to a subsequent period

<sup>1</sup> Ezra iv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ezra iv. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Introd. to the Literature of the Old Test.*, by Prof. Driver, D.D., p. 514.

and to another chain of events ; when the internal evidence and the whole sequence of the words, as written, seem to point so conclusively to the line which has been followed in this article.

Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes were the two best known names in Persian history, both too well known to admit of the possibility of their being confounded with any later monarchs, and it is clear that the writer intended them to be the two *termini* of the period he was dealing with.<sup>1</sup> Then there were, as a matter of fact, two intervening reigns between those of the two great kings, and just two are set out in the text as so intervening. Further, it is plain that "Ahasuerus" ignored the calumnies of the Jews' opponents when these turned unto him, which is exactly the course that the son of Cyrus, who was desirous of maintaining the continuity of his father's policy, would be expected to take, while "Artaxerxes" at once accepted the counsel of the adversaries, and never raised the question as to whether Cyrus had promulgated the decree by virtue of which the Jews claimed to be proceeding or not ; which is again precisely the line which the Pseudo-Smerdis, as an impostor whose desire was to undo the work of Cyrus and to overturn the religious policy which Cyrus had established and pursued, would be likely to follow.

Again, when the matter was laid before Darius, that prince acted just as an Achæmenian monarch who had displaced a usurper might be expected to act ; laying great weight on the former decree of Cyrus, his lawful and acknowledged predecessor, and altogether ignoring that of the pretender, though it was so much the more recent.

These considerations taken together with the fact that names and titles of distant monarchs are even by contemporaries who speak another tongue, mixed up frequently

<sup>1</sup> Ezra iv. 5.

in almost inextricable confusion,<sup>1</sup> will probably be found sufficient by the majority of unprejudiced seekers after truth to keep them from refusing to accept the assumption upon which we have proceeded in these pages, and to enable them to find in the course of events in Persian history, something of the external causes for the strange stoppage and equally strange resumption of the work of the house of God by the restored remnant of Judah.

If this be so indeed, it has more than an academic interest, for it affords a glimpse of the way in which the government of the world by the providence of the Most High is affected by the proceedings of the people of God, and how He will, when occasion arises, lift up and put down kings and dynasties according as the real good of His people seems to Him to require.

This will become even more apparent at a later period of the history of the kings of Persia.

W. H. HUNTER.

<sup>1</sup> How many of the people of Great Britain at this time can distinguish between the names and the titles of some of the feudatory princes of Hindostan?

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## DIFFERENT KINGDOMS.

THE following offers a few suggestive gleanings in connection with the different kingdoms mentioned in the New Testament; some of which are present, others are future. Some affect or encompass all upon the earth. Others are only within the reach of certain. Regarding which some may be helpers thereunto. "These only are my fellow-workers unto the Kingdom of God" (Col. iv. 11).

Others may be opposers. Beware of bad workmen (Phil. iii. 2). "Study to show thyself approved unto (not by) God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Tim. ii. 15).

Moreover, some aspects of those kingdoms are but temporary. By-and-by these will be merged into and be lost in others that are abiding and eternal.

Taking the Gospel by Matthew, we have first in order the Kingdom (*i.e.*, the rule or reign) of the Heavens. That probably overshadows and surrounds all the other Kingdoms. That speaks of the operations of God from off His throne in the heavens, whereby He accomplishes His will upon and by that and those found upon the earth.

Thus it is that the Kingdom of the Heavens suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Wherefore, in manifestation or in mystery, "the rule of the heavens" abides and goeth on.

Colossians i. 12, 13 show that the present portion, or position, of all the born-again (we do not say all the saved) of the present dispensation is that we have been delivered out of the authority of darkness and are translated into the Kingdom of the Son of the Father's love. The setting of *authority* over against the word *Kingdom* in the passage before us gives a most helpful definition of God's use and meaning of the term Kingdom, which is usually that of rule, rather than (though it may include) locality.



2 Peter i. 1-11 calls upon those who have obtained like-precious faith to do the things therein enumerated; and intimates that such behaviour will bring about a corresponding entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To that same Kingdom Paul alludes in 2 Timothy iv. 18 —“The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto His heavenly Kingdom,” which plainly is future.

In the third chapter of the Gospel by John the Lord Himself shows that unless a man be born again he is not able to see, neither, consequently, is he able to enter the Kingdom of God. That is to say, a man's being born again makes it possible for him to see, and, seeing, to enter the Kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 22 sets forth the MANNER of entering the Kingdom of God. We (the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ) must, through much tribulation, or many tribulations, enter into the Kingdom of God. Compare Romans v. 3-5 and 1 Thessalonians ii. 1-12.

Romans xiv. 17 defines both negatively and positively the Kingdom of God. It is not meat and drink. It is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. These are matters of obedience. For he that in these things serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God and approved to men.

In the first Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi.), when the Lord taught the disciples to pray, “Our Father . . . Thy Kingdom come,” He pointed them on to a coming Kingdom whereof Matthew xiii. speaks. There in the explanation of the Parable of the Sower, the field is the world (v. 38). At the end of the age the *Son of man* shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom (not the field) all things that offend and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be the wailing and the gnashing of the teeth.

THEN shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the

Kingdom of THEIR Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

We would compare this Kingdom with, and yet distinguish it from, that of Matthew xxv. 31 to end,<sup>1</sup> which again should not be confounded with Revelation xi. 15 (Rev. Ver), where the Kingdom of this world has become that of our Lord and of His Christ. And He shall reign for ever and ever.

All of which shall issue as 1 Corinthians xv. 20-28 tells,<sup>2</sup> and regarding which the doxologies of the book of the Revelation afford most instructive corroboration, which we may be able to overtake in our next issue.

JOHN BROWN.

*September, 1892.*

<sup>1</sup> But when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.

Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or athirst, and gave Thee drink? And when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? And when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me,

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the Devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not.

Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?

Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto Me.

And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.

<sup>2</sup> But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For, He put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that He is excepted who did subject all things unto Him. And when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all.

## PARDON BY DEED.

Now it comes to my mind what was said to us at the gate, to wit, that we should have pardon by word and deed. By word, that is, by the promise; by deed, to wit, in the way it was obtained. What the promise is, of that I know something, but what it is to have pardon by deed, or in the way that it was obtained, I suppose you know, which, if you please, let us hear your discourse thereof.

Pardon by the deed done is pardon obtained by some one for another that hath need thereof; not by the person pardoned, but in the way, saith another, in which I have obtained it. So then the pardon that you have attained is by another; to wit, by Him that let you in at the gate; and He hath obtained it in this double way, He hath performed righteousness to cover you, and spilt blood to cleanse you.

But if He parts with His righteousness to us, what will He have for Himself?

He has more righteousness than you have need of, or than He needeth Himself.

Pray make that appear.

With all my heart; but first I must premise that He of whom we are now about to speak is one that hath not His fellow. He has two natures in one person; plain to be distinguished, impossible to be divided. Unto each of these natures a righteousness belongeth, and each righteousness is essential to that nature. So that one may as easily cause the natures to be extinct as to separate its justice or righteousness from it. Of these righteousnesses therefore we are not made partakers, so that they or any of them should be put upon us, that we might be made just, and live thereby. Besides these there is a righteousness which this Person has, as these two natures are joined in one. And this is not the righteousness of the Godhead as distinguished from the man-

hood ; nor the righteousness of the manhood as distinguished from the Godhead ; but a righteousness which standeth in the union of both natures, and may properly be called the righteousness that is essential to His being prepared of God to the capacity of the mediatory office which He was entrusted with. If He parts with His first righteousness, He parts with His Godhead ; if He parts with His second righteousness, He parts with the purity of His manhood ; if He parts with His third, He parts with that perfection which capacitates Him to the office of mediation. He has therefore another righteousness, which standeth in performance or obedience to a revealed will, and that is what He puts upon sinners, and that by which their sins are covered. Wherefore He saith, " As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous " (Rom. v. 19).

But are the other righteousnesses of no use to us ?

Yes ; for though they are essential to his natures and office, and cannot be communicated to another, yet it is by virtue of them that the righteousness that justifies is for that purpose efficacious. The righteousness of His Godhead gives virtue to His obedience ; the righteousness of His manhood giveth capability to His obedience, to justify ; and the righteousness that standeth in the union of these two natures to His office giveth authority to that righteousness to do the work for which it was ordained.

So then here is a righteousness that Christ as God has no need of, for He is God without it ; here is a righteousness that Christ as man has no need of to make Him so, for He is perfect man without it ; again here is righteousness that Christ as God-man has no need of, for He is perfectly so without it. Here then is a righteousness that Christ as God and as God-man has no need of with reference to Himself, and therefore He can spare it ; a justifying righteousness that He for Himself wanteth not and therefore

giveth it away. Hence it is called "the gift of righteousness" (Rom. v. 17). This righteousness, since Christ Jesus the Lord has made Himself under the law, must be given away; for the law doth not only bind him that is under it to do justly, but to use charity. Wherefore he must or ought by the law, if he hath two coats, to give to him that has none. Now our Lord Himself hath two coats, one for Himself and one to spare; wherefore He freely bestows one upon those that have none. And thus doth your pardon come by deed or by the work of another Man. Your Lord Christ is He that worked and hath given away what He wrought for to the next poor beggar He meets.

But again, in order to pardon by deed there must something be paid to God as a price, as well as something prepared to cover us withal. Sin has delivered us up to the just course of a righteous law; now from this course we must be justified by way of redemption, a price being paid for the harms we have done; and this is by the blood of your Lord, who came and stood in your place and stead, and died your death for your transgressions. And thus has He ransomed you from your transgressions by blood, and covered your polluted deformed souls with righteousness (Rom. viii. 34; Gal. iii. 13), for the sake of which God passeth by you and will not hurt you when He comes to judge the world.

JOHN BUNYAN, in "Pilgrim's Progress."

EDITOR'S NOTE.—"Rare John Bunyan" has understated his case here. Not only has Christ covered "polluted deformed souls" with righteousness, but He has *made them righteous*; and not only will God "not hurt" those who have entered in by the *gate* when He comes in judgment, but them will God at that time "bring with Him," to be admired and wondered at in Christ and with Christ "at that day."

## FAITH AND SCIENCE.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth ;<sup>1</sup> this is the opening statement of the God breathed Scripture, and by it the believing disciple is made in faith to understand that the worlds have been framed by the Word of God so that what is seen hath not been made out of things that do appear.<sup>2</sup> In other words, there was a time when these things had no existence, and there was a time when God called them into being.

Moreover, the things which are seen are for a time,<sup>3</sup> and that day will certainly come in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.<sup>4</sup>

Thus we learn that there has been a beginning, and that there shall be an end. We say—thus we learn—we know it, because God has said it : God gives no proof, we require none : He furnishes no evidence, none is needed : God speaks, we believe, and thus we learn. There was a beginning when God created ; there shall come a time when all will have passed away.<sup>5</sup>

As to that which is seen, which has present existence men of science may investigate it and seek to comprehend it, for God has placed in man power for understanding the things which are in existence to-day, and for discovering therefrom (with more or less certainty) that which has been in days gone by. But science never has reached and never can reach to a knowledge of the beginning ; this God has reserved for faith ; to sight it is not granted. The sight of man back into past ages has been extended greatly during the present century, so that he is perhaps able to trace back

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 1.<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi. 3.<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 18.<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 10.<sup>5</sup> Rev. xxi. 1.

the history of this and other worlds into far remote periods; but his sight is limited, and ever must be limited to that which has happened since the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth.

Not thus is faith limited. The weakest, the simplest of those who have believed in God may learn from God of that One who is the First and the Last,<sup>1</sup> the Father of Eternity,<sup>2</sup> who in the beginning was with God, and was God,<sup>3</sup> and who has loved us with an everlasting love.<sup>4</sup>

So again from the study of the laws and order of the physical world, scientists may be enabled to predict future events with wonderful accuracy. Astronomers for instance, foretell long beforehand the exact time at which an eclipse of the sun will begin and end. But all forecasts of the future are limited by the coming Day, for unto a knowledge of it, science is not permitted to attain.

But that end which science cannot foresee is by God revealed to those who believe His word, and not only is there revealed the end of the things which are seen, which are for a time, but God assures us also of the continuance of the things which are not seen, which are eternal. He tells us that there will be a removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain, and that we receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken.<sup>5</sup> Yea we have the assurance that we shall ever be with the Lord.<sup>6</sup> His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.<sup>7</sup>

Thus faith is at once the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and therefore faith can never, on the one hand receive confirmation from any agreement (real or imaginary) between Scripture and the theories of scientists, nor can it on the other hand be shaken

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 17.      <sup>2</sup> Isa. ix. 6, R.V.      <sup>3</sup> John i. 1.      <sup>4</sup> Jer. xxxi. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. xii. 27, 28.      <sup>6</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 17.      <sup>7</sup> Rev. xxii. 3, 4.



by any discrepancy or want of harmony that may exist or appear to exist between these. For faith rests on the unerring Word of God concerning that which is not seen, whilst science concerns itself only with the investigation of that which is seen, and with logical deduction therefrom.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

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### Fragments.

HAM'S exposure of his father's sin was never forgotten by God; and although we cannot trace very much of the *effect* of Noah's curse upon Ham's descendants, so that it would seem to have almost died out, yet it was only, almost, for upwards of a thousand years after Noah's fall, the unsuspecting descendants of Ham were "utterly destroyed" (1 Chron. iv. 40, 41). Now as God writes "for our admonition," I would desire to be admonished, and hesitate to proclaim a brother's sin without distinct and cogent reasons, which, of course, may exist.

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A SAINT of seventeenth century days wrote: "Reverently read God's Word, thereto joining prayer, so that, as in reading you hear Him speaking to you, you in speaking to Him may do so as helped by the Spirit's bringing God's own will to your remembrance.

SHINE, Light Divine, upon the path on which I stand,  
 And clear away the mists that hang around my steps,  
 And hinder thus my walk with Thee.

Shine Thou amidst the gloom and cheer me on ;  
 Oft those that most I trust mislead, while some deceive.  
 Some stand and smile at my perplexities,  
 While others sternly chide.

From those I turn away, to these my ears I close,  
 And follow on to find the path by vulture's eye unseen,  
 And where no lion's whelp hath trod,  
 Yet Thou thyself hast been, and Thou canst lead me there,  
 Make all so clear, that painful doubt as to my path shall  
 swiftly flee !

Then every weight that makes my burdened heart to sigh,  
 shall pass away.

Soon I shall be at home, the conflict passed, the battlefield  
 behind,

Then bathed in light—the light that leads me now—  
 Behold Thy face, my Lord, and like Thee be.

The rest, the crown be mine,

If I have fought on this dark shore, on which my feet now  
 rest according to Thy will.

Lead Thou me on then, Lord, if needs there be alone, but  
 ever yet with Thee,

Till Thou shalt say, "Well done," and Thou on earth shalt  
 reign, and I shall reign with Thee.

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## THE PROMISES MADE UNTO THE FATHERS.

### ROMANS xv. 8-12.

WHAT deep interest there is for the child of God in the attentive following of the acts of the Lord as recorded in the Gospels! Every step of the Son was in perfect accord with the will of the Father: His delight was in the law of His God. The holy motives of His absolute obedience ever tended to glorify His Father, and He could say at the end of His earthly life: "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do" (John xvii. 4). His acts had not importance merely for the brief time of His sojourn down here, but they had far-reaching and fruitful consequences as those of no other could have. Our present purpose is to show that Christ by being baptized of John took Israel's place before God, and guaranteed the promises made of old to the fathers, which, apart from Him, Israel could never enter into. The subject of the immediate lesson to be drawn from the baptism of Christ by John has been lately treated in these pages,<sup>1</sup> therefore no further reference to that baptism need be made apart from what will be unavoidably necessary.

In Romans xv. 8-13 we read: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. . . ." These words clearly show that Israel occupied the first place in the thoughts of the Lord when on earth, and that God's earthly people were to be the channel of blessing to the nations, but we know that they never reached that position.

If we turn back to the days of Abraham, we find that many of the promises of blessing were made unto him un-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. IV. No. 15, pp. 110-114.

conditionally. There was no question of failure anticipated or even supposed, but the words were most emphatic. Genesis xv. shows us this distinctly as well as the promise of the Seed through whom all nations are to be blessed (Gen. xii. 3; xxii. 18; Gal. iii. 16).

But now comes the law and all its direful consequences. Israel is put in a position of responsibility, and failure ensues. Israel would inherit the land and all the blessings if the obedience of the people was perfect, but it was not such, and consequently this position under law put away for a time the fulfilment of God's free promise. Israel's boast must be tested to the end, and bitter were its fruits, even to their carrying away as captives to a strange land. All attentive readers of the Old Testament have noticed the deepening gloom which surrounds the people of God and which a few bright scenes do not dispel. The times of the Judges show a complete departure from the will of God, and put under trial with the Kings, the downward career of the people hastens on till Israel's national history ends in bloodshed, carnage and captivity. Well might the question be asked, How are the promises to be fulfilled?

The captivity put the people wholly out of the land, and the few who returned to it deeply felt their loss, their disgrace, and their inability to begin afresh where others had so signally failed. And as God does not go back improving what has failed, so the Prophet Malachi points forward to the time when the Holy One was to come and fulfil perfectly what the nation of Israel had been unable even partially to accomplish.

The means provided by God to enable the people to approach Him through a certain class of individuals, the house of Aaron, shows again how little man is fitted to fulfil the divine purposes in blessing. For the very nature of that priesthood, as well as the imperfectness of the sacrifices, clearly pointed to the One who, in the mind of God, was

predestined to be the means of blessing and glory for which man has waited and which God delayed until the fitting time had come.

Thus, whether it be a question of national obedience or priestly walk according to God, Israel had to learn (if they could teach their hearts to do so) that their failure was complete and absolute and that, so far as they were concerned, no hopes could be entertained by them of inheriting the promises made to the fathers.

The voice of John the Baptist sounds forth the message from the banks of Jordan: "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The message does not go home to those who were responsible as being the heads in Israel. Some few among the people are awaiting the Messiah and centring their hopes in the coming One. But, as in former times, the ears of the nation were not open to the calls of God. The Pharisees and others, carried by the current, did go to John, but he was not deceived by them. If they will not come to God with repentant hearts and be baptized by Him, well, the judgment is what remains for them. And if they will continue in their evil course when God sends His own Son, albeit they are children of Abraham, God will give life to that which so far had no life, and from what was of small value, even from stones, children might be raised up to Abraham. But no change for the better takes place, and the Lord appears on the scene.

John withstood Him: "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou unto me?" (Matt. iii. 14). The characteristic of each one who was baptized by John was the manifestation of real repentance, not only for individual sins, but also especially for the national sin of disobedience. Thus the act of being baptized by John indicated failure on their part in fulfilling the conditions of obedience and the putting of themselves before God for Him to do what He pleased. But the Lord had no personal sin to confess, nor

had he a share in the national sin. Hence by going down into the Jordan he took Israel's place before God, and as Israel had thoroughly failed, He presented Himself to do what Israel had not done. He begins afresh the history of God's people, but here there will be no more failure, no more sin. And God finds at last, so to speak, One in whom He can take pleasure, in whom there is no stain, no imperfection; thus the voice from Heaven proclaims God's entire and absolute satisfaction and pleasure.

Christ is now representative of the true Israel of God, and, taking the position which the nation ought to have taken, sets the first stone of the glorious purpose of God in accomplishing the blessings promised in olden times. The Lord begins Israel's history over again in accordance with the words: "Out of Egypt did I call out my Son" (Matt. ii. 15), but this time there is perfect obedience to the law, and every act and saying of Christ is a sweet savour to the Father. Through and by the Lord will Israel receive the full benefit of intended blessing, which will spread to every clime and to every nation. The Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets each give their testimony to the great truth that Christ the Lord will yet be the centre of all blessing when He takes the rule of this world into His own hands (comp. Rom. xv. 9, 10, 12).

G. F. GAUDIBERT.

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## Department of Question and Answer.

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God."—*John vii. 17, R.V.*

QUESTION 34.—*If one is being received into, or put out of fellowship in the Church meeting here in this place; can it not be scripturally done except the whole Church throughout the province of — is notified of it?*

That which makes the reception or excommunication scriptural, is the Scripture command which is acted upon. If other Scripture teaches that saints elsewhere should be "notified," then failure in so doing does not touch the right character of the prior act.

The question as to "notifying" an act to saints at a distance, therefore brings in two distinct matters. First, the reception or excommunication; next, the notifying of it to others. If the person to be received or put away is known to be well-known, and often found present as a Christian in any other place more or less distant, instead of "notifying" after step taken, surely the full and proper views of fellowship would lead overseeing brethren to take counsel with others in that place to which the one about to be received or put away, went, so that there might be assured fellowship in the act, and trouble and sorrow saved by giving beforehand an opportunity to others to agree to or dissent from proposed action. If the person was not known outside the place in which he lived, nothing could be gained by naming before or after in a province or district, as it would be simply a "name," the person in such case being unknown. R. T. H.

QUESTION 35.—*Are not letters of commendation safeguards enough to prevent those who are put out of fellowship, from being received into the Church at any other place?*

They would be if in every instance, where one unknown came without a letter stating that he was in an assembly, he was informed that he would have to wait until communication was held with brethren in the place from which he represented himself as coming. If one had been known, and had been before, and therefore did not take a letter on each occasion, and went as hitherto, hiding the fact that he had been "put away," then, as soon as that fact was known, he would be acted toward as in the outside place, and also as being a deceiver in hiding the fact, so long as he could, of his having been put away. The "love that believeth all things" would, so long as nothing was known to the contrary, receive him as before, but as soon as saints were informed, they would act promptly in upholding the action

taken elsewhere. All this is very simple where saints have learned the "ways that be in Christ"; but where "independency" is held and practised from ignorance or any other cause, then the idea inculcated that each assembly must judge for itself, with the result that a plausible person, ingratiating himself with a few, can soon be considered as an injured and ill-used person, who should be sympathized with and received, and in such cases without even communication had with those from where the person has come, or if any, of such a kind as to show that they believe the story told, and are already in a prejudiced state of mind.

Where, therefore, the Assembly contemplated is one scripturally taught, there is no difficulty. If difficulties are found arising from "independency" notions, then the first thing to be done is to shew from Scripture how evil they are, and what untold mischief results from acting upon them. It might be added that brethren should feel responsible to inform overseeing brethren in another assembly of the putting away of one whom they believed had gone, or was likely to go to their town.

R. T. H.

QUESTION 36.—*If a brother who calls himself a Baptist comes and asks to break bread, should he be received, it being understood he is only coming for that time, or any other time he may wish to come?*

A question familiar to many would need to be asked. "Received to what?" All he is represented as asking for, is to "break bread," therefore the only reception he seeks is for the time, and for an act, that is, to break bread, and he does so as one who is occupying a sectarian position, and unless prepared frankly to own such a position wrong he can only regard it as a right one, or, as being equal to any other, and consider therefore that in which he seeks a place for a time is equally a sect. Thus, if place is accorded him by the assembly without seeking "in meekness" to instruct (2 Tim. ii. 25), he will go on in self-will or ignorance, choosing as he pleases, and will be a sectarian still; and thus Christians would have lost their opportunity to help, because of their own neglect in acting upon plain Scriptural injunction.

Scripture never teaches reception to an act, but always into "the fellowship," and reception, excision, and restoration, are invariably shown to be the act of the assembly in the name of the Lord, according to His direction of word. The assembly alone can act in these things, for the plain reason that Scripture appeals to all. "Receive YE" (Rom. xv. 7); "Purge out . . . that YE" (1 Cor. v. 7); "I wrote unto you" (1 Cor. v. 9); "Therefore put away from among YOURSELVES" (1 Cor. v. 13); "I beseech YOU that YE would confirm YOUR love toward Him" (2 Cor. ii. 8). Thus the action is shown to be that



of the assembly, and the responsibility devolving upon them as a whole cannot be delegated to any other part less or more. *All* in oversight in any place are as unable to receive, put away, or restore, as any *one* among them. They can only counsel and advise the assembly, then all act together in the matter. It is only torturing Scripture to take Acts ix. 26, and because Barnabas brought Saul to the Apostles, teach that one as Barnabas can now bring to "the breaking of bread," or into the assembly. For Barnabas only brought Saul to "the apostles," ver. 27, not to the assembly. All this is clearly seen as to excision or restoration, one never hears it contended for that one should be able to act on behalf of all in these things. It would be resented at once. Why then in the first and most responsible? The only reply can be that ignorance led to the doing of it, until "deeds" became "doctrine," and after so long acting upon the notion that one or more could be trusted to act for all, it has gradually been taught, and Scripture has been then sought for to sustain it.

If one objects by saying, but "a brother, a Baptist" has been received, and is therefore already in and needs not to be received, then to be consistent, such an one must insist that every Christian, because he is one, is in, and equally needs not to be received. Thus, reception by an assembly of any one would be wrong, and it would have to be held that Scripture commanded the assembly for certain sins (1 Cor. v.), to "put away" one whom they had never received. How could that be possible?

Unless stress was laid upon the fact that the brother referred to in the question was a Baptist, that is, had been baptized and was therefore in, which would teach that baptism was the door into the Church. A doctrine widely held, but where does Scripture teach it? As a fact, Scripture never teaches anything like it. Baptism is neither "into the Kingdom," nor "into the Church" as some affirm, but is "UNTO Christ" (Gal. iii. 27). A figure, the answer of a good conscience (1 Pet. iii. 21). If Baptism was as some say, "the door into" in Apostolic days, then it is now, for evil doctrine (infant sprinkling and immersion) can no more change God's Word concerning it, than neglect of it by Christians can. If one holds that *any* Christian has to be received into the assembly, then he must, to be consistent, hold that *all* must be, and that the reception according to Scripture must be *by* all. And seeing that in the assembly One Voice alone has right to be heard and obeyed, and One Will alone should guide and govern all, then if anyone has come under the sound of other and discordant voices, and thus under the will of man, resulting in his joining a sect, in love it should be shown him that he has sinned, and also that it is not for him any longer to act as in the past but with repentant heart, gladly to take his place where the will of the Lord, and that alone, is sought to be maintained and acted upon.

As Christians thus act toward one, they can look to the Lord to work Himself in the *out* and *in* leading, so that the "ism" left consistently and continually the Word is sought unto and followed in all things.

R. T. H.

QUESTION 37.—*If a number of believers are habitually gathered together to break bread in remembrance of the Lord, looking to Him to guide by His Spirit in worship and ministry, by whomsoever He will, are they not a Church of God in that place?*

Christians gathered unto the Lord Himself at Ephesus, Corinth, etc., were, being so gathered, spoken of as "Church of God." That which caused their being so called was not the result of numbers, for if only two or three they would have been equally so called; nor did it result from all Christians living in the place being together, for all might have been together in a voluntary association, and in such case would have been no assembly of God's, nor would they have had Scripture to guide them. Thus that which underlies every Sectarian Gathering is WILL at work in bringing together, and Rules, Creeds, Articles, or Confessions binding and keeping them together thereafter, for however much Scripture may be talked about, the ultimate appeal is made to the Creed, and not apart from it, directly and only to the Scriptures.

But when Christians are gathered by the Holy Spirit unto Him, then Scripture calls them "Church of God in Corinth."

If not "a Church of God," that is brought together by Him, and therefore belonging to Him, what would they be? The question is not should such continually assert that they are Church of God until pride might work and evil result, but apart from such Christians, their thoughts or claims, if they have any, does Scripture call them Church of God? When we take the Word itself there can be no hesitation. Undoubtedly they are, whether meeting in one room or in twenty, for if not belonging to Him, as gathered by Him, they would have no right to take the Scripture for their action in matters pertaining to discipline, etc., in Church of God, not being one, and therefore they could only be in association apart from God's Word, result of Will, and Man's energy at Work.

R. T. H.

QUESTION 38.—*At page 55 the writer of "Spirit and Soul and Body" says, "The brute is never said to have received nor to possess n'shamah." Does Genesis vii. 21 and 22 not say that the beast equally with the man possesses "n'shamah"?*

Genesis vii. 21 and 22 does NOT say that the beast equally with the man possesses n'shamah (נִשְׁמָה), as the following amended punctuation with the marginal reading of the verses show:—

“ And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of the fowl, and of the cattle, and of the beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

“ And every (Adam) man,\* ALL IN WHOSE NOSTRILS was the BREATH (n'shamah) of the SPIRIT (ruach) of life,\* of all that was in the dry (land) died.”

That agrees with every occurrence of the word n'shamah, and is corroborated by all Scripture, which plainly shows that man alone possesses n'shamah.

J. B.

\* N.B.—Those words are *explanatory* of the expression “and every man.” If carefully noted they save from error, and guide into all the truth.

GOD IS FOR me.

His Son He gave, who through His death hath  
Set me free. My guilt is gone, and by  
His blood I am brought nigh to God.  
What foe shall dare lift up his head  
'Gainst Him who mighty is to save!

Ps. lvi. Rom. viii. 31.

God is WITH me.

Then be the journey long or short,  
I need not fear: He is enough, and more,  
For all that will arise. His company  
Shall cheer, and in Himself all needs  
Shall find supplies.

Heb. xiii. 5, 6. Phil. iv. 19.

God is IN me.

Oh! that it might be always true,  
That, till in that abode with Him above,  
Himself shall find in me a place  
Wherein to dwell and sup. .  
The opened ear, and opened door,  
For Him to enter with love's store.

John xiv. 23. Rev. iii. 20.

Thrice blessed word,

For me, *with* me, *in* me. What  
Want I more? Except to be with Him  
Whom now unseen I love. 'Tis but  
A moment's interval, and then, "The twinkling  
Of an eye," and then, eternally, with  
Himself on high.

1 Thess. iv. 17. 1 John iii. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 52.

## TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR.

“JESUS OF NAZARETH.”<sup>1</sup> Yes, this was the term of scorn and reproach that was nailed to His Cross. It had followed Him through life. He had crossed the path of the proud Pharisee, who, wrapped around in his self-righteousness, sought in cold contempt to trample under foot all that opposed his own exaltation. He had spoken withering words of rebuke to the teachers of the law who had moulded the Word of God to suit their own ungodly ends. The reasoning Sadducee had been baffled and confounded. And now, with all the hatred of fallen humanity burning in their hearts, they have got the Son of David nailed to the Cross.

But whence came the title on His Cross? If we examine Luke ii. 11 we shall see there what He was, and whence He came. Yet how strangely this has been lost sight of, even to the closing scene of that short and wondrous life. The falsehood followed Him, and when the question was asked, “Who is this?” by the men of the city (Matt. xxi. 10, 11), the reply was, “This is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.”

Satan has been a close observer of human nature for some six thousand years. And how long before that he had been a seducer and leader of rebellion we know not; but this we know, that he has led and is leading men astray to-day. There is no fitter tool to do his work than the tool fitted of God to fulfil His divine purposes, if that tool is, for the moment, out of the Master's hand, so that Satan can take it up, therewith to accomplish his own ends. Therefore let our ears be ever open to the warning, “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”<sup>2</sup>

But we may see Satan's devices unveiled by the Word of God,—see that he has a deep purpose in thus raising a false

<sup>1</sup> John xix. 19.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 12.

report and getting it fixed in the popular mind; being well aware that, once so established in the mind of the people, the truth will with many be for ever excluded, the light shut out, and the kingdom of darkness established.

Let these solemn lessons serve us to-day, and let not the momentous issues of the present time be cleverly hidden by some unimportant question being brought to the front.

The real matter at issue is: Are we to be led by the Word of God or by the traditions of men? Are the assemblies of those saints who have been gathered apart from the principles of open brethren, with an open Bible as their guide, to become the followers of men and man's tradition?

The unwearied effort is, and has been, made to prove that the teaching of these pages, and of the many throughout the world who are at one with us, "tends to Darbyism"; and this is the more startling to not a few because they little understand what "Darbyism" means. For years every attempt at godly order and discipline has been stigmatized as "Darbyism." Not a protest has been raised by those who have thus spoken against the great and increasing evils of Open Brethrenism. And now the protest within that indefinite circle has wellnigh ceased, and that perhaps for ever. They, who have for years sought that the truth might find entrance, have withdrawn, or are withdrawing, from a fellowship that as a whole they cannot recognise as of God; and those who are being left will be left in association, by their own choice, with all the ungodliness of a system that has brought continual discredit upon the truth.

That there is far more in common between Open Brethrenism and Darbyism, as we pointed out in October *Needed Truth*, has lately met with a most remarkable confirmation, for there has been issued, from the *Witness Office*, 180, Buchanan Street, Glasgow, a reprint from the writings of Mr. J. N. Darby, entitled "Principles of Gathering, and the Reception of Christians."

Is it that dear brethren find that the open position is so

weak that they have to fall back on the writings of this clever and subtle teacher? Could anything more strikingly verify what we have always affirmed in these pages and elsewhere?

But again, it is said that some personal matter in a certain assembly is being made the "test question" over the world, and that meetings are being divided on this point. No, no, brethren; be not deceived: this is NOT the point at issue.

Then, from another quarter, comes a booklet, entitled "Exclusivism," by some one who most probably is indebted to "Exclusive" writings for what he may know of the truth. Here we have the system professedly exposed, but not a single quotation from or reference to the writings of "Exclusive" brethren given.

Lastly, comes an attempt to fasten upon us the principles and doctrines that we have for years opposed, and oppose still. "Defilement" is spoken of, and "Central Authority," etc.

We would ask our readers to carefully consider what is practised to-day, and has been for long, by brethren occupying the open position; a practice which we believe has hindered and is hindering the development of gift in the assemblies in much the same way as one man ministry has done in the sects.

The controlling authority being assumed by a man, or men, at a distance from the place where a difficulty arises hinders the carrying out of godly rule in the district itself, and deadens the sense of responsibility among local over-seeing brethren.

We might take cases that have come under our own observation during many past years, but a recent one will suffice. There is an attempt made to undermine the influence of those who guide in an assembly on the part of those who covet a place of greater power. Differences of judgment on matters of church government are made the excuse; but, under this cloak, all godly rule and order is brought to a stand in the assembly, till the opposers of the

truth carry things to such lengths that they have to be dealt with and withdrawn from, according to the Word of God.

But now comes in the action of the central authority. Men are chosen, pointed out, or their names suggested, by some one, or ones, at a distance, to look into the matter. The man, or men, who thus nominate others *may* be the best fitted to undertake so solemn a responsibility, but they *MAY* NOT be. And now let us look at what is likely to be the result of such a system.

The law of England, which in many points follows the law of God, seeks carefully to guard against a "packed jury"; but what is the safeguard against a corresponding result in such a case as we have indicated? The men chosen may be those who it is believed will come to a judgment in accordance with the views of those who have chosen them. The judgment of the latter may be already formed. The case is gone into professedly, and the judgment of this unscripturally appointed tribunal is given to the saints, and is implicitly believed by the many, because, as we have already sought to show, the first impression is often the one which takes the strongest hold on the mind, be it right or wrong.

We would ask our readers, is there no danger here? May not such a central authority as this with the greatest ease pass into the hands of the most unfit men—men who, like Diotrephes, will use it to the casting out of all those who oppose their wills being done?

But it has been said, you point out the evils that exist, but what do you believe is the way of God in such a case? In reply to this, we believe the scriptural course to be, in any such case of difficulty, for those in oversight in the various assemblies of the district to come together and prayerfully and carefully investigate the matter.

If things were according to the will of God, in every district those seeking to guide the flock would be coming together, at stated times; and surely such should have the



best knowledge of what was passing in their immediate neighbourhood.

Not that we would exclude, as we have before said in these pages, godly and known overseeing men from a distance taking part in such matters. Far from this; for though we do not believe with some that the elders of the Church of Ephesus were told to take care of and tend all the saints upon the face of the earth,<sup>1</sup> yet we do believe in the united responsibility of the eldership on the lines indicated throughout Old and New Testaments, which subject we hope to treat more especially shortly.

For wellnigh thirty years we have sought to protest against "the defilement theory" of those from whom we differ so essentially in many points of Church order, but let not fellow-saints be thrown off their guard at the present moment by the cry of, "The wolf! the wolf!" so that, when the real defilement comes to their door, it is received with open arms, such as, for example, those who have been dealt with on account of their ungodly conduct or false doctrine, or those who have sought in every way to obstruct all discipline in the House of God. On the contrary, may we be prepared to act towards such according to the will of God.

The warning cry has, in much felt weakness, been sounded in the ears of saints for long. Yet it will be to-day with many as in the past. The John Baptist testimony had been at the time referred to in the beginning of this article little understood by the many who followed him and heard his words.

Had it not been so, the multitude would have recognised their Lord, not as Jesus of Nazareth, but as the Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Ruler from Bethlehem, the King of Israel.

J. A. BOSWELL.

<sup>1</sup> This, to our mind, is the inevitable consequence of teaching that "the Church" of Acts xx. 28 "embraces all in this dispensation who are purchased by His own blood."

## REMINISCENCES OF OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

BY S. BLOW.

It is one thing to write about open-air preaching and preachers, but quite another to engage in the former and be one of the latter. "In the open" and "beneath the blue sky" may sound very pretty, and even poetical, but the earnest, faithful herald of the Gospel does not always find the sky "blue" when proclaiming His Master's message, looking at it literally or figuratively. It requires some amount of tack, ready retort, and, above all, special divine guidance, when one has gathered a crowd around him, and perhaps just at the moment when he seems to have gained the attention of the people, to be suddenly interrupted by an entire stranger, who, with all the confidence, conceit, and wicked, barefaced impudence in the world, struts up, and with a twinkle in the eye and an air of the greatest familiarity brings you to a sudden standstill by saying: "Come, come, this is too bad, old fellow! You know you lost the bet fairly last night! Now give me my five shillings, and I'll let you off this time. Pay your debts; don't be a hypocrite; then preach as much as you like." And these words spoken in such a realistic manner that not only would your greatest friend be disarmed, but yourself necessarily embarrassed for the moment, especially when you see the bulk of the people apparently believing that all the man says is true. To have wisdom and skill, not only to silence such, but to do it so that the people are convinced that *he* and not you is the hypocrite, needs help from above. To look on as an observer is one thing, but to be the attacked party, and yet to maintain your equilibrium and hold of the people, is quite another.

And yet such instances as the above have often happened, only each disturber appears in a different form, and uses a different artifice and deception. One brings you a jug of

beer, and puts it close to your face, suggesting, "You need a drop for your health, and to wet your whistle!" Or another deliberately swears he saw you drunk the night before, or that you have left your wife and children on the parish. And all these false accusations addressed in such a subtle, Satanic way that for the moment you seem to be worsted, and your accusers, and not you, have the control of the crowd, and even their sympathy.

My experience of open-air preaching goes back to over thirty years ago. It was in the open-air I met and formed acquaintances with fellow-labourers in the Gospel with whom I have had unbroken fellowship ever since. Some have gone to their eternal rest; others are still in some feeble measure heralds of the old, old Gospel, and love to have a real old-fashioned open-air Gospel service as much as ever they did.

For years after my conversion I chiefly, if not exclusively, preached in the open air. Figuratively, it is there where the "fish" are, and there throughout the whole winter, as well as summer, we flung the Gospel net into the crowded sea of human life. Many a time the snow and frost have been under our feet, or sleet and rain falling overhead, while we have been holding forth. Flour and rotten eggs, a bucket of not always clean and wholesome water flung on, or at us, besides all kinds of interruption and molestation, which the modern fashionable open-air preacher knows little of. *Then* open-air preaching brought *reproach*; *now* it is respectable, and, as a rule, received favourably, because human methods and carnal weapons are resorted to to attract, entertain, and please the *natural* instincts and "man" in the "flesh," more than to *convict* of *sin*, and *convert* the soul of the hearer. Only a short time ago I witnessed an open-air service broken up several times during the short *sermonette*, and then, after all, it had to be abruptly closed, because of a few slight showers, fearing the rain would damage the delicate organ and mar the fashion-

able attire of the young [and pretty player and soloist. I have often wondered how Philip would have managed if he had been encumbered with the varied modern appliances and worldly addenda which accompany the nineteenth-century preacher, or the Apostle Paul when he visited Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus.

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### “AN HERETIC.”

(Titus iii. 10.)

IT is always of importance that we should know the full and proper meaning of any words used in Scripture before we seek to apply it in any way whatever. It becomes a very dangerous pursuit to be found searching the Scriptures for passages that can be made to give colour to opinions advanced and taught.

If alive to this, we shall avoid it by seeking to know what God intends to convey to us by the use of a word. Then, on finding that it has in all places where it occurs one invariable sense, we can safely insist upon all that it teaches and maintains.

Apart, therefore, from the application, in the first instance we should seek to grasp the meaning of words.

But in reference to some words found in the New Testament this is difficult at the first to an English reader; that difficulty arising from the insertion of a word almost in its Greek form—that is to say, not translated. One illustration will suffice: “Baptisma,” the Greek word “Baptism,” is found in the English New Testament. Thus, a letter having been dropped, it is inserted as an untranslated word; the reason for this doubtless being that controversy as to form or mode of baptism was raging at the time of translation, and not because of any difficulty in the word itself and its uniform use; but, because of the differences existing, it was put in in its present form; as also the Greek verb

"Baptizō," English "Baptize." Necessity is laid upon one, therefore, to search out each occurrence of the word, so as to ascertain how it is used. And when, in so doing, one finds the verse, "Buried with Him in baptism" (Col. ii. 12), and seeks to translate this untranslated word by inserting it "sprinkling," one finds at once he has a "figure" that is at fault and absurd, and therefore rejects it. On inserting the word "immersion," he finds difficulty gone, and the figure a speaking one, full of meaning. Having thus obtained the true and only meaning of the word in English, let him go on to apply it, and to believe whatever it may teach, whatever his dislike may be to it, arising from early prejudice or other hindering causes.

The word that heads our paper being in like manner an untranslated one compels us to ascertain its meaning before we can lay hold of the teaching that is contained in it.

The Greek word is "Hairetikos"; the English, "Heretic." The dropping again of two letters thus leaves before us an untranslated word. As this word occurs only once, so the verb "hairetizō" only occurs once; but on turning to the place where it is found, Matthew xii. 18, we find help, as it is translated, "Behold my servant, whom *I have chosen.*" Again, although this word is only found once in the New Testament, it occurs in twenty places in the LXX., or Greek translation of the Old Testament, and in almost every passage in the English we have the word "choose," the context showing that no other word could take its place.

Judges v. 8, "They chose."

1 Chronicles xxviii. 6, "I have chosen."

Psalms xxv. 12, "He shall choose."

Psalms cxix. 30, 173, "I have chosen."

Let these suffice to prove how the verb is used; thus establishing beyond a doubt that "choosing" is the proper meaning of the word.

The kindred verb "haireō," not found in the New Testament, but occurring in the LXX. in nine passages, is the

equivalent of the word "choose," and "haireōmai" in the New Testament in each place is so translated. These I set forth:—

Philippians i. 22, "What *I shall choose.*"

2 Thessalonians ii. 13, "*Chosen* you to salvation."

Hebrews xi. 25, "*Choosing* rather to suffer affliction."

Thus clearly can we ascertain that "heretic," a word in itself conveying nothing to our minds, means "a chooser," "one who chooses."

And, that being so, we can the better see the connection that exists between verses 8 and 9 with verse 10 of Titus iii.

The good works, fruit of the Spirit, are brought into bold contrast with the works of the flesh: "foolish questions," "contentions," etc. It is well to note that, when the Apostle sets out these works (Gal. v. 19-21), and enumerates seventeen, he puts together strife, seditions ("dichostasia," translated "division" in Rom. xvi. 17), and heresies, along with the grosser sins of the flesh; thus classing together things the flesh can enter into of very opposite characters—on the one hand, these divisions, heresies, etc., etc.; on the other, murder, drunkenness, and such like—one resulting from the flesh as much as the other. Man's will at work, the result must be deeds of the flesh, however much they be dressed up in religious garb. The contending for truth in obedience to Jude 3 ("Earnestly contend for the faith") is a very different thing; and though the English word is the same, the Greek word used is one from which our English word "agonize" comes. In grace thus to agonize or contend for the truth, result of the Spirit's making us jealous for the truth, and for the honour and glory of our Lord, is one thing; the fleshly contending is another, and can only result in disastrous consequences to all who engage in it. Even though Scripture may be involved in the contention, and is the point at issue, if thus carried on, then, the flesh being actively at work, one will become a chooser, and be thus turned aside. It may be by some distinct point

of his own which he seeks to build on Scripture, or it may be by taking some scriptural teaching itself, and bringing it into conflict with other Scripture, with the result that he gradually gives up all the truth and takes a part, thus manifesting himself as a chooser. In any case, by whatever process, once one has taken a part, instead of all, or rejected part by holding views not found in Scripture, he is "an heretic," a chooser. Self-will is actually at work, and the one who has thus chosen will get others to choose if he can.

What was Titus to be doing to the prevention of this among the saints? "Affirming constantly." Active engaging in the right, energies all at work for God, in His ways, are the grand preventive against this choosing. As soon, therefore, as faithful ones observed "Will" coming in with any, they would warn of the consequences that might follow, and once one manifested that he was a "chooser," he would be "admonished." But such admonishing would be no indistinct matter. The issues at stake were too grave, and, as one or more might seek in grace to admonish, they would be lovingly firm and plain, showing the Scripture departed from, and the sure result if persistently such a course was pursued. If such an one heeded not, and went on in his wilful course, whether alone or with others, then a second admonition would be given, and, if that was equally turned away from, then the word was, "After the first and second admonition, reject." A word that in all its force they would have to act upon, however painful to themselves. When, now-a-days, it is a question of sin abhorred by the respectable of the world, then there is no hesitation as a rule. Christians act quickly. Their position and credit are at stake, and seldom is there much delay once the sin is proved. But when it is a matter that the world cannot see—in fact, that the world and a large number of Christians even regard as one that should be left alone, a matter in which one "has a right to his own opinions," then Christians, if not

watchful, come under such influences, and hesitate—worse, refuse—to deal with one who is admittedly a “chooser” or a “party man.” He is considered; fellow saints are not thought of as they should be, until the evil soon manifests itself in others being drawn along with him in his evil ways. Whereas if, however painful, such an one had been at once firmly acted toward, in accordance with this word, then others would have been saved. Let Christians be assured of this, that the action Scripture dictates is the right one; not only so, it is the only loving one. The love that spares “an heretic,” that allows him free scope to go on and to influence others, is not the love of the Spirit; for true love regards the saints as a whole, and vigorously seeks to prevent damage accruing to them by the teachings of one who has thus departed from the truth of God. Therefore the plain exhortation in regard to an heretic: “After the first and second admonition, reject.”

Again, we have to be careful to see the proper force and meaning of this word. Some have stated that because the word used is “reject,” and not “eject,” that therefore the man contemplated was *without*, and not *within*, and all that was to be done was to *reject*—that is, keep him without. Even if this were so, surely all can see it would be a monstrous thing to teach that a person who was without was to be rejected, and that one within, holding and pursuing exactly the same course, was to be gone on with. To state such a thing is sufficient to show the absurdity of it. Therefore, if one from without were seeking in, he would be rejected, and if one was within, he would equally be so. In passing, one might point out that the word “admonition” is used with regard to those within. See 1 Corinthians x. 11, Ephesians vi. 4, where the word occurs.

But it must be remembered that it will not do to take a word in its English translation, and then force a meaning upon it that the original will not bear. We need, therefore, to seek its simple meaning, and the way in which it is used



in the different passages where it occurs. For that purpose it would be well to set them forth:—

The word is "paraitōmai."

Luke xiv. 18, "Began to *make excuse.*"

19, "I pray thee have me *excused.*"

Acts xxv. 11, "*I refuse* not to die."

1 Tim. iv. 7, "But *refuse* profane and old wives' fables."

v. 11, "But the younger widows *refuse.*"

2 Tim. ii. 23, "Unlearned questions *avoid.*"

Tit. iii. 10, "An heretic . . . *reject.*"

Heb. xii. 19, "They that heard *entreated.*"

25, "See that ye *refuse* not."

25, "If they escaped not who *refused.*"

The reader will notice how differently it is translated the first time it is used; and because "excuse" is the word in Luke xiv. 18, therefore some have said that it should be so translated in Titus iii. 10. We should then have to read, "An heretic, after the first and second admonition, *excuse.*" But, to be consistent, we should then read, "Old wives' fables *excuse*" (1 Tim. iv. 7), "The younger widows *excuse*" (1 Tim. v. 11), quite enough to show that is not the thought conveyed by the word.

Or again, if, as one has translated it, "*From* an heretic, after the first and second admonition, *excuse thyself,*" then we can see how, rightly read, it can only mean what is conveyed by the words "refuse," "reject," used elsewhere. For then it is not the man who is to be excused, but Titus is to excuse himself from the man, and he can only do so by refusing or rejecting.

Thus "refuse" and "reject" convey practically the same meaning as excuse does in its use in Luke xiv. 18. "I pray thee have me excused" only expresses the same thing. The man who is represented as uttering it is one invited to a feast, but he does not want to go, therefore he wants to stand apart from it. He begs to be refused; he entreats to be away. Where the feast is he does not want to be.

So where the heretic is, after the first and second admonition, Titus is not to be ; and if not Titus, then no other one who would obey the Word. Thus any attempt to minimise the expression, or to enfeeble it, utterly fails with one who honestly avoids any and all opinions, his own as well as those of others, who, by taking the different occurrences of the word, can arrive with perfect certainty at its correct meaning as here used. The reason for rejecting is then added : "Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

The word translated "subverted" is a remarkable one, meaning literally "to turn inside out," and thus metaphorically came to be used for one who "changed his character"; thus we may read it, "He has changed his character and sinneth." What force it gives to the passage, as it vividly represents "an heretic" as one who has changed his character by becoming "a chooser!"

R. T. HOPKINS.

*(To be continued.)*

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## RIGHT OR WRONG.

YOUNG believers often ask, "Is it wrong to do this?" or "Is it wrong to go there?" and in many cases there seems a real difficulty in finding a satisfactory reply to such a question. Yet the obedient one need not on that account fail to do what is pleasing to his Lord.

For He Himself (who, coming into the world, said, "Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God") never asked such a question at all. He ever occupied Himself with the positive will of the One who had sent Him. And He left us an example that we should follow in His steps.

So too His holy apostle who, in the hour of his new creation, cried, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" expressed

a God-begotten desire for us when he said, "I would have you to be wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil" (Rom. xvi. 19).

The question, then, for the true disciple one is not what is wrong, but what is right. "Is this a right thing?" "Is this one of the good works unto which I have been created? one of the good works before prepared by God for me to walk in?" (Eph. ii. 10).

Even the world has a saying, "Right is right, but wrong is no man's right" And, forsooth, no one ever learns to do what is right by knowing what is wrong. Whereas he who knows what is right may learn thereby to avoid what is wrong. That is to say, an acquaintance with good (that is, with God's will for us) is calculated by His grace to deliver us from evil. Whilst acquaintance with evil never can teach us to do what is good.

If indeed, in God's much mercy to us, conscience, enlightened by the Word of God, convicts us of wrong we have been doing, be it ours to confess it, and to forsake it, but to remember that whilst "cease to do evil" is commanded us, "learn to do well" is also enjoined upon us; and these are two things, not one thing. It is quite possible to discover that we have been doing amiss, and to cease the particular practice, yet to fail to exercise ourselves in the ways of righteousness, and thus to prove that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do."

Let us, then, seek to bring the little things (as we might call them) of daily life to the test of this question, "Is this God's will for me?"

If I am a master or a servant, God's word will tell me God's will for me as such. Am I a parent or a child? a husband or a wife? in the Scripture I shall find how to behave in that relationship, and there please Him whom I call Lord.

Is it a situation that offers itself? Then the question arises, "Is it where my Master is sending me? What I

shall have to do, can I do it as unto Him? Can I perform the duties so as to please Him?"

"Would it be wrong for me to do these things?" "I have spare time, I want recreation; would it be wrong to go to the concert?—I am so fond of music!" "Couldn't I join those unconverted young men in their football club?" "Would there be any harm in joining this, or going to that?" and so on. All these questions, which often gender strifes, vanish when once, instead of the standpoint of WRONG, we take the standpoint of RIGHT, and say, "Is this or that what I can do to be obedient and pleasing to Him whom I call LORD Jesus?"

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### PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

THE following notes are written with a desire to help those who may be perplexed by passing events among the assemblies professedly gathered unto the Name of the Lord Jesus in these British Isles. Being couched in the form of questions on subjects that are exercising the consciences of many, these notes will be more suggestive than didactic; but will only, I trust, be, because of this, the more helpful to those who are willing to be helped.

The first question that will present itself to the mind of many readers is that with which they have been familiar for the greatest length of time:—namely, the so-called "reception question," or "Whom, and in what manner, should we receive?" It may help to simplify this question if we endeavour to put into plain words what it involves. It really, when looked at closely, reduces itself to this: Are there two distinct kinds of reception? That is to say, Is there one reception which brings a man into all the privileges and all the responsibilities of the House of God, and another which introduces him into all the privileges and

none of the responsibilities? Is there one reception by which a man is received into a circle where he is liable to certain kinds of discipline—where, if he sin, he may be dealt with in a certain prescribed way—where, for example, he may be convicted according to Matthew xviii. 15–17, avoided according to 2 Thessalonians iii. 14, 15, and from which, according to 1 Corinthians v., he may be put away to a greater distance than that occupied by wicked men of the world; and another reception which authorizes a man to break bread whenever it seems good in his own eyes, without bringing him under any scriptural order or exposing him to any scriptural correction? Surely to state this question is to answer it. Surely it is not the Word of God that teaches that of two brethren who remember the Lord together in the Weekly Feast both should have a right to all the privileges of the House of God, while only one should be exposed to the rule and discipline which are characteristic of that House; whereas the other, even if he should become intoxicated the following Saturday, or teach fundamental error the following Lord's Day, cannot be *put out* of a fellowship he *never was in*, or disciplined according to an authority he never at any time recognised.

Again, is it not the case that wherever what is called "occasional fellowship" is practised—wherever certain believers are received to break bread "as visitors"—there are not only two different kinds of reception allowed from without, but two different classes of brethren created within? Any brother who belongs to the first class (which consists generally of those who have been longest in the gathering, those who most frequently take part in the meetings, and those who have the best social standing in the world) can bring in a total stranger to the breaking of the bread, no one in the assembly asking any question. On the other hand, no one in the assembly would have any difficulty in naming certain other brethren, who, if they attempted to bring in their friends who were unknown to the other

Christians, then the other Christians would soon put a stop to it.

Nevertheless while, in many assemblies, a caste has been formed, the individuals composing which are in possession of almost unlimited powers in the matter of reception, is there not something strange in the way in which these powers have been limited in other directions? For instance, what assembly would allow one individual to put away a wicked person from even such fellowship as exists in many places in the present day? Or what assembly would tolerate one individual restoring a repentant brother to the place he had forfeited by his sin? But if no one individual, however spiritual, has any right to excommunicate or restore any one, how can it be right for one individual to act alone in reception?—to receive into fellowship, when he can neither put away therefrom nor restore thereto?

Then there is another side to the question. Is it, even from a human point of view, the kindest thing we can do to a fellow-believer who, in any degree, has an exercised conscience, to bring him into a connection which, if he is an honest man, he does not believe in? A believer whose persuasion is that Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, or Congregationalism, has a divine origin cannot consistently look upon one of the assemblies with which we are in fellowship as other than a destructive heresy. Is it a kind thing to take advantage of such a believer being perhaps a relation according to the flesh, on a visit to our home from Saturday till Monday, to entice him into something wherein necessarily his conscience must be defiled?

On the other hand, if he is convinced that this is the circle in which the Lord would have him to take his place, while he is allowing himself to be kept back from obedience by unworthy considerations, is it a kind thing on our part to help him to soothe his conscience to sleep by an occasional observance of the Feast? Can it be helpful to him to see that we are willing to do this when we have every reason

to believe that he will be back at his chapel the following Lord's Day?

But some believers have no conscience at all about the matter! Quite so; and is it not a melancholy proof of the extent to which our own sense of right and wrong has been perverted by false teaching and bad example that these are just the men who have been most admired and most eagerly welcomed in many assemblies? The dear, large-hearted brother, who is as willing to take part, with equal indifference, in the proceedings of the Ritualists, of the Quakers, and of Booth's Army as in the acts of the Assembly of God, has been coaxed in to break bread; while the man who fears God and follows his conscience—who is in his sect because he believes it to be of God, and who would leave it and come with us if he were convinced that this Way is of God—has been branded as an intolerant bigot with whom it is no use to argue.

Can any one deny that we have succeeded in gathering together, to a large extent, not the best and truest-hearted believers from among the sects of Christendom, but the shallow and turbulent men, who would be no help or credit to any society? Can any one look the facts in the face and wonder that it should be so?

Such are a few of the questions that long ago forced themselves upon some of us, causing us to wonder if a system so inconsistent and self-contradictory could indeed be an institution of God, who "is not the Author of confusion." Nor let any one object that all this was reasoning apart from Scripture. What troubled us was just that we were associated with a line of things of which no example could be found in Scripture, and which could not be described in scriptural language at all.

When we turned to the Scriptures for guidance we found that, at the beginning of this dispensation, a great number, having received the Word, were baptized and were added

together.<sup>1</sup> The reception of the Word, the baptism, and the adding, took place once for all. Then they "continued stedfastly in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers."<sup>2</sup> The fellowship must have been something which it was in their power to forsake, or it would be superfluous to say that they "continued stedfastly" in it. It cannot therefore refer to the possession of common life in Christ. It does indicate that the apostle's doctrine formed the fellowship, the breaking of the bread expressed it, and the prayers laid hold of the power of God to maintain it.

We learned also that privilege and responsibility are inseparably linked together in the Word of God. "Let us keep the feast" is addressed to those who have listened to the exhortation, "Purge out the old leaven."<sup>3</sup> An Israelite who did not comply with the injunction of Exodus xii. 15 had no right to eat the roast lamb according to Exodus xii. 8-11. And a believer who, owing to his sectarian associations or other causes, could not take part with us in maintaining the purity of God's House is not one to be invited to keep with us the Feast of remembrance and testimony.

But as our acquaintance with the Word of God increased our dissent from the avowed principles of "Open Brethrenism" became more pronounced. Of this we shall speak in detail in another paper, if God permit.

A. P. MACDONALD.

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

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## THE FOUR GREAT MONARCHIES.

## VI.

It has been held to be desirable that this series of sketches of the historical sequence of the events which are set out in figure or in detail in the book of the prophet Daniel should be carried on to completion in the new issue of NEEDED TRUTH, due regard being had to the necessary limitation of space required by the reduced size of the magazine.

The effort to give at once expression to the desire and effect to the limitation will necessitate a greater degree of selection and of condensation than has been attempted before. It is proposed therefore to confine the notes for the greater part to the incidents and the reflections which seem to bear more directly upon the matter of the government of the world and the control of its affairs by a Divine Providence, which unseen in its operations and often unrecognised in its effects, yet for nations as well as for individuals

. . . "Shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them as we will."

The Persian empire reached the high-water mark of its power and of its glory about the middle of the reign of Darius Hystaspes, and from that point it entered upon a steady and continued decline, the very greatness of its success and of its possessions furnishing, as is so often the case, the occasion for its failure and its downfall at a later day.

The beginning of the reign was disturbed by a series of conspiracies and revolts, which were crushed with great difficulty. This disturbance was of itself a source of national weakness, but its outcome was distinctly beneficial to the empire, as Darius, feeling the difficulty of ensuring good and wholesome government over so vast an area and so varied a population, set himself to remodel the constitution from the beginning to the end, dividing the un-

wieldy mass into provinces, which were made complete and autonomous, and which were known as the *satrapies* of the Persian empire, from the *satrap*, or governor, who ruled each by virtue of the appointment and in the name of the king.

As the centre of this vast administrative system Darius built "Shushan the palace,"<sup>1</sup> and for the purpose of keeping himself in touch with his satraps, and of preserving his control over the whole of the system, he established the series of regular posts of which such effective use was made in the days of Queen Esther.

It would have been well for Darius, and for Persia, had all his undertakings been of so peaceful a character; but neither kings nor nations followed after the things that made for peace in the days of the son of Hystaspes; and in keeping with the times, he undertook many great military expeditions, which had for their object the conquest and the annexation of the territories of his neighbours.

One of these expeditions had most momentous consequences, for Darius marched westward through what is now known as Asia Minor, and crossing the Bosphorus, made EUROPE for the first time the theatre of the operations of an Eastern king. He subjugated Thrace, and thus came into contact with Macedonia, from which the great commander was to come who was to humble his people and to crush his empire into the very dust.

The consequences of this expedition were indeed far-reaching. The Greeks, alarmed at the stretching out of the arms of the great Eastern octopus towards their land, attempted reprisals, and stirred up a revolt of some of the feudatory nations in the Persian satrapies. This Darius put down, and then in revenge despatched two expeditions into Greece, the second of which gave rise to an incident which left an ineffaceable mark upon and a deathless name in the world's history, for it was defeated and crushed at

<sup>1</sup> Esther i. 2.

MARATHON by the Athenians under Miltiades. Darius, indomitable to the last, was in the act of preparing a third expedition, when he died, after a reign of thirty-six years, having bequeathed the crown to his son Xerxes.

The reign of Xerxes, which lasted for some twenty years, is worthy of note, both from the point of view of profane and from that of sacred history.

From the first, because having overcome a rebellion of the Babylonians, and reconquered Egypt, Xerxes reverted to his father's project for the subjugation of Greece, and at the head of an immense host marched himself into Europe; but found his progress southward checked and his huge army arrested at the Pass of Thermopylæ by a handful of Greeks under Leonidas the Spartan. The handful was overwhelmed, Leonidas and his Lacedæmonians were cut off to a man, and Xerxes occupied and destroyed Athens. There his triumphs ended and his troubles began, for an indecisive naval engagement was followed by another of a very different character, at SALAMIS, where Xerxes' great fleet was not merely beaten, but for all practical purposes destroyed. The naval battle of Salamis, fought as it was in the actual presence of the Persian monarch, decided the fate of Persia and of Greece, and Xerxes after it lost all heart and hope, fled out of Europe in terror, and gave himself up to the luxurious pleasures of the harem and the banqueting hall, leaving the remainder of his troops to be overthrown by the Greeks at PLATŒA and finally driven back in headlong rout into Asia. The dream of Persian conquest of the West was over for ever, from henceforth the western people were the aggressors, and the empire was put to its defence against, and sorely pressed by, the attacks of the Greeks.

Xerxes' time was no less interesting from the standpoint of Scripture history. He was, almost beyond question, the AHASUERUS<sup>1</sup> of the book of Esther; the feast which

<sup>1</sup> Ahasuerus was really a *title*, not a proper name, and means "the Lion King" or "the Great King."

Ahasuerus is described as having given in the third year of his reign "unto all his princes and his servants"<sup>1</sup> being the "durbar," or state council of his feudatories and his satraps, which Xerxes convened (in the third year of his reign, according to Herodotus) for the purpose of declaring his resolve to invade Greece and crush the Greeks; and at which, in order to inspire his chieftains with confidence, he set out in detail his great resources, showing "the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty, many days." In the seventh year of his reign Xerxes returned to Susa, with his hopes blighted and his visions of universal dominion effectually dispelled, and gave himself to dissipated indolence, which exactly agrees with the Scripture story of Ahasuerus, who, in the course of a process of selection which need not be enlarged upon, married Esther in the seventh year of his reign. Weak frivolous and utterly contemptible Xerxes remains in profane history, as does Ahasuerus in the scriptural record, and the earth was better and purer when he was dead than when he was alive. He was murdered in his palace, and his son, Artaxerxes "of the Long Hand," succeeded him on the throne.

Artaxerxes found himself obliged at once to act on the defensive, as the Egyptians, strengthened and emboldened by large reinforcements from Greece, again rose in revolt. The attempt was fruitless, the rebels were crushed into the dust, and the Greeks cut off almost to the last warrior. A lengthened period of peace ensued, during which Artaxerxes showed much kindness to the Jews, with the result that about the year 458 B.C. a second immigration of Babylonish Jews into Jerusalem took place, led by Ezra, who took with him certain principal personages amongst those of the Captivity, three "men of understanding," and much treasure.

In the year 449 B.C. the peace was again broken by the Athenians, who attacked the Persian coasts and defeated

<sup>1</sup> Esther i. 3.

the armies of the great king both by land and sea, until, after a decisive overthrow at Cyprus, Artaxerxes was obliged to submit and sue for peace. The terms which were imposed were most humiliating to the Persian pride, but had an important bearing upon the fortunes of the remnant of Judah. Artaxerxes was driven to surrender all his sea-coast towns, and forbidden to allow his army to approach within three days' march of the sea, thus to all intents and purposes contracting the boundaries of his empire by leaving a defenceless fringe over which he could exercise no control between his territory and the sea.

This made JERUSALEM a *frontier town*, most valuable as a post of defence, and at once furnishes an explanation of the outward occasion for the new departure which Artaxerxes took in the twentieth year of his reign<sup>1</sup> in allowing Nehemiah to go up and to fortify the hitherto unwall'd city, and to convert it into a stronghold, with walls and gates.

It is unnecessary to enter further into this matter. It is another and most striking instance of the manner in which the Most High so moulds the destinies of the nations to make it possible, in His own time, for His people to do His will and to carry out His purposes—a will which is always good, purposes which are ever beneficent and gracious.

The long-continued contact between the Scripture narrative and Persian history may be said to have come to an end with the restoration of the walls of Zion, and therefore the history need be pursued no further in this series of sketches.

The empire grew weaker and weaker still, tottering to its inevitable fall. The Bear had indeed devoured "much flesh," the Ram had become very great, but its time was at hand, and once again the working of the unfailing law in the world's history that the East must go down before the West, and the South fall before the North, was to become

<sup>1</sup> B.C. 445, the date from which the seventy weeks of Daniel ix. 24 are to be reckoned.

apparent in the passing away of the Second Great Monarchy of the visions of Daniel the prophet.

W. H. HUNTER.

### THE MAN OF GOD'S CHOICE.

"HE chose David" (Ps. lxxviii. 70); "I have found David" (Ps. lxxxix. 20). These are the words the Holy Spirit uses in reference to the man after God's heart, and they clearly enough indicate the sovereignty of God in the choice of His workmen. It has always been so, and Holy Scripture along its entire page presents us with numerous witnesses thereto. If God has a work to be done, He also has workers in His purpose, and time to do it.

But David's choice meant more than this, for it stands in contrast to another choice. Saul, the man of the people, and David, "one chosen out of the people" (but not by the people), are opposites, placed side by side by the Spirit of God, as were Abram and Lot, Isaac and Ishmael, Esau and Jacob, that, in the light each throws upon the other, the lessons relative to both might be the better learned.

"The voice of the people" had led Saul to reject the word of the Lord (1 Sam. xv.). The result is told by Samuel: "The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart" (1 Sam. xiii. 14); and to him a further testimony is borne in Acts xiii. 22: "Which shall fulfil all My wills." Thus Saul and the people's voice, David and all God's wills, are linked, and rule according to the creature and rule according to God appear before us in their two representatives. It is in the perception of these contrasts and differences that the election of David the king has its special and particular teaching for us.

There is a rule that has its origin in God. Ephesians iv. shows it—the ascended Man giving gifts; Acts xx. 28 declares it—"The Holy Spirit hath made you overseers"; and

2 Corinthians viii. 16 further indicates it—"Put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you." There is the divine rule, and David is the figure of it now, as truly as of God's king in a day to come.

As certainly as God chose David to rule His people so assuredly has He by the Holy Spirit raised up guides for His saints to-day—guides who are such by His appointment only, and whose service is by His call alone. To recognise it is another matter, and it needs wisdom from God to discern it, and often courage from God to acknowledge it, and loyalty of heart to submit to it.

Samuel, fearless and faithful, had gone from a night of prayer to hew Agag in pieces, and, in such act, to stand a lonely witness for God before Saul and the nation, and then he returned to mourn for the man he could no longer follow. But, when the command is given to anoint another, he is ready to say, "How can I go?" To mourn over man's rule is one thing, to accept God's is another, and not a few will be found saying, "How can I?" It involves something. "If Saul hears it he will kill me," said Samuel. What will it cost? is the consideration still.

There is, however, an answer to the exercised heart: "Say I am come to sacrifice to the Lord." Thus, in the place of communion, in the drawing nigh unto God, shall we come to see God's rule and to own it.

Samuel with difficulty and slowness perceives the man of God's choice. Eliab's appearance was too great an attraction to the prophet, as Saul's had been for the nation. Jesse's eldest son had everything outside to recommend him to the natural mind; but the youngest had a heart for God, and on that Jehovah looked. The man after God's heart is a man of heart; whatever else he had, it was this as a first characteristic that marked him out as God's man. The inward affection and purpose was the leading feature of his qualification, and on that Jehovah looked with approbation. "Lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep!" A heart for the

divine Shepherd first, then a heart for the sheep. "Ye were dear unto us" marks out the shepherd-ruler still. Against such there may be arrayed the most imposing position, intellect, and eloquence, so much to attract the human eye and arouse the admiration of the natural man, and for it all there may be a ready payment and a splendid stipend; but "the Lord hath not chosen this." "I have refused him" must regulate our action still, and enable us to refuse a rule God has not given and a ministry He does not impart.

The man of God's choice is next characterized as one who needs to be sent for and brought in. There is no self-seeking. In the obscurity of the wilderness—as with Moses in Midian, John in the wilderness till the day of his showing to Israel, and Paul in Arabia—David is learning God, and is there busied with his lessons as well as with the sheep till the call of God brings him out, and the Spirit of the Lord fits him for His service, and God pronounces the choice, "This is he."

Do we not see still something akin to this, and do we not know those whose hearts are filled with earnest care, and who with unobtrusive service labour on? "Guides"—as truly pointed out by apostolic words (1 Tim. iii.; Titus i.), as those by apostles' fingers long ago, of whom it can be said: "The Holy Spirit hath made you overseers," known by their labour, and known by their manner of life as certainly as when the word of God to Samuel said of David, "This is he."

Yet again, God's man can wait. Till God makes it manifest that he is the chosen of the Lord, patiently he waits. God has His time as well as His purpose, and the beauty of a thing is its season. He is ready to obey till the time comes to command. Obedience precedes rule.

David keeps sheep for his father, is subject to his parents, and whether before Saul with his harp, or returning to feed his father's sheep, is always the patient, retiring one. That which is given him to do he does till the great



opportunity of his life comes, or till the due time arrives for God to make manifest His chosen in the use of him.

“Patient toward all” (1 Thess. v. 14). However long the feeble need the comforting, the weak ones the strengthening, the unruly ones the warning, however varied the ministry, patience is called for in it all, and only patience in such work will do, and he only will patiently deal with others who has himself learnt how to wait for and on the living God. But patience is not indecision. Action, decisive and courageous, is perfectly congruous with gentleness and patience. With David there was both, calmly and with dignity begotten of faith in God. David moved among those ranks of trembling Israelites undeterred by the insinuations of his kin and the fears of Saul. He could look above brother, above king, above human strength, above Saul’s aid—above it all! With a stone and sling he runs to meet the man of Gath in the confidence of victory, for God was with him. The God of patience and the God of all might had made him a patient yet a mighty man. The shepherd youth, strong in the Lord, felled the giant, and the Eternal One thus marked him out as the captain for His people.

The heart, the self-sinking, the patience, the faith, the obedience, the courage of God’s man pass in review in those wonderful chapters, xvi. and xvii., of 1 Samuel, and give a picture, drawn by the Spirit of God, in the character of God’s first king, of that qualification the Spirit still links with the overseeing ones He raises up to bring in and to lead out His people.

C. MORTON.

## “ AN HERETIC.”

*(Concluded from page 58.)*

HAVING reached the point at which we know what “ Heretic ” conveys to us, as well as having learned the meaning of the word “ reject,” it becomes important to see who were to act upon the injunctions thus clearly given by the Apostle.

If blessing has resulted to many from searching the Scripture, with a view to finding out the object the Spirit of God had in each book or Epistle, that they might be found “ rightly dividing the Word of Truth ” (2 Tim. ii. 15), and learning the different ways in which God has acted at different times, it has not been without dangers arising in the doing it. Dangers, one is thankful to believe, most have been saved from, yet into which a few have fallen. And therefore one gladly takes the opportunity, in writing on this subject, to refer to one particular danger, and to warn Christians against it.

It has been most helpful to trace from the different Epistles the causes that gave rise to them, and to see how the sins and failures of Saints in Apostolic days called out the word of warning and rebuke, and also to see how, when certain sins were practised, the Word of God was given in reference to these sins ; sharply rebuking the sinning one and calling upon him to repent; and also instructing the church how they were to act toward such.<sup>1</sup>

Not only so, but as almost every description of evil doctrine came in, Epistle after Epistle was written to deal with them, thus furnishing the Saints with the Word of God for every emergency, never leaving them at a loss as to how they should act, as they would otherwise have been.

Whether the resurrection was denied (2 Tim. ii.) an heretical Man was present (Titus iii.), or an Elect Lady might at any moment have one coming to her house who did not

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. iii. ; 1 Cor. v.

bring the doctrine of Christ (2 John), in each and every case definite instruction was given, and thus there never was a time when any Saint had to say: "evil has arisen, and I am without guidance as to it." We find, therefore, in the New Testament Scriptures, guidance for every emergency. In some cases, as 1 Corinthians v., given after the sin was among them, in others in view of its presence at any moment, as in 2 John.

We may note also that these specific directions scattered through the Word are found in an Epistle to "the Church of God" at one time, at another in one to an Evangelist, Timothy, Titus, or to Gaius, or to an Elect Lady.

Now, one of the dangers alluded to has arisen from this fact.

Certain, on searching into each Epistle carefully to note its distinct line of things and way of presenting Truth, have noted the fact that some have been addressed to "Churches," others to "Saints," and others again to individuals; and from this have wrongly inferred that when written, as by Paul to Timothy, or by John to the Elect Lady, only individual action could be taken, the Epistle not being addressed to a Church as such. As well might they go further and infer that it was not only so, but that only the particular Church or individual addressed could act. In so doing they might be recovered, as the startling fact came before them, that they had been unwittingly taking from the Saints in all time the Word of God, and thus preventing the Church of God, wherever present, from acting under equal authority with the Church of God in Corinth or elsewhere.

Whilst it is useful carefully to study the differences between each Epistle, in the truth they present, and the opening address of each, it is most dangerous to conclude from such differences that one is more applicable to Saints collectively than another. To do so is to overlook entirely the unity of the Scripture. Each Gospel and Epistle is needed to the completion of the Word. A complete whole is

presented to us, made up of Books written by writers of different position in life, and different intellectual attainments and knowledge. But whether the one or the other, each was under the direct control and distinct guidance of the Holy Spirit, Who gave each word, and thus conveyed the very thought that Word alone could express.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17).

Timothy was one who had very early been taught in the Scripture. “From a child” he knew it. His mother and grandmother had known and enjoyed it, and had also taught him from his earliest days. Paul, by the Spirit, urges upon him to “Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. ii. 2). Thus the doctrine taught was not for him, but for all; and he was to commit that which he had *heard* (not yet written in its completeness) to others, that they also might teach.

As time went on, one Epistle after another was written. That which drew them forth being the need for the Building-up Word on the one hand, and the power of Satan working evil among the Saints in varied ways on the other. Not only did Paul by the Spirit write, but, among others, Peter, who, in his second Epistle adds most solemn words to the Saints, not under that name, nor as in the Church of God in any place, but to them as “having obtained like precious faith.”

At the close of his Epistle he exhorts them to account “that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written UNTO YOU, AS ALSO in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things” (2 Pet. iii. 15, 16).

Thus clearly does this Scripture establish the fact that

Paul, when writing to Saints at Corinth, Ephesus, and elsewhere, or when writing to Timothy or Titus, was writing to all who had "obtained like precious faith" ("HATH WRITTEN UNTO YOU"), and these Epistles are for ever established to them as being Scripture, and of equal authority with other Scripture, by the words which follow: "Speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."

"THE OTHER SCRIPTURES"! Then Paul's Epistles are set upon a level with the Old Testament, and are given to us with the rest of the New Testament as one whole! All needed for the "perfecting" of the Man of God, all needed by us whether as individuals or in Church relationship. Whereas therefore it is right and useful to see the why and the wherefore of each, and to learn the condition and spiritual state of the Individual, and the Church addressed, it is wrong and dangerous to assume that, because exhortations as to how to act toward "an heretic" are found in the Epistle of Paul to Titus, therefore they *only* have an individual application. But one may object: Surely you admit there are in those Epistles to Timothy and Titus exhortations individual to them? Assuredly one does. "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments" (2 Tim. iv. 13). "Do thy diligence to come before winter" (2 Tim. iv. 21). "Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing may be wanting unto them" (Titus iii. 13).

These are verses easily selected as samples of instructions conveying commands that none other but the one addressed could fulfil, and, in like manner, such special commands are found in the Epistle addressed to the Church of God in Corinth. But, though no other could carry out these distinct commands, yet even from them much can be learned.

Because of the presence of such, to refuse to give all the New Testament its full bearing upon the ways of Christians individually and collectively is, one fears, to prove that the one who does it is already a "chooser" or in danger of very soon becoming one.

In every "city" there was a Church (Titus i. 5), for Titus was left in Crete for the very purpose of setting "in order the things" *left undone*, and of ordaining or *placing* (see margin) elders in every city. Thus, though the word "church" does not occur, the thing itself is there; and the whole Epistle assumes its existence. One imbued with Scriptural thought could not contemplate the Saints in any city of Crete being anything but the Church of God in that place. Therefore a command such as the one under consideration would come to them all in its full force and obligation, and together, as faithful ones they would, in acting upon it, seek to show that God and His Word were even by them placed before "an Heretic" and his opinions; and therefore without hesitation, individually and collectively, they would seek to act in such a matter for the glory of the Lord, in obedience to His Word; and, resulting from that, others would be saved from the same evil course.

The whole Epistle, when carefully looked into, brings before us, in the fullest way, Christians as together with special responsibilities, such as the "teacher," and the "taught." Not only so, but the "unruly and vain talkers" (chap. i. 10), "whose mouths must be stopped." In what circle? Surely that of the Church, for there would be no power to stop them elsewhere. "Rebuke THEM," "that THEY" (chap. i. 13); expressions abundantly proving that the Epistle, though addressed to an individual, regards Saints as in Church position before God.

Thus, in going on, we find elder men, elder women, young men, young women, servants, all addressed, and responsibilities referred to from their not only being Christians, but Christians gathered together. "In all things

showing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us" (see R.V. "us," not "you") chap. ii. 7, 8.

Titus, in a circle of God-gathered ones, Churches of God in Crete, at a time when evil was present, when national character was manifesting itself: ("The Cretans always are liars") chap. i. 12, specially needed to become a pattern to others. The exhortations were ever needed by him as an individual, yet were given with others specially in view, that he might set an example, and thus become a pattern. For if, on the contrary, forgetful of these commands, he walked carelessly as to any of them, he would not only bring reproach upon himself but on others: "having no evil thing to say of us," not *thee* as if Titus alone were contemplated, but "us" as later on the Apostle writes: "Let ours also learn to maintain good works" (chap. iii. 14).

More might be said, but I trust enough has been written to show how impossible it is to resist the force with which the injunction is brought home: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." Titus in doing it alone, as he would have been compelled to do if others had refused to act with him, would, in the carrying it out, have become "a pattern" which surely all should quickly have followed if they desired to be counted faithful. If not, then his action would have condemned them.

But surely no one can suppose that Titus would have acted as an individual ere he had done everything possible in reaching the consciences of others, thus seeking to gain the heretic by the united admonition of the saints in the place, or, in the final rejection, to make it, not the seemingly arbitrary act of one, but the action of the whole called forth by the Word of God; an action resulting in the Heretic finding no room in the Church for his opinions and thoughts, and no one whom he could act upon to the bringing

of such into the position he occupied as a "choosing man," condemned either by his own past teaching or practice, or both, and standing before the saints therefore as a subverted one, that is, one who had "changed his character."

May the Lord Himself, Who alone is able in these days of many thoughts and much choosing, keep us close to the "Word of His grace," and thus save us from ever occupying the position of "an Heretic."

R. T. HOPKINS.

## PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

(Continued from page 64.)

At this point some reader may demand what becomes of the right of all believers, simply as such, to participate in the breaking of the bread? Whenever we hear such language, we are reminded of the words addressed by a certain author to the French democracy: "Alas, poor people! whose leaders tell you continually of your *rights*, and never let you hear about your *duties*!"

To the question itself we may reply by asking another: "Was there ever a time when believers, holding conflicting doctrines, could remain together in church fellowship?" It is no answer to quote the statement that "all that believed were together,"<sup>1</sup> for we know that at that time "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."<sup>2</sup> They "continued stedfastly in the doctrine of the apostles,"<sup>3</sup> and were therefore in a position where they could "obey out of the heart the type of doctrine whereinto they were delivered,"<sup>4</sup> as well as mark and avoid "them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine."<sup>5</sup> True, it was recognised as a fatality that there would be heresies among them;<sup>6</sup> but the heretic, after a first and second admonition, was to be rejected.<sup>7</sup> When heretical

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Acts iv. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. vi. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. xvi. 17.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Titus iii. 10.



men—that is, men who in self-will chose their beliefs, their disbeliefs, and their consequent line of conduct—were tolerated and encouraged division became simply inevitable.<sup>1</sup>

Again we may ask, “Is it possible, in the present day, to bring and keep together believers who differ on truths that affect every detail of their ecclesiastical life?” Let us suppose a “gathering” formed of believers only, each one being brought in on the distinct understanding that “we meet simply as Christians, and do not make knowledge a ground of fellowship.” One comes in holding and teaching baby-sprinkling; a second, one-man ministry; a third, every-man ministry; and so forth. Supposing a meeting could be brought together in this way, and that it consisted of twenty men, all contending for their own private opinions, and having no intention of giving them up. If two of us, who have been gathered into the Name of the Lord Jesus in another place, found ourselves in such a “believers’ meeting” is it not self-evident that we should have to withdraw from it if we wished to carry out together the revealed will of the Lord? What room would there be in such a company for the practical acknowledgment of the authority vested in the Lord Jesus as Son over God’s House?<sup>2</sup> If, then, two of us would be obliged to withdraw from such a gathering, in order to seek the place where Jesus the crucified is owned as both Lord and Christ,<sup>3</sup> and where He is in the midst,<sup>4</sup> can it be right in an assembly of twenty Christians gathered into His Name to receive two such self-willed saints as I have described? Is the “ground of fellowship” after all merely *that those who think with us must be in the majority?*

The question with whom we are to remain in fellowship, and from whom we are to separate, must be settled for us by the Word of God, and not by any sentimental considerations whatever. Some say that God’s Word commands “separation from all unbelievers and fellowship with all

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 19-22.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. iii. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ii. 36.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii. 20.

believers" Is that so? Surely there is, in New Testament scripture, at least one clear case where a believer is *forbidden* to separate from an unbeliever. In 1 Corinth. vii. 10-16 there is legislation for the case of a brother or sister converted after marriage, and whose wife or husband remains an unbeliever. It would have seemed much simpler for the believing husband to put away his wife, or for the believing wife to leave her husband. Old Covenant Scripture seemed to indicate this as the right course to follow.<sup>1</sup> Heathen society would have permitted the act. Nevertheless, the believer is exhorted to remain with the unbeliever. In like manner, in 2 Timothy ii. 19, "every one that nameth the Name of the Lord" is exhorted to "depart from iniquity;" and this, as the context shows, in circumstances where it is impossible to depart from iniquity without departing from those who practise it, and where, moreover, some who are known to the Lord as being His remain in fellowship where iniquity is practised. The limits of association and separation must be defined for us by the Word of God, and by it alone.

Much has been said, within the last few years, on this matter of reception—too much indeed, for the discussion of what is, after all, a minor point has drawn away the attention of Christians from what is really THE QUESTION at issue. This latter is, we submit, not so much "Whom ought we to receive?" as "What manner of persons is God gathering together?" If it be so that, after nearly nineteen centuries, during which the whole teaching of Scripture concerning the House of God has been departed from and man's will has run riot in divine things, God is beginning again to gather all believers, without repentance or confession, as if nothing had happened, then we *must* recognise what God is doing. If the men who seek into the fellowship as into a circle where everybody is equal, where anybody may arise and speak, and where nobody has any seat-rent to pay, are

<sup>1</sup> Ezra x. 18-44; Neh. xiii. 23-27.

men whom God is gathering, then *of course* we are *bound* to receive them. But surely one may be permitted to ask if this is really so without exposing oneself to condemnation as a sectarian or a schismatic !

The first thing that strikes one, in this connection, is that if God is, in these last days, gathering His people together as if they had nothing to judge and repent of—or as if repentance and self-judgment on their part were purely optional—it is the first time He ever gathered a remnant on such a principle ! In the days of the reformation under Hezekiah the appeal sent out to “all Israel and Judah”<sup>1</sup> was not based on “the *right* of all the people to eat the Passover,” but on Jehovah’s claims on their obedience. “Ye sons of Israel, turn again unto Jehovah Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that He may return to the remnant that are escaped of you.” The commandment was addressed to all the people, but only those who confessed and forsook their sin could obey it and find mercy. Those who came up to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel<sup>2</sup> were “all whose spirit God had stirred to go up to build the house of Jehovah which is in Jerusalem.”<sup>3</sup> God had stirred the *spirit* of these men ; for the call of the Lord to return to the place which He had chosen to put His name there is not an appeal to the emotions, but to the conscience. The same remark applies to the ministry of John the Baptist. Those who would have submitted to his baptism, as a bit of easy conformity to a popular religious movement, were warned off with terrible words, and bidden to bring forth “fruits worthy of repentance.”<sup>4</sup> The Lord Jesus Himself refused to be made king by a lawless and unrepentant mob.<sup>5</sup> And when, after His resurrection, testimony was borne to Him as the One whom God had made both Lord and Christ, the word of exhortation was, “*Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*”<sup>6</sup> In accordance with which we read

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xxx. 6-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ezra ii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> See Ezra i. 5, R.V.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. iii. 8, R.V.

<sup>5</sup> John vi. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Acts ii. 40.

that "the Lord added together day by day *those that were being saved.*"<sup>1</sup>

Surely all these examples might teach those who affirm that the Lord is now gathering all His people to unite in the breaking of the bread, apart from repentance, enough humility to think it possible they may be mistaken!

Some one may raise the objection, "All this is reasoning from analogy; have you any direct Scripture bearing on the case?" Is the objector prepared to tell us that he believes God has left us without plain direction in His Word concerning our behaviour towards those who are entangled in that from which He has delivered us? If not, let him go and learn what this meaneth:<sup>2</sup> "Be gentle unto all, apt to teach, patient under evil; in meekness correcting those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance unto a right knowledge of truth; and they may awake up<sup>3</sup> out of the snare of the Devil (having been taken captive by him<sup>4</sup>) unto His will."<sup>5</sup>

Here is plain Scripture, the neglect of which has caused our predecessors to hand down to us a "legacy of confusion" as it is this day.

A. P. MACDONALD.

(To be continued, if God permit.)

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 47, R.V., margin.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 24-26.

<sup>3</sup> ἀνανήψωσω, ananēpsōsin: "awake up" as from drunkenness.

<sup>4</sup> ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, hup' auton: "by this one"—that is, by the Devil.

<sup>5</sup> ἐκεινοῦ, ekeinou: "that One's" will—that is, God's will.

## DEFILEMENT—HOW?

THERE are not wanting to-day some who dare to make so light of the positive revelation of God in regard to association with evil that they speak of "defilement" as if it were the device of mistaken men rather than a terrible possibility to the Saints and churches of God.

In fact, one has gone so far as to say that "a defilement theory in the foundation of a fellowship is but the proof of a preceding departure from the truth of God."

Notwithstanding, defilement is evidenced in two unmistakable ways:—

Firstly. By being

### PERSONALLY GUILTY

of moral delinquencies such as 1 Corinthians v. describes. Or by

### ERRING DOCTRINALLY

as Galatians v., 2 Timothy ii., 2 John and Revelation ii., iii., set forth.

Secondly.

### BY CONDONING,

so as to screen, excuse, justify and support those moral delinquencies or those erroneous doctrines.

Though 1 Corinthians v. manner of defilement is generally accepted as being somewhat easy of determination, it really is so because that God has revealed His standard whereby such things should be proved. To that Saints commonly hold and by it they act.

Since God hath so spoken in connection with moral misbehaviour it is passing strange that any can imagine, hold, or teach that He has not given as certain and definite guidance regarding errors in doctrine. Doth God care only for morals?

Indeed, does not the word in Romans xvi. 17 show that the doctrine of the Lord is so simple, concrete, and whole that all the "beloved of God" may so learn it that they who cause divisions and offences contrary thereto shall be known and turned away from? If that be done, 1 Timothy i. 3, with 2 Timothy iii. 10 (marg.), will be the result and manifestation.

It has pleased God to use two terms that are at once different and instructive in the matter of defilement.

The one is that of Leaven.

The other is that of Fellowship.

In the Scriptures, leaven is always used to express evil and the operation of evil. The manner in which leaven works is TO LEAVEN; that is to say, to so affect another substance that it shall become as itself.

Thus, a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. It is not the MERE PRESENCE of evil that defiles or leavens. For example, one might put the strongest leaven into a vessel containing small stones. Yet there would not be any leavening. For the simple reason that the leaven cannot find any place of assimilation in the stones. Wherefore it is that they who at the Lord's bidding put out the evil from among them do so NOT to become unleavened, but because they ARE unleavened. Still, when the evil one has been put out and thus the leaven is outpurged, they who remain together of God are by that action made a new lump.

Moreover, this permeation by evil is as real and vital in and by matters of doctrine as it may be in the matter or range of morals. For which cause it becomes every child of God to see that no one, and no thing, is suffered to hinder him from obeying the truth. Such persuasion is not from Him Who calleth us and saith, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," as see Galatians v. 7-9.

The defilement by fellowship is solemnly set forth in 2

Corinthians vi. 11 to vii. 1 (R.V.), which please read, and connect with Hebrews iv. 1-13.

If obedience thereto be not rendered by any, then the defilement of such abides. Wherefore the obedient, as cleansed ones, ought not to touch those unclean ones. Compare Haggai ii. 10-14.

Like unto that is the defilement through recognising and encouraging the leaders or led in contrary doctrine, as see 2 John 9-11, Revised Version.

JOHN BROWN.

### Fragment.

. . . TRUE-HEARTED believers separating themselves from the religions of the day have to follow their Lord, bearing His reproach, seeking a city that is to come, daily realizing that they are strangers here; and instead of conforming to the world and its respectable religious ceremonies, they are to assemble themselves together exhorting one another, and so much the more as they see the day approaching.

H. W. SOLTAU.

## THE GREEK WITNESSES.

“What the inspired authors actually wrote is a matter of testimony ; the ancient evidences which have been transmitted to us present us with the best accredited grounds on which we can form a judgment.”—*Tregelles*.

IN endeavouring for the benefit of the youngest of our readers to give a brief account of the most important witnesses that we possess as to the exact words used in the God-breathed Scriptures, we naturally commence with

### THE SINAITIC MANUSCRIPT (Ξ, ALEPH).

According to the opinion of those most competent to judge, Aleph was written some time between the years 300 and 400 A.D. There is only one other manuscript of the same antiquity, and each of these venerable documents has its own most interesting history.

Many are the men whom God at one time and another has raised up to labour for His own glory and His children's blessing, and surely in these days in which we live those whom He has caused to labour for the discovery of the exact words of Holy Scriptures ought to call forth especial thankfulness on our part, professing as we do to adhere to God's Word alone, and finding our only justification for the position of separateness that we occupy in that we are where we are at the bidding of Him whose Word we have found in those same sacred writings.

Amongst the names of those who have borne the burden and heat of the day in the path of textual criticism, that of Constantine Tischendorf, of Leipsic, takes a high and honourable place. The amount of work which he has performed in publishing the text of many manuscripts of the Greek New Testament would be of itself enough to evoke our most lively gratitude to God for him, but all this seems little by the side of the benefits that accrued from his persistence in the years 1844–1859 ; which resulted in bringing



to the light of day the most valuable of all extant manuscripts of the New Covenant of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It was in the year 1844 that Professor Tischendorf, visiting the convent of St. Catherine, on Mount Sinai, secured some leaves of ancient writing, which the monks had consigned to the waste paper basket to take its turn in lighting the oven fire of that "religious house." These proved to be fragments of the Septuagint Greek version of the Old Testament, and were published by Tischendorf in 1846 as the Codex (that is, manuscript) of Frederick Augustus, naming them after the King of Saxony, under whose patronage he was then travelling. At the same time, and on several later occasions, Tischendorf sought to obtain more of the same precious spoil, but without success. However, in the year 1859, when he again visited the convent on Mount Sinai, the influence of the then Czar of Russia (Alexander II.) secured the goodwill of the denizens, and the whole of the valuable manuscript was placed at his disposal. Tischendorf touchingly describes his surprise, his joy, his midnight studies over the priceless volume on that memorable 4th February, 1859.<sup>1</sup> He took the manuscript to St. Petersburg, where it is deposited in the imperial library.

The venerable Sinaitic manuscript (called **A**, Aleph, for brevity) contains a great part of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, the whole of the New Testament, and two writings which are not part of the God-breathed Scriptures.<sup>2</sup>

It consists of several hundred sheets of vellum, each composed of the entire skin of one animal, four together being folded in the middle so as to form two leaves or four pages

<sup>1</sup> Scrivener's "Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament." 3rd edition, p. 88. (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell & Co.) We are indebted to this volume for much of the matter of these articles.

<sup>2</sup> The Epistle of Barnabas (not written by Barnabas the apostle) and The Shepherd of Hermas.

out of each sheet. The pages are about  $14\frac{7}{8}$  inches  $\times$   $13\frac{1}{2}$ , and contain mostly four columns of 48 lines each on every page. The letters in which it is written are remarkable for the simplicity of their form; they are what are called uncials, or, as we should say in English, capital letters, quite free from ornamental or superfluous strokes. These plain, bold letters are characteristic of the most ancient manuscripts.

The titles of the books of the New Testament are known to be no part of the original text.<sup>1</sup> This manuscript is noteworthy for the extreme shortness of the titles. Revisers of the English version say, "Too short a form to be convenient for use." We venture to differ from them. The titles used, if they are not actually taken from the text itself, cannot be too short. So that the titles given in Aleph seem very convenient. These are samples—"According to Matthew," "Acts," "To Romans."

In this manuscript the letter to Hebrews immediately follows those to Thessalonians, coming between them and the letters to Timothy. This is evidence so far as it goes that Paul was the writer of the letter to Hebrews.

In the Sinaitic manuscript we have not only the testimony of the scribe who wrote it as to the contents of the exemplar from which he copied. Aleph also bears indubitable evidence of having been corrected by several hands, one of whom (at least), whose notes are distinguished as **Na**, did his work very soon after the manuscript was written, comparing it doubtless with some other exemplar which was considered reliable. Correctors of a later date furnish evidence of less value—though their numerous marks gravely add to the work of the collator.

It is not to be supposed that **N**, any more than any other codex, gives us the New Testament in perfect correctness throughout. There are places where the combined testi-

<sup>1</sup> Revised Version, Preface.

mony of other ancient witnesses shows it to be in error. But the value of the Sinaitic manuscript is very great. It is the only document of the fourth century which contains the text of the Revelation, and therefore its value for the criticism of that book is considerable, as the following example may serve to show:—

In Revelation i. 5, the ordinary text is as follows:—

|           |                    |              |            |                 |              |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>ΤΩ</i> | <i>'ΑΓΑΠΗΣΑΝΤΙ</i> | <i>'ΗΜΑΣ</i> | <i>ΚΑΙ</i> | <i>ΛΟΥΣΑΝΤΙ</i> | <i>'ΗΜΑΣ</i> |
| tō        | agapēsanti         | hēmas        | kai        | lousanti        | hēmas        |
| to Him    | that loved         | us           | and        | washed          | us           |

This is also the reading of the Codex Porphyrianus, P, of the ninth century. On the other hand, the reading of the Alexandrian Manuscript, A, of the fifth century, and of the Ephraemic Palimpsest,<sup>1</sup> also of the fifth century, is—

|           |                  |              |            |                 |              |
|-----------|------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>ΤΩ</i> | <i>'ΑΓΑΠΩΝΤΙ</i> | <i>'ΗΜΑΣ</i> | <i>ΚΑΙ</i> | <i>ΛΟΥΣΑΝΤΙ</i> | <i>'ΗΜΑΣ</i> |
| tō        | agapōnti         | hēmas        | kai        | lusanti         | hēmas        |
| to Him    | that loveth      | us           | and        | loosed          | us           |

The only other ancient manuscript of the Revelation is the Codex Basilianus of the eighth century, and this agrees with A and C in reading agaponti “loveth”; and we are safe in concluding that “loved” is wrong, and “loveth” is right. As to the second difference of reading, the Codex Basilianus reads lousanti “washed.” Certainly the testimony of A and C, both of the fifth century, is worth more than that of the other two of the eighth and ninth centuries. But still it is a matter of thankfulness that we have the reading of the Sinaitic manuscript to set all doubt at rest, as it entirely accords with the readings of A and C, and we thus are perfectly certain of the text, “To Him that loveth us and did loose us from our sins in His own blood,” as testified by three independent and reliable witnesses. It

<sup>1</sup> It is hoped to devote later papers to these valuable and interesting manuscripts.

will be observed by the careful reader of Scripture that God never speaks of our being washed from our sins in the blood. The washing in Scripture is "of water according to His Word."

However, we must never allow our understanding of the Truth of God to influence us in considering the evidence which may come to us as to whether this or that reading is indeed the Word of God as it was given by Him. This has to be decided by the testimony which reaches us in the case; and then, when we once know on reliable evidence what God actually caused to be written, we shall be in a position, with the help of the Spirit of God, to appreciate its true harmony with the rest of the God-breathed Scriptures.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

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### Fragment.

FELLOWSHIP or communion. God wanted sinners to have fellowship or communion with Himself. Fellowship is an old Saxon word, and communion an old Latin one, meaning the same thing. When some good people therefore say, "The fellowship and communion of the Holy Ghost," etc., it is simply repeating the same idea twice. To bring this subject nearer of comprehension, I will use a word all are familiar with. Fellowship means partnership. Then we are told the sons of Zebedee were partners, co-owners of the ship. It is the same word then. They were all partners together. The Son of God wanted partners, wanted companions. Oh! what a precious view one seems to get of Christ. Christ did not want to enjoy His God and Father all to Himself. He wanted companions.

WILLIAM LINCOLN.

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## BAPTISM.

(ESSAY WRITTEN BY A YOUNG BELIEVER.)

BAPTISM is an ordinance prescribed in God's Word to be administered by Christians to, and to be observed by, all those and only those who confess faith in Christ as He is presented in the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> To be dipped in water,<sup>2</sup> into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>3</sup> as a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, is the only form of baptism prescribed for us in Scripture, and is, therefore, the only proper mode of procedure for us to follow. It is, as it were, an outward representation<sup>4</sup> of the transition out of death into life which believers have already experienced inwardly.<sup>5</sup> In being immersed in water, and raised again, into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they (being dead to the world,<sup>6</sup> and their past life being dead in the sight of God<sup>7</sup>), whilst showing forth the burial and resurrection of the Lord, and their faith that, through His resurrection, they also shall be raised in like manner, at the same time show forth *their own* burial with Him, and their being raised to walk in newness of life,<sup>8</sup> having their title clear as children of God,<sup>9</sup> and partakers of the Holy Spirit.<sup>10</sup>

By baptism we are neither "made partakers of the benefits of the Covenant of Grace"<sup>11</sup> nor are we "admitted into the fellowship of the Church."<sup>12</sup> It is distinct from both, and, according to the divine order, *comes between them*; but, being a commandment laid down in the Word

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Mark xvi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iii. 6, "in Jordan"; John iii. 23, "much water," etc.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 21.

<sup>5</sup> John v. 24.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. v. 24, with vi. 14.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. v. 17; Col. iii. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. vi. 3-5; Col. ii. 12; Gal. iii. 27, with Rom. xiii. 14.

<sup>9</sup> John i. 12; 1 John iii. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Eph. i. 13, 14.

<sup>11</sup> John iii. 36.

<sup>12</sup> Acts viii. Compare ver. 13 and vers. 20-23.

for all believers, obedient ones rejoice in the fulfilling of it,<sup>1</sup> as they find it to be the answer of a good conscience toward God.<sup>2</sup>

The Holy Spirit is our Teacher, and is not given unto the world,<sup>3</sup> but only to those who are born again. Thus those who are of the world know not what Christianity really is; and it is but reasonable that one should know what Christianity is before he proclaims himself to be a Christian. Hence neither worldlings nor infants are fit recipients of this ordinance, and we do not, in any part of the Scriptures, find that it was administered to them; while, on the other hand, all the recorded cases of baptism indicate that those who observed it previously confessed faith in Christ.

The passages generally put forward in support of "infant baptism" are Luke xviii. 16, coupled with John iii. 5. When we take into consideration (1) the antiquity of the rite, (2) the dependence and trust in the minister to explain the Scriptures accurately, (3) the idea generally held as to the meaning of the phrase "the Kingdom of God," (4) the comparative absence of inconvenience with which the rite is performed on infants, and (5) the prevailing notion that it admits infants into the church, and, should they die in infancy, into heaven, but that, without this rite, they are excluded from both, it is not at all surprising that the minister (himself brought up under the same teaching) should, by linking together these two passages in a more eloquent than truthful address, blind the minds of his willing-to-be-blinded hearers<sup>4</sup> by explaining that, as "of such (babes) is the Kingdom of God," and as those who are born of the Spirit can see the Kingdom of God and are eligible for baptism, therefore infants are eligible for baptism. He might with as much logic say that because,

<sup>1</sup> John xiii. 17; Acts ii. 41, viii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> John xiv. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xv. 14.

in the animal kingdom, the horse is of the order of thick-skinned animals, and the ass is of the order of thick-skinned animals, therefore a horse is an ass.

Infant baptism did not grow in a day, but I have been unable to find out when infants were first baptized. It would have been extremely dangerous to the proving of the legitimacy of the rite to have allowed that date to become public property, therefore it seems to have been well hidden. We know, at any rate, that there was no such custom in apostolic days. As to the mode, we know that at one time the instructions were that "the infant was to be immersed in water unless a medical man declared that its health would not permit of this," in which case water was to be *poured* upon it. This instruction was afterwards altered to read that the infant was *not* to be immersed in water *unless* a medical man declared that its health *would* permit of this; and, in the present day, a medical man is never consulted on the point, and *pouring* has been changed to *sprinkling*. Indeed, what guarantee can there be for the stability of an ordinance from the moment that the letter of the Word is departed from?

(To be continued.)

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### Fragment.

It is always profitable to change even our brightest dreams for the immutable and eternal truths of the Word of God.

HECTOR BETTEX.

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## ON THE CONDUCTING OF GOSPEL MEETINGS.

1. As to convening meetings for the special purpose of preaching the Gospel, our authority is the command of the Lord to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark xvi; Matt. xxviii.). As to where the preaching is to take place must depend on circumstances, and the Scripture "let all things be done decently and in order" would not only justify, but render necessary, the making known of the place and time of meeting.

2. The attitude of the preacher to his hearers in such a meeting is that of an ambassador praying men to be reconciled unto God (2 Cor. v. 20). He is charged "to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins" (Acts xxvi. 18). And he is also commanded "to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He (Christ) which was ordained of God to be the Judge of living and dead" (Acts x. 42).

3. To some of his hearers he is a savour of death unto death, to others the savour of life unto life (2 Cor. ii. 16).

4. Should there be Christians present in the meeting, they could help the preacher, and show fellowship in the Gospel by prayer (2 Thess. iii. 1; Rom. x. 1), and in doing such personal work (*e.g.*, in directing enquirers to Christ) as the preacher could not find time to do (Acts viii. 30, 31).

5. What place, then, have prayer and singing in such a meeting? Prayer and singing are essentially Christian exercises. As to praying for the Gospel work, we do not find this was done in the presence of those who were preached to, but we have evidence to show such prayer was made when *all* were of one accord.

Acts i. 14 shows us the disciples continuing together in



prayer with one accord, in which attitude the Holy Spirit descends upon them, and they then go *out* to preach.

Acts iv. 23, etc., shows the apostles, being let go, return to their own company, where they together lift up their voices with one accord, and pray that God would grant them boldness to speak His word.

Acts xiii. 1 shows the Lord's servants prior to their service ministering to the Lord and fasting, in which attitude the Holy Spirit selects two of them to go forth to preach the word.

6. As to the application of the above. If a preacher were going to speak to a company of unbelievers, and he were the only Christian present, it would be not only absurd but wrong of him to address God in the plural number "we," when seeking blessing on the word, as those present could not join him in prayer, and such action on his part would be calculated to leave an impression on the minds of his audience that *he was leading them* in prayer. As to his praying as an individual audibly before them, does it not seem to savour of the hypocrite? (Matt. vi. 5, 6). Individual prayer should be in the closet; collective prayer must be among Christians.

7. If believers were present, the objection to prayer would be the danger of the people being considered and considering themselves as *one*, thus leading unbelievers to suppose that they (because they bowed the head and outwardly appeared to be engaged in the prayer) were also taking part in a religious observance. Surely it cannot be denied that there is such a danger, especially in Christendom, where the majority have been sprinkled in infancy, and confirmed later on, and where therefore it becomes of paramount importance to detach them from any religious observances on which they might lean.

8. If to have no audible prayer during the time of meeting rendered the collective prayer of Christians impractic-

able, then some reason could perhaps be given for continuing the custom; but inasmuch as all those interested in the Gospel could almost invariably come together for a season of prayer prior to the meeting, the necessity for having it during the meeting does not exist.

9. As to singing, it would be well to ask to what purpose do we sing in Gospel meetings:—

First: to give praise to God.

Second: to tell out the Gospel to those present who are unsaved.

As to the first, it must be confessed that praise can only come from a redeemed people. Such scriptures as Ephesians v. 19, Colossians iii. 16, Exodus xv. 1, Psalm xxxiv., Psalm ciii., Hebrews xiii. 15, etc., abundantly show *who* can praise God; and such as Hebrews xi. 6, Romans x. 14, Proverbs xv. 8, Romans iii. 13, also abundantly show how impossible it is for the natural man to render anything acceptable to God. As to the second, if by singing hymns we do indeed tell out the Gospel, then those who so tell it out should be, according to 2 Corinthians ii. 15, a sweet savour of Christ unto God. Indeed, it is clear that whether we preach or sing the Gospel, God should get His portion out of our service *first*, and then as a necessary consequence man will get a portion next.

To sing hymns speaking of God and His love, of Christ and His work, and yet in so doing to deny “a sweet savour” to God, would be a worse than useless performance.

10. What then can be the purpose in unconverted ones telling out the Gospel? Scripture, speaking of the Thessalonian saints, says, “From *you* sounded out the word of the Lord.” Are we not in danger of giving that which is holy unto the dogs?

Instead of unconverted ones singing the Gospel, should we not rather be concerned to see them broken down under the power of the word, and crying out, “What must I do to be saved?”?

Such a thought as sinners singing the Gospel to themselves has no place in the Word.

11. But it will doubtless be objected that we do not *ask* them to pray or sing, and that if they do so the responsibility is their own.

Such an objection comes badly from those who oppose the passing of the collecting box before *all* who come to the meeting, for fear the unconverted should give. This is the excuse of those who do that very thing: they say that if the unconverted give, they do it on their own responsibility. Are not hymn-books placed in their hands? are not tunes set which are perfectly familiar to them? thus rendering it wellnigh impossible for some to refrain from joining in, even though they might see the inconsistency of their action.

The act of giving them a hymn-book is your warrant—yea, your recommendation—to them to sing.

12. What is understood in the so-called “places of worship” around? Do not the “people” go to “divine worship”? and do they not in these places, both as to *prayer* and *singing*, act in principle similarly to what *we* do in our meetings? and can it be expected that people are willing to discern any difference between the one place and the other?

How did the Lord speak to the sinner of John iv? She could talk, and say, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” Almost identical is the language of the professor of the present day. How did the Lord answer her? He told her plainly, “Ye worship ye know not what”; and then he showed her the requirements of God as to worship. Of course the woman did not worship God, though she called it “worship,” any more than sinners now worship God; but did the Lord allow her to remain deceived? No!

Let us ask ourselves, Are we in *any* measure, through our additions to the word of God, helping to keep souls in the dark? helping to keep them satisfied with themselves and

their religious observances? Certain it is that "actions speak louder than words," and however we may preach to them of their unregenerate condition, yet if we place them in a position which denies our words, they will naturally accept our actions in preference to our words.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. v. 21).

S. HILL.

## NOTES FROM NEANDER.

### I.

[THE following passages are extracted from the "General History of the Christian Religion and Church," the central labour of the life of JOHANN AUGUST WILHELM NEANDER. Concerning this author one who knew him has written: "No man, perhaps, ever had a clearer insight into the mutual relation of historic facts, into the real worth and significance of historic phenomena." Another has said concerning his book: "He boldly went back to the primitive sources. He would not publish a history at second or third hand; but he pursued his researches as patiently and carefully as if he had had no predecessors. His work is therefore unrivalled." It may be interesting and helpful to many, who have learned what truths they know solely from the pages of God's Word, to see how these same truths appear to one who has looked at them from another point of view, and who has approached them along the lines of historical enquiry.—ED.]

### OF THE CONSTITUTION OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES.

"As, from the very first, the *inner* fellowship of divine life, which Christianity introduced, strove to exhibit itself in an outward fellowship, it must necessarily adopt some determinate form, which should be agreeable to its own essence, and in which it could shape and manifest itself as a spiritual body. . . . To this end a certain organization was necessary—a certain relative subordination of the different members, according to the different positions assigned them in reference to the whole;—a certain guidance and direction of the common concerns, and consequently a distinction of

organs destined to effect the several ends. . . . For as there were individual characters predominantly productive, and others of a more receptive bent; as there were those pre-eminently calculated to guide and rule; and as the Christian life shaped itself to the form of these natural peculiarities, which it ennobled—the natural talent being elevated to a charisma—the result was that some members of the community would come to be possessed of the gift which is designated in the Epistles of St. Paul as the *χάρισμα κυβερνήσεως*.<sup>1</sup> . . . As organs of the whole and of the one Spirit who gave it life, these several members were to co-operate, each in its appropriate place, for the common end; and in this organization of parts some acted pre-eminently as the ruling members. But . . . the essence of the Christian life and of Christian communion could hardly lead to this guidance being placed in the hands of a single individual. The monarchical form of government was in no wise suited to the Christian community of spirit.”

“The pre-eminence of a single individual at the head of the whole was too likely to operate as a check on the free development of the life of the church, and the free action of the different organs. . . . The individual on whom everything would in such a constitution be made to depend might acquire too great an importance for the rest, and consequently become the centre round which all would gather, in such a manner as to obscure the sense of their common relation to THAT ONE who ought to be the centre for all.” . . .

“How difficult would it be to find an individual uniting in himself all the qualifications for guiding the affairs of the body, and possessing the confidence of all! How much easier to find in every community several fathers of families, whose respective qualifications might supply the deficiencies

<sup>1</sup> Charisma kubernēseōs—“Governments.” Compare 1 Cor. xii. 28.

of each other! Individually, one might enjoy the greatest confidence with one, and a second with some other class of the community; both together, therefore, being qualified for such a function. Monarchy in spiritual things does not harmonise with the spirit of Christianity, for this points everywhere to the feeling of a mutual need, to the necessity and to the blessing as well of common *deliberation* as of common *prayer*." . . .

"Besides, Christianity freely appropriated to its own use such existing forms as were adapted to its spirit and essential character. Now in the Jewish synagogue . . . there existed a form of government which was not monarchical, but aristocratical, consisting of a council of elders, זְבֻנִים,<sup>1</sup> πρεσβύτεροι,<sup>2</sup> who had the guidance of all affairs belonging to the common interest. To this form Christianity . . . would most naturally attach itself. The same polity, moreover, would appear most natural whenever churches were founded among the pagans in any part of the Roman empire, for here men had long been accustomed to see the affairs of State administered by a senate or assembly of decuriones." . . .

"The guidance of the communities was therefore most probably entrusted everywhere to a council of elders. It was not necessary that these should be the oldest in years, though some respect was doubtless had to age. Age was here generally a designation of worth, as in the Latin *senatus*, and in the Greek γερουσία.<sup>3</sup> Besides the usual name, πρεσβύτεροι, given to the heads of the church, there were also many others, denoting their appropriate sphere of action, as ποιμένες,<sup>4</sup> ἡγούμενοι,<sup>5</sup> προεστώτες τῶν ἀδελφῶν.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Z'qēnim.

<sup>2</sup> Presbuteroi. Compare Exod. iii. 16, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Senatus and gerousia: both words meaning a "senate," and both derived from words meaning an "old man."

<sup>4</sup> Poimenes—"shepherds." Compare Eph. iv. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Hēgoumenoi—"leading-ones." Compare Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24.

<sup>6</sup> Proestōtes tōn adelphōn. Compare 1 Thess. v. 12; 1 Tim. v. 17.

The founding of churches among the pagans led to another name, more conformable to the Grecian mode of designating such relations than the terms above cited, which clearly bespeak their Jewish origin. This name was *ἐπίσκοποι*,<sup>1</sup> borrowed from the civil form of government among the Greeks, and applied to the presiding officers of the Christian churches, as overseers of the whole, and leaders of the community."

"That the name *ἐπίσκοποι*, or bishops, was altogether *synonymous* with that of presbyters is clearly evident from those passages of Scripture where both titles are used interchangeably,<sup>2</sup> and from those where the office of deacon is named immediately after that of bishop, so that between these two offices no third one could possibly intervene.<sup>3</sup> This interchange of the two appellations shows that originally they were perfectly identical." . . .

"Hitherto we have gone on the supposition that, from the beginning, one single community was formed in each town under the guidance of a senate of elders. Are we warranted in so supposing? An opposite hypothesis has, in more recent times, been advanced by several writers. According to this view, the converts to Christianity did not from the beginning, at least not in the larger towns, form themselves into one single community; but as Christianity was introduced from many different quarters and by different preachers, several *small* communities must have been founded independently of each other, and which, holding their assemblies at different places, long remained separate. . . . Of such separate churches . . . indications, it is supposed, are found in those passages of St. Paul's epistles where one person, with the church assembling in his house, is greeted."<sup>4</sup> . . .

<sup>1</sup> Episkopoi—"overseers." Compare Acts xx. 28; Phil. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xx. Compare ver. 17 with ver. 28. Titus i. 5 with i. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1 and 8.

<sup>4</sup> Col. iv. 15; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Rom. xvi. 5, 14, 15; Philem. 2.

“Such an atomical theory, however, corresponds very little with the essence of Christianity and of the Christian communion of the Spirit, which tended everywhere to fellowship and unity. . . . Throughout the epistles of the New Testament, Christians of the same city appear to be associated together and to form one *ἐκκλησία*.<sup>1</sup> This unity is never represented to us as something which is yet to take place, but as the original form, having its ground in the very essence of the Christian consciousness. On the contrary, the party divisions which, as in the Corinthian church, threatened to dissolve this unity appear to be a morbid affection which had subsequently crept in. And if portions of the church sometimes formed separate assemblies in the houses of such individuals as possessed local conveniences for the purpose, or who, by preaching the word, were eminently qualified to edify those who assembled in their dwellings, . . . even then those who met in such assemblies did not, by so doing, separate themselves from the great whole of the *community* which subsisted under the *guiding senate*.”

*(These extracts to be continued if God permit.)*

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### Fragment.

To honour God and maintain an unspotted conscience is of more worth than to have intercourse with good men.

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<sup>1</sup> Ekklesia, church.



A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.<sup>1</sup>

BY RICE T. HOPKINS.

VOLUMINOUS as the writings of J. N. Darby were that could be obtained in print during his lifetime on a great variety of subjects, nothing was printed by him on the subject of Baptism. Extracts from his letters may have been printed privately by others, and circulated in a limited sphere, or his letters may have been copied or handed about (as W. K. years ago complained that they were), but he never had anything printed on the subject himself.

Many until recent years in the same circle with him hardly knew what he held as to it; but a number, on becoming acquainted with the fact that he held Infant Baptism, very suddenly changed their views—one at least who had printed a tract on Believers' Baptism, being amongst the number. The volumes of letters contain eighteen on the subject of Baptism; and where dates are given it can be easily seen that most of them were written after 1860 (the *first* about 1856).

The letters date back to 1832. Thus it is significant that for the first twenty-four years this subject had not been written upon; and when he did write, it was drawn from him as one unwilling to enter upon the subject.

“You will perhaps be surprised to hear me say I do not like answering you (I do not say, writing). I believe all is in such confusion in the church, and I so thoroughly prefer dwelling on Christ to ordinances, that I have no comfort in speaking of them, and specially of this; as our real work as to this is to get Christians clear practically of a great corrupt baptized house, to which the Lord's Supper helps; and the bringing them into it such as it is (though till judged it is owned of

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<sup>1</sup> “Letters,” J. N. D., 3 vols.; “Baptism: Its Scripture, Place and Use,” F. W. G.; “What Baptism Is,” by S. M. A.

God—not practically) does not present itself in thinking [of it] with attraction. I believe they should be, but as a child ought to come home to his father's house; yet if the house be in disorder morally, there is not satisfaction in thinking of it, even though right, and we should be glad as to him to see him return.”<sup>1</sup>

“I should not re-baptize a person sprinkled in infancy, though I do not like the form, because the intended signification *in the form* is lost. There is an analogy between baptism and circumcision; but such analogies must be used with intelligence, as the dispensations are different. But I say no more, as this occupation with the forms of Christianity (though bowing to them as such) I find has little edification, and much wearying of the mind.”<sup>2</sup>

I have given these rather long extracts to show how J. N. D. seemed always to regard the matter. “A form”; “little edification” in it; “much wearying of the mind”; “does not present itself with attraction”; thus J. N. D., but not so his disciples, who, more zealous than he in propagating views on Baptism as if new and spiritual, seemed to find no weariness in urging it on every hand, even though warned that they were likely to cause division. Not only so, but, in a way unworthy of Christians, they sought to press into service for the upholding of their theories the writings of C. H. M., who never had the smallest sympathy with them in their false teaching. Andrew Miller, of London, having written him as to the use his little book on “Thou and Thy House” was being put to, received a letter, which was printed at the time,<sup>3</sup> as follows:—

“A.M., London. I am glad you have called my attention to my little book, ‘Thou and Thy House.’ I am aware of the use which has been made of it in a recent tract on the subject of Baptism—a use which I consider to be aught but disingenuous. With the theory of that tract I have no sympathy whatever; still less with its monstrous statements. I believe the course of some of our friends in urging on this question of Baptism will, unless God in His mercy interpose, lead to most disastrous results. I complain not of any who conscientiously hold this or that view on the subject; but I do complain of those who,

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II. p. 269, 1873.

<sup>2</sup> 1878, Vol. II., 521.

<sup>3</sup> “*Things New and Old*,” Vol. XV., 1872, by C. H. M.

instead of preaching and teaching Jesus Christ, are disturbing the minds of God's people by pressing Infant Baptism upon them. For my own part—seeing the question has thus been forced upon me—I can only say I have for thirty-two years been asking in vain for a single line of Scripture for baptizing any save believers, or those who profess to believe. Reasonings I have had, inferences, conclusions and deductions, but of direct scripture authority not one tittle. I may further add that there is not a word about Baptism from beginning to end of my book, 'Thou and Thy House.'

"C. H. M. ED. *T. N. and O.*

"BRISTOL, Dec. 22nd, 1871."

No clearer evidence could be furnished that there were those forcing the subject until it compelled C. H. M. to write thus, and to bring home to them, if at all open to conviction, that he had for "thirty-two years been asking in vain for a single line of Scripture for baptizing any save believers, or those who profess to believe," and also with special emphasis at the close of his letter to say, "I may further add that there is not a word about Baptism from beginning to end of my book 'Thou and Thy House.' Yet, in order to have the influence of his name it had been referred to as helping on these "inferences, etc.," which have not, according to C. H. M., "one tittle" of "direct Scripture authority."

But to return to extracts from J. N. D. Surely it is remarkable that he could continue to look upon "Infant Baptism" as being according to Scripture, and yet write of finding in it "little edification," "much wearying of the mind," and a "form." Good that he felt it was wearying if that had led him to give up his "form," but a gross mistake when he called it "a form of Christianity." A "form of *Christendom*" it has certainly become, and most wearisome, seeing it is but a form without one tittle of Scripture to support it. Seeing it was so wearying to J. N. D., what a pity that he should have written eighteen letters (very likely others, but that number appears in these volumes) on such a form. Wearisome work, indeed, to wade through

them, and to find nothing but false reasoning, with an attempt to support it by such Scriptures as Matthew xviii., Mark x., and 1 Corinthians vii.; for, although F. W. G. and S. M. A. have a good deal to say about "Households" of Scripture, J. N. D. has not. He seems only to refer to these three passages, and to him they were full proof for his "form," though Baptism is never named or hinted at in either of them. Did it never occur to him why it was so wearying? Surely Scripture never wearies one in communion with the Lord. Nothing, however simple, contained in it can weary a heart that loves Him.

But when Baptism is turned aside from those for whom it was alone intended, and turned into a "sacrament," a "form," a mere outward, meaningless thing as practised in connection with infants, no wonder if one is wearied equally with J. N. D.

These letters are significant. They were drawn from him. He says so in them:—

"I never seek to persuade any one of children's baptism."<sup>1</sup>

Or again, when written to by another:—

"The subject you refer to is one on which I so far unwillingly engage that it is one which I feel is to be left entirely to individual consciences."<sup>2</sup>

Again:—

"I don't wonder at people being in doubt in the state of confusion in which the church is, so that I have no difficulty in respecting the consciences of brethren who believe that they ought to be baptized. If their conscience tells them that they have not been baptized, they do well to get baptized, if they do it peaceably—I say peaceably, because it is no longer the confession of Christianity, but an act which seeks to repair a fault of negligence. But if one makes it a sect, it is a very great evil."<sup>3</sup>

What a jumble of ideas! It is left to "conscience," an "act" to be done "peaceably," to "repair a fault of negli-

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. III. p. 427.    <sup>2</sup> Vol. II. p. 333.    <sup>3</sup> Vol. III. p. 385.

gence"! Whose fault? would be an interesting inquiry—that of the one baptized or his parents? But the purpose for which I refer to this letter is to point out that whereas on every other subject on which he wrote J. N. D. would seek to refer to Scripture alone, on this one he constantly drags in "Conscience," and leaves it to that. Is "Conscience" a safe guide? What is to control it? The Word of God ever must, or the one who acts apart from it under plea of conscience will find himself in the wrong. "They do well to be baptized"; but it cannot be well unless in it they are fulfilling some Scripture. If in no sense the act results from the Lord, and His Will as contained in His Word, how can it be well? It would have nothing to make it so. And if there is Scripture, then the believer should be referred to that, and not to his conscience.

Never for a moment would J. N. D., or any other with him, have allowed reference to be made to conscience on any other subject; but in this he left it to conscience, and influenced others to do the same. Thus in a paper on Baptism, in "The Girdle of Truth,"<sup>1</sup> the writer starts with the same assertion:—

"I would begin with Baptism, confining myself to the elucidation of the subject, and not treating of the question as to *who* are the proper recipients; the determining of *that* point I would leave to the enlightened conscience."

Sad and significant sentence, showing that he was in such unity with those who held Infant or Household Baptism that, while feeling responsibility, and attempting to discharge it in connection with Baptism, he passes over the question as to *who* are the proper recipients. A teacher given for the help of God's children (assuming to be such, at least), he seeks to expound the doctrine, but leaves the rest to an enlightened conscience. Well to ask, therefore, where the light could come from save from the Scripture

<sup>1</sup> Vol. VIII. p. 97. Edited by Dorman. 1864.

itself. Had he himself no light on it? Had he learnt so fully the meaning by study of all the Scriptures on Baptism from Mark xvi. to 1 Peter iii. (he quotes them in the course of his article), and yet had he no light on *who* were intended by God's Word to be baptized? It would have been interesting to ask why he did not leave it all to an "enlightened conscience." For if that was sufficient for the one part, why not for the other?

It would have been well if he had acted more thoroughly himself on the advice he gave as a preface to his article:—

"Our only course, one that the servant of God ought never to have deviated from, is to disengage our minds from everything man has said on the subject, and apply ourselves to the Word of God, as if we had never heard of the subject before. It would reveal one of the mysteries of the mind if one could trace the prepossessions about the truth of God with which Christians come to the Scriptures; in fact, they too often do so more to establish their own convictions than to derive convictions therefrom. These remarks apply, I think, peculiarly to Baptism; for no truth has been so popularized and adopted by the world."

"SO POPULARIZED AND ADOPTED BY THE WORLD!" Alas! how true; but has the world ever adopted Believers' Baptism? or has the Baptism of Believers ever been popularized? Acknowledged the fact that, when nothing else prevailed, professors bowed to it;—did the world? Never; but Infant or Household Baptism it adopted and popularized, until nearly all the leading denominations, commencing with Romanism, practise it; all of them connecting it with regeneration in a greater or less degree:—

"I am persuaded that so long as Infant Baptism is practised Popery will have a door set wide open for its return. It is one of those nests which must come down, or the foul birds will build again in it. As long as you give baptism to an unregenerate child, people will imagine that it must do the child good; for they will ask, If it does not do it any good, why is it baptized? The statement that it puts children into the covenant, or renders them members of the visible Church, is only a veiled form of the fundamental error of baptismal regeneration."

The foregoing sentence is from the pen of another. But he was one who was prepared to help the children of God, instead of leaving them to "an enlightened conscience." He also does so by showing how the world adopts it; but he goes further, and boldly attacks the world's belief, and warns the children of God how Popery makes immense use of these teachings in reference to Infant Baptism. He shows the way in which it became popular, the leaven put in by the woman has been the teaching "that good does result from it." If it does not do any good, why baptize them?

"Baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"Not only persons who are come to the use of reason, but also little children, and infants newly born, if they die without Baptism, do go into everlasting fire."

AUGUSTINE.

"If infants are guilty of original sin, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved unless this be washed away by Baptism."

JOHN WESLEY.

"But how God will deal with persons unbaptized we cannot tell."

G. WHITFIELD.

Can it be wondered at, in view of such teachings—coming even from men such as Wesley and Whitfield—that the common belief should prevail among the people that not only is good obtained by the baptism of infants, but that by it they are saved from hell?

(To be continued.)

## THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

WHEN David, the instrument of Israel's salvation, stood before Saul with the head of Goliath in his hand, how many may have imagined that the fortune of the stripling was made, and concluded in their minds as to the future position and prosperity of the victorious shepherd lad; for had it

not been said on the morn of that mighty conquest, "The man who killeth him (Goliath), the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel"?

David had fought and conquered: what shall be his reward? "Saul took him." "Saul set him over the men of war."<sup>1</sup> Saul takes him up and gives him a place. The patronage of the king secures for David a position.

God had taken up David<sup>2</sup> in the public use of him, even as He had already taken him up in Divine purpose,<sup>3</sup> and would yet take him up to put him on the throne of all Israel, for "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

Saul had taken him up to drop him. We, however, anticipate.

Saul gives David a place, but he cannot stand the truth. The song of the women makes that evident, and fills Saul with fear for the loss of the kingdom.<sup>4</sup> Was this the man of whom Samuel had spoken that God would raise up?<sup>5</sup> What memories that song had probably raised! The prophetic words of the seer, the victory in the valley of Elah, and now the women's song! Was the shepherd lad his rival? The women think of the thousands slain; Saul, of the transfer of his rule. There is the explanation of his wrath and jealousy. "Saul eyed David from that day and forward."<sup>6</sup> Within a few short days it had been demonstrated Saul and David could not get on together. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" The more wisely David behaves<sup>7</sup> the more Saul is afraid of him. David's prosperity is again and again an occasion for Saul to exhibit his hatred. Open acts of violence and secret deeds of strategy—everything in turn is tried to get David out of the way; but God is his defence, as Psalm lix., written at this time, declared. Amid all David is preserved;

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xviii. 2, 5.    <sup>2</sup> Chap. xvii.    <sup>3</sup> Chap. xvi.    <sup>4</sup> Chap. xviii. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. xv.    <sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. xviii. 9.    <sup>7</sup> Chap. xviii. 5, 14, 30.



still, each event as it occurred made it only too manifest that the people's man and the man after God's heart, though together at court, are wide enough apart in reality; and that, however much David may endure and suffer at the hands of Saul, there is a limit beyond which he cannot go. Therefore the intolerance and tyranny, the deceit and strategy, at last accomplish the cleavage.

God's king cannot live in Saul's court. Rule according to God has nothing to expect but opposition at the hands of the exponent of rule according to man.

In all this is there not an experience to be traced that many of the Lord's servants have had? Up to a certain point clerisy has been ready to sanction earnest work, and, till its own safety became questionable, to patronise the workers; but when ministry arose, and asserted itself in the fear of God and faith in Him, then, as Saul against David, so clerisy has fought against the truth and those who taught it, till the conviction has forced itself upon servants of God (a conviction that truly might have been gathered from the Scriptures themselves) that there is no room for God's rule in man's organizations; and again and again, like David, have children of God had to part company with human associations.

But David does not hastily estrange himself. This at first sight is surprising, considering that his life was sought by Saul at least six times (probably more) during the period of David's sojourn at court. What patient suffering this expressed! Those chapters (1 Sam. xviii., xix., xx.) tell us how when he suffered he threatened not. Psalm lix. completes the picture, and shows how he committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously.

Then surely there was another reason for the length of his sojourn there. When David stood before Saul on the occasion of his victory over Goliath, another stood near and heard him speak. It was Jonathan. And when David had

ended his words, the owner of the Philistine's head became the possessor of Jonathan's heart. Jonathan loved him as his own soul. David's deeds of valour and modest words and bearing attracted Saul's son; and robe, girdle, sword, and bow follow Jonathan's heart. David gets all, and a friendship based on love sprang up between the two. Is it not more than probable that such friendship had something to do in lengthening out David's days with Saul? To break with the one was to part with the other. Friendship had its ties then, and friendships have their ties still. To part with Saul had its own particular difficulties; to leave Jonathan behind was to almost break both hearts. May not this help to explain the action of some, who see plainly enough God's rejection of man's system of ecclesiastical rule, and yet go on with it when the face of God is against it? The voice of a wife beloved it may be leading the husband wrong, as when Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. The leading of a father substituted for that of God, as when Terah took Abram; and so forth. We need still the words of warning: "He that loveth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."<sup>1</sup>

At length David decides on his course and departs. Jonathan speaks kindly and returns; his heart with David, his presence with Saul. Convinced David is right, still clinging to the last to Saul to follow and fall with him. Solemn lesson!

May the mighty attractions of David's Lord lift us above all human considerations when they hinder us, and draw us after Himself in what must ever be the right way, however rough.

"Then let us stand prepared  
In duty's path to run,  
Nor count the greatest trials hard  
So that His will be done."

CHARLES MORTON.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 37.

## THE FOUR GREAT MONARCHIES.

## VII.

“To the Jew first and also to the GREEK.”<sup>1</sup> The phrase has been rendered happily familiar by the use made of it by the great teacher of the Gentiles, while the manner of that use leads to the supposition that it was an expression generally employed by the earlier Christian communities—a formula, as one might say, in which was crystallized and preserved the fact that so great and so intellectually dominant were the people of that tiny group of states into which the land which moderns know as Greece was divided, so deep was the impress that they had left upon the history of the human race, and so lasting the influence that they had exercised upon the human mind, that even in the day of their servitude, when their glory had departed and their empire had for ever passed away, they were still the typical Gentile people, and that their name still symbolized all that was of the most profound wisdom and of the most perfect art amongst men; while their tongue was so universal in its sway that it was chosen as the medium through which the story of the Cross of Christ was borne unto the Gentile world, even as it had been accorded a place in the epigram which Pilate had attached to that Cross and fixed above the head of the dying Son of God.

The Greeks (or Ionians, as the Persians and other Easterns called them) had their descent from Javan,<sup>2</sup> the fourth son of Japheth, Javan being “the nearest possible expression in Hebrew of the Greek term which we render Ionians”;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom i. 16, ii. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. x. 2. See *Needed Truth*, Vol. I. p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Canon Rawlinson in “The Origin of Nations.” *Ionia* afterwards came to be applied to the part of Asia Minor which Greek settlers had colonized, the emigrants having borne the name with them across the Ægean.

the people described by the term including not only those of Greece proper, but also those of Macedonia and possibly of Thracia, Alexander the Great being styled "King of Javan"<sup>1</sup> by the angelic interpreter of the vision of the Ram and the rough Goat, to which reference must be made further on.

The deduction which competent scholarship has drawn from the many anomalies in the Greek language, and from the broken and confused forms of certain of its grammatical inflexions, is that the Greeks originally formed one compact and undivided nation, which subsequently broke up into the many minor states, republics, and principalities of which the alliances and the strifes, as well as the manners and customs, have so great a place in history.

The scope of this article does not admit of any attempt to enter even in the most general way into this part of the history of the Greeks. Their successful resistance to Persian aggression has already been referred to in these pages,<sup>2</sup> as well as their reprisals and counter-attacks upon Persia; and it need only be added that in all human probability they would have wrested the dominion from the great king long before they did, and the Leopard<sup>3</sup> would have taken the place of the Bear in the Four Great Monarchies at a much earlier period, had they not spent their strength in fratricidal strife, and their resources in internecine conflict, in which "Greek met Greek": and there came indeed "the tug of war"; for as a matter of fact all the periods of repose that Persia enjoyed, and the intervals of peace which were permitted to the empire after Xerxes' expedition into Greece, were due to the fact that the Greeks were so busily engaged in fighting amongst themselves that they had no opportunity for fighting with their neighbours.

Some four hundred years before the birth of our Lord, amidst the weakened states of Greece three republican com-

<sup>1</sup> Dan. viii. 21, R.V., *margin*.

<sup>2</sup> *Needed Truth*, No. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Dan. vii. 6.

munities stood out from the rest in unmistakable prominence, their names being Attica, Laconia and Bœotia, but their people were better known, and are now more easily recognised, as Athenians, Spartans and Thebans, from the names of their respective chief cities. To the north of Bœotia lay Thessaly, and again to the north of Thessaly the small kingdom of Macedon.

The kings of Macedon claimed descent from Hercules and Jupiter, and to be of pure Greek lineage. The Greeks, on the other hand, styled the whole nation Barbarians, and refused for ages to admit them into their assemblies upon any footing of equality. At one time or another the three leading states exercised a sort of protectorate over Macedon, receiving some manner of tribute in return. At the particular period with which we are dealing the Thebans held this quasi-feudatory position; and as a result thereof in the year 373 B.C. Pelopidas, their general, was called upon to arbitrate between two brothers who both claimed the crown of Macedon; and generally to settle the affairs of the kingdom, which were in a most distracted condition owing to strife amongst the members of its royal family.

Pelopidas decided in favour of the younger of the two brothers, the birth of the elder being illegitimate, and, as one of a number of hostages for the due fulfilment of the obligations which the Macedonians had undertaken, carried back with him into Thebes a still younger brother, who was eventually to lay the foundations of the power that became at length one of the greatest of the monarchies of the Gentiles, and who was known unto succeeding generations as PHILIP of Macedon, the father of ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Pelopidas and the Thebans were little able to gauge the character or to forecast the career of the boy of ten years of age whom they thus received into their city. Indeed, it is not easy to say how far Philip's future was influenced by his Theban residence and training. He was placed in the

house of the great captain Epaminondas, educated under Greek philosophers with that hero's own children, and permitted to accompany him through more than one of his campaigns, learning in this way lessons that he turned to good account on another day.

After ten years of this life, news reached Philip of grave disaster and distress in his native land. The king, his brother, was dead, having fallen in battle, and Macedon was beset with foes and tortured by the pretensions of rival protectors. It was indeed woe to the land: its king was a child and its enemies were strong and many. Philip fled from Thebes, and, reaching Macedonia, assumed its government—first, as guardian of its infant prince; finally, as himself its king, called by the stress of circumstances and the voice of the people to the throne.

This was in 360 B.C. Four years later his eldest son, ALEXANDER, was born.

The change wrought by Philip in the fortunes of Macedon was simply marvellous. He found it a distracted and impoverished state, with nothing before it but a choice of evils—submission to the Greeks or subjection by the Barbarians. He left it at his death, twenty-four years later, the acknowledged head of Greece, the dominant power amidst the Greek governments and communities, its wealth as great as its renown in arms; and this all due to him—to him and to his gold or to his steel; for he either purchased or conquered every foe that confronted him, every opponent that stood in his way.

There can be no doubt that had Philip lived for ten years longer *he*, and not his son, would have been renowned as the conqueror of Persia. And thus the whole course of human history might have been changed, for it is improbable that in such case the division of the third kingdom into four great parts<sup>1</sup> would ever have occurred. But this division

<sup>1</sup> Dan. viii. 8, 22.

was decreed by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and therefore Philip fell at forty-seven and Alexander died before he was thirty-three.

Philip's end was even more dramatic than it was tragic. At a great festival, to which he had invited every person of distinction in Greece, in honour of the marriage of his daughter and as a prelude to his intended invasion of Persia; amidst scenes of indescribable magnificence and beauty and with the acclamations of multitudes ringing in his ears, he was stabbed to the heart by an officer of his guards as he walked, clad in pure white robes, in solitary grandeur and majesty in the procession from the palace to the theatre, and died just as his statue, as the statue of a god, was borne into the theatre, while the people bowed the knee before it and hailed it as an image of the Divine.

His assassin had private wrongs to avenge; but there were not wanting those who whispered their suspicions as to the part that Olympias, the wife of Philip (but whom he had divorced) and the mother of Alexander, had in compassing her husband's murder, and who even charged Alexander himself with having been a party to the plot.

Alexander succeeded to the throne of Macedon at twenty years of age. He had been most carefully and wisely trained under the supervision of his father and by some of the greatest and noblest of the minds of his time, notably by Aristotle the Stagyrite, whom he greatly revered, and to whom his attachment continued throughout his whole life. Not only was his education of a character entirely exceptional, but his genius was of the rarest order; his abilities were pre-eminent even amongst the able men by whom he was surrounded. As a result, at the age of sixteen he was appointed regent of the kingdom during his father's absence at the wars, and before he was seventeen he commanded with the greatest success and distinction a division of Philip's army at the great battle of Chæroneæ, in which

the Macedonians and their allies overthrew the combined Athenians and Thebans, so utterly routing the Greeks that with them fell that day, and for ever, the liberties of Greece.

The stately ceremonies in connection with the burial of Philip were hardly well over before his young successor found himself involved in difficulties and surrounded by active and energetic enemies, who judged that the time had come for the shaking off of the yoke which the dead king had imposed upon them.

Mistaking youth for weakness on Alexander's part, the Barbarians in the north and the Greek cities in the south<sup>1</sup> rose against him. The mistake was a natural one, but experience showed it to be so tremendous that it never was repeated; for Alexander led his Macedonian hosts from victory unto victory. Moving with incredible swiftness from place to place, he fell upon the nations of the Barbarians in detail, smote them hip and thigh one after the other, scattered them like chaff before the wind, and then suddenly turned about and marched into Greece. The great city Thebes was the first (and the last) that offered armed resistance to Alexander. He took it by assault, and made such an example of its unfortunate inhabitants as struck terror into the hearts of the dwellers in every Greek town.

The result was accepted as decisive, no further experiments were made in the way of resistance to the conqueror; and thus the way was made clear for the realization of the project that Philip had conceived and that Alexander was determined to execute, for the invasion of Persia and the overthrow of the Persian monarchy, for the subjugation of Eastern nations by a Western race, for the domination of Asia by Europe, which begun by Alexander the Great, has continued and has increased, in spite of temporary fluctuations, from his day to ours.

W. H. HUNTER.

<sup>1</sup> Stirred once more by the eloquence of the great orator Demosthenes.



## Correspondence Department.

"Hearken to me,  
\* \* \* \* \*  
I will answer also my part."  
—*Job xxxii. 10, 17.*

TO THE EDITORS OF *Needed Truth*.

Dear Sirs,—

Permit me to offer a few remarks on the article in your issue of this month under the heading, "Pertinent Questions," by A. P. Macdonald.

This I have found, that manifold difficulties in the path of obedience disappear once we have become sufficiently humble-minded to acknowledge past failure and our own insufficiency, and, in simple dependence upon the Lord for each step, accept as our only rule His written Word.

No more concise and definite answer to the question, "Whom and in what manner should we receive?" could be given than that of Romans xv. 7: "Receive ye one another, as Christ also received you to the glory of God." This does not admit of two distinct kinds of reception, or of any choice as to whom we should receive. "One another" seems to embrace all children of God who are known to be sound as to the fundamentals of the Christian faith and consistent in their behaviour, whilst the latter clause of the verse, having in view the glory of God, as it were, shuts the door against all that is manifestly wicked.

When the important question of reception is before us, the one essential to be determined is as to title; and who can deny that title to participate in the privileges of the House of God is the birthright of all whom God in grace justifies on the ground of redemption? Of course, as all admit, privileges carry with them corresponding responsibilities; but we must be careful to distinguish between things of which the Lord alone is competent to judge, and for which He will hold each directly responsible to Himself, and matters concerning which others are called to judge, for which they will be held collectively responsible.

In my humble opinion many of the divisions over which we have cause to sorrow would have been avoided had brethren recognised this distinction; and no more presumptuous sin has ever disgraced Christianity than that of men intruding themselves between the individual conscience and God, constituting themselves judges in other men's matters, and by the imposition of non-scriptural terms and penalties, bringing them under bondage for their own personal exaltation.

Not to trespass overmuch on your limited space, I conclude this letter with one further observation. It is an error common to all those who conscientiously have seceded from so-called "Open Brethren" to suppose that all whom they are pleased to distinguish by that appellation belong to some ecclesiastical system of "Open Brethren," and consequently are responsible for all that may be done in connection with it. I, for one, disclaim any responsibility of the kind, acknowledging only the one corporate church system, which is divine and *invisible*, and decline to subscribe to any rules or to accept principles outside of those we have clearly defined in the written Word for the guidance of all children of God. So far as those are concerned, I fully admit responsibilities, both *personal* and of a *local collective character*, but nothing further.—Faithfully yours, R. S.

[We gladly give our correspondent's letter a place in our paper, for, though he may differ from us, as we from him, in some points, yet it is written in the courteous and Christian spirit that becomes us as children of God.

With regard to the reference made, Romans xv. 7, the word there "to the glory of God" is, in our judgment, of the greatest importance. What is to the glory of God? Here lies the question.

There are those whom, although in the House, we may have to treat according to 2 Thessalonians iii. 6—that is, we may be called upon to reject them so far as service or ministry is concerned. Were such in an outside position, we should not surely be called upon to receive them in, and then immediately put them under discipline. The receiving one another of Romans xv. seems rather to be a condition of things within the House—see Acts ix. 28—the coming in and going out of the internal fellowship.

A person may be received at the door of our house, the door shut, and they within, yet left standing in the passage; but the bringing in and making one of the family is a further reception; and this, we believe, is the reception of Romans xv.

There can be no question that "Open Brethren" hold and practise certain principles in common. Whether this be called an ecclesiastical system or not, these principles are sufficiently defined and definite to bring into continual collision the holders of them with others who are of a contrary mind as to many points in the government of the House of God.

We do not understand how a church system which is invisible can be applied for the practical government of the House of God, and the carrying out of the present aspect of the Kingdom of God amongst His saints. We are not called to a negative thing, but a positive. Israel was not separated out of Egypt for the purpose of keeping the Passover only, but that the government of God might be manifested

in their midst. So to-day saints are not called together from the systems of men simply to break bread, but that they may unitedly manifest the rule of God amongst them.—J. A. BOSWELL.]

## A SONG OF OUR HOPE.

LORD JESUS, Lord Jesus,  
 We long Thy face to see!  
 We wait the word of power that soon  
 Shall gather Thine to Thee.  
 We're strangers here and pilgrims,  
 For Thou art gone above:  
 We're strangers here and pilgrims,  
 For we have learnt Thy love.

O Shepherd, O Shepherd,  
 Thy sheep shall hear Thy voice!  
 Thy flock, for whom Thou gav'st Thy life,  
 Shall hear Thee and rejoice.  
 Thou knowest their names: a vast bright host  
 Forth unto Thee Thou'lt call:  
 Thine own Thou wilt have with Thee,  
 And Thou wilt have them all.

We'll see Thee, Lord Jesus,  
 We'll see Thee face to face!  
 Thou that didst walk our bitter earth  
 In so exceeding grace;  
 Thou that didst die, in wondrous love,  
 Upon the Roman tree—  
 Didst die, in love to sinners,  
 That they might live with Thee.

When all Thine are with Thee,  
 All like Thee, and all one;  
 When wandering and scattering,  
 When sin and death are done;  
 With joy, with joy wilt Thou look round  
 On that rejoicing throng,  
 O Lord, our light and glory,  
 Our morning and our song!

## Department of Question and Answer.

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God."—*John* vii. 17, *R.V.*

QUESTION 39.—*Is there any difference between being "in Christ" and being "in the Lord" ? as see Romans xvi. 3-16.*

The term "in Christ" we understand to express the absolute positional relationship of those who have believed to the saving of themselves by God.<sup>1</sup> But this only during the period known as from Pentecost to the Rapture. That position is so absolute and abiding that even death cannot touch or alter it. Hence the truth,—

"Once in Christ—in Christ for ever."

Yot, let no one confound or mistake that as synonymous with "They that are Christ's."

The term "in the Lord," in contrast thereto, seems used in the Scriptures to set forth a *possible* relationship, *through obedience*, to the revealed will of Christ Jesus as Lord. Wherefore, the Apostle Paul speaks of certain as having been "in Christ" before him, but never of any as being so "in the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

There are, at this moment, many both of the dead and of the living "in Christ." There are not yet any dead in the Lord. Just as all the saved dead are not "in Christ," so, similarly, we understand that all the saved living are not "in the Lord."

When Revelation xiv. 13 is fulfilled, there will not be any dead, nor alive on the earth, "in Christ." Although there shall be many both of the dead and of the living that "are Christ's."

Meanwhile, they that are "in Christ" should, in marriage, "marry only in the Lord." If this were heeded in such matter, there would be infinitely less sorrow and mistake than at present appears to be. Notwithstanding, if a believer does marry NOT IN THE LORD, that disobedience won't alter such an one's position or standing "in Christ." Christians too commonly can agree to differ, and go on without any strife, because disregarding the guiding word, "Be of one mind in the Lord."

Christian wives may be in subjection to their husbands for various reasons to the sacrificing of "as is fitting in the Lord." So also the Christian child to the parents. But "in the Lord" is a necessity to the submission and obedience being "RIGHT."

JOHN BROWN.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xvi. 7.

## THY WILL BE DONE.

“God . . . hath extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the House of our God, and to repair the ruins thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem” (see Ezra ix.; please read the whole passage R.V.).

If there was a time in Israel’s history when, after much departure from God and much sorrow arising therefrom, a remnant was enabled in Jerusalem to build the House of God; is there not a time when that which is House of God in this present age may again be set up?

And, lest any say that this is not the time, we would earnestly direct attention to the word of Jehovah by His prophet Haggai, as in chapter i. verses 1-11.

But we are well assured that not a few of our readers do believe that the time is come when all half measures should be discarded, and when those whose spirits God has raised to build His House should set about it with both hands earnestly.

We therefore desire at this crisis to again direct very special attention to certain important points in reference to the dispensation or administration (see Eph. iii. 2, 9, R.V.) that is the law of the House (please read Ezek. xl. to xlvi. in the Revised Version, noting particularly xl. 4, xliii. 7-12, xlv. 5-9).

Of that which is called the House of God in the present period of time, from the day of Pentecost to the moment of our meeting the Lord in the air, Scripture thus speaks:—

Hebrews iii. 6,<sup>1</sup> “Christ as Son over His (*i.e.*, God’s) House; Whose House are we, if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end.”

Hebrews x. 21, “A Great Priest over the House of God.”

1 Timothy iii. 14, 15, “How one ought to behave oneself

<sup>1</sup> Please read the whole of each passage Revised Version.

in House of God, which is Church of Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth."

In each of these Scriptures it appears plain that the House of God is on earth, that it is composed of persons, who hold fast and that it is only one House of God, though they who are in it, who compose it, may be scattered over a large part of the earth.

1 Peter ii. 5, "Ye also, as living stones, are being builded<sup>1</sup> (that is, are being builded together) a spiritual House."

This is addressed to the elect sojourners throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, including Churches of God in very many cities, etc., but all builded into one House. So in addressing the elders:—

1 Peter v. 2, "Shepherd the little flock of God among you, . . . not as lording it over the charges<sup>2</sup> allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples of the little flock."

If one little flock, however large the area of these five great provinces, little wonder that Paul, as recorded in Acts xx. 17 to 38, "sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the Church [not the Churches] and . . . said, . . . Take heed to yourselves and to all the little flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers to shepherd the Church," etc.

One Church in Ephesus with one circle of overseeing men—but more, the elders of all Asia were the divine links between the churches of Asia. Even in the time when the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ was written the seven assemblies in the seven mentioned cities of Asia formed a perfectly distinct circle of fellowship, a distinct "within"—needing, alas! oh, how sadly, the rebuke and chastisement of the Great Priest, but by that very judgment known to be in the House, as compare:—

<sup>1</sup> So the Greek; the tense is present and continuous, and there is no word "up."

<sup>2</sup> The word is in the plural; the warning is against congregationalism.

1 Peter iv. 17, "Judgment to begin at the House of God"; and see also 1 Corinth v.

To return, however, to what the House of God is, we see its unity over the five provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.

Seeing its connection in 1. Timothy iii. with the Church we revert to

Ephesus iii., see verse 10, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the Heavenlies might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God."

What Church? we ask. Certainly not the Church of Matthew xvi., of Ephesus i. 23, ii. 20. For that Church is not yet together for the principalities and powers to see. True, all His works are known to God from the beginning: He sees "In Christ" all those whom He has foreknown. But the scripture before us speaks of what the principalities and powers may now be made to know.

Surely the conviction is irresistible that here we have the oneness of all the churches of God set forth as God's eternal purpose!

Ephesus ii. 20. tells of us as having been built up upon the foundation-stones of the apostles and prophets, they, too, having been built up on the foundation rock of Matthew xvi. 18. But the chief corner-stone of the Church of Christ's building is also He in whom each several building as fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord. (Ephesus ii. 21.).

The Temple of God is the House of God, and the House of God is the Temple of God. Both words, Temple and House, mean a dwelling. But Temple of God denotes where God dwells to be worshipped. House of God where He dwells to rule.

Comparing these and other Scriptures, and contemplating the divine record of the early Churches, the reader will readily see,—

That in every city or hamlet where saints were gathered into the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, they were builded together for an habitation of God in the Spirit (Eph. ii. 22), they were in character temple of God, and therefore holy (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; 2 Cor. vi. 16, no word "the" in either case), and they were called the Church of God in that city or town, etc.

That the Churches of God found in a larger area, as, for instance, Asia (Rev. i., ii., iii.), Achaia (2 Cor. i. 1, ix. 2, etc.), Macedonia (2 Cor. viii. 1, ix. 4), also were united together (and that especially through the agency of overseeing men) into a definite, united whole.

That singular words, "Flock," "Church," "House," are used of the whole of the disciples in very large districts. For instance:—Judea, Galilee, and Samaria (Acts ix. 31, R.V.); and the peninsula now called Asia Minor addressed by Peter in his first letter.

That there is no geographical or local limit whatever to the Fellowship, the Flock, the House, the Church. That if from the heart we can pray, "Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth," we must seek each to the utmost of his or her ability to build the House according to God's pattern—to be content with no makeshift—to suffer no modification. We must see to it that the Fellowship is as clearly defined to-day as it was in the days of the Apostles—not indeed by human make-believe arrangements, but according to the will of God. Every personal and petty feeling must be put away, and all laziness overcome. Every man and woman must work, and, over and above all, each one must pray. For assuredly there is in none of us a sufficiency for these things; but let not faith in God be lacking.

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, "If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in Mine eyes?" saith Jehovah of Hosts.

C. M. LUXMOORE.



## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

## II.

EXTRACTS such as have been given sufficiently show what it was that originated Infant Baptism; for originated by man it certainly was. As one leading German writer says, "Neither in the Scriptures nor during the first one hundred and fifty years is a sure example of Infant Baptism to be found."<sup>1</sup>

Not until the third century, and then springing from Africa, do we get in history the Baptism of Infants. The fact that Roman Catholics generally, and the High Church party in the Church of England, frankly admit that they have no Scripture for the practice, basing it upon tradition and the action of the early Fathers, is significant.

The necessity for getting rid of original sin by Baptism was first urged, then the doctrine of the damnation of unbaptized infants was taught, and became the effectual means by which to introduce the practice.

"The condition of the Church since the third century imperatively demanded the introduction of Infant Baptism. Christian Baptism sank, as it were, to the grade of John's Baptism, and the whole Church had sunk down to the legal state. Again (1 Cor. vii. 14), it is clear that Paul would not have chosen this kind of proof had Infant Baptism been in use at that time."

Thus another leading German theologian, Olshausen, wrote in reference to Baptism.

Let Christians lay it well to heart. Infant Baptism falls as soon as men are persuaded nothing can result from it for any one—that it leaves the person baptized, whether adult or infant, not only where, but as it found him. If it does not do any good, there is no use for it. But the sacramental theory has been attached to it, and widespread is the notion that not only is there good in it, but that there

<sup>1</sup> Hahn.

is danger in neglecting it. In another tract,<sup>1</sup> by H. T., written in dialogue form, for the purpose of showing the evils of teaching and practising Household Baptism, we read thus:—

“CHARLES.—There is something naturally very pleasing in baptizing little children, who have no will of their own about it. Hence it crept into the Church of God very soon after the days of the Apostles. And, on the other hand, the Atonement of Christ was very soon lost sight of, as is the case now all around us. And this is always its tendency. Only a few days back I heard of a sister who lost her little boy when he was only a few months old; and she is in continual sorrow, and cannot forgive herself, because she did not have him baptized. And we all know how ministers are often called out of their beds in the middle of the night to baptize dying infants a few days old.”

Thus H. T., in the same circle with J. N. D. and S. M. A., had to write of a sister also with them actually mourning over the loss of that which Christ never enjoined! doubtless because, unlike H. T., she had listened to the specious reasonings of such as S. M. A., who plainly asserts, in the tract before us, that there *is* value in it, for he asks whether earthly parents would deny some earthly blessing to their children. But the reader shall have it in his own words:—

“If it were a question of something pertaining to this life or worldly gain, they would not so reason nor act. If a parent knew some worldly advantage could be obtained for his child, he would be quick enough to secure it, without waiting till the child first grew up to see if he were worthy or deserving of it, or willing to accept it” (p. 30).

Now, if there is any meaning in this sentence, it is that something is to be gained for the child by Baptism; therefore the parents are urged to get it baptized in order that this may be obtained. S. M. A. appeals to them by an illustration of a parent keen to obtain some worldly advantage for his child; so Christians ought to be quick to “secure” for their children this benefit!

A child is sprinkled. Be it so that a Roman Catholic priest has done it—it is just as valid; “it has been done,

<sup>1</sup> “Baptism: A Word to the Simple. A Dialogue.” H. T. Published by G. Morrish, London.

and cannot be undone."<sup>1</sup> It has gained; privileges have been secured. So S. M. A. declares, "Some may fail to apprehend the nature and value of these privileges" (p. 31). Again, in answer to those who ask, "What are these privileges?" his reply is, "Anyhow, privileges are privileges, for all that; how people may treat them does not alter the fact that they are real and valuable" (p. 30). So that something "REAL AND VALUABLE" has been gained for the child; and, if S. M. A. were to be believed, this is not only true of the child of believers, but equally so of the child of unbelievers; nay, more, these "real and valuable" privileges can be secured for the child of unbelieving parents by one who is himself an unbeliever just as fully and as readily as by a believer.

"Outside a believer's house there is no warrant for baptizing any unless there be repentance first; still, the responsibility is with the one who baptizes *in all cases*; and though, as is often the case in the present day, neither baptizer nor baptized, nor the parents of the baptized, may be true believers, yet the one is acting as Christ's servant, and baptizing to Him and to His name; and the one baptized is baptized to Him and brought into the place of privilege—connected with Him, *outwardly, on earth*, and the act cannot be cancelled nor made null."<sup>2</sup>

What can the privileges be, or what can they be worth when obtained, when thus easily they can be got? Yet so securely are they ensured by the act that they cannot be "cancelled nor made null"! And where is God in the matter? The writer himself (mark it; not one for him by inference from any sentence) asserts in the plainest way that all concerned may be unbelievers—"NEITHER BAPTIZER NOR BAPTIZED, NOR THE PARENTS OF THE BAPTIZED, MAY BE TRUE BELIEVERS," but all is done as effectually as if they were all believers; and it is so although "outside a believer's house there is no warrant for baptizing any unless there be repentance first"! So that although but few, according to the writer, that is, the children of believers, are entitled to be

<sup>1</sup> So J. N. D., but not Scripture.

<sup>2</sup> S. M. A.'s tract, p. 33.

baptized, still the rest, the larger number by far, are equally baptized and are in the position, the privileges theirs. Thus S. M. A. writes:—

“The Baptism holds good before God, as we have seen, and if the person is baptized a thousand times after it does not alter anything, nor add anything further to the one baptized; but the one who attempts thus to rebaptize is simply stepping into the place of a judge pronouncing on the work of a fellow-servant, judging before the time and saying that he can do the work better” (p. 34).

“The Baptism holds good!” One would be inclined to ask, “Good for what?” or to say, “Good for nothing!” The writer then says if such an one is re-baptized it does not add anything FURTHER. This can only mean that Baptism, though all concerned in it were unbelievers, added *something*! “The work of a fellow-servant”!—thus regarding an unsaved man, in his meaningless act of sprinkling, as a fellow-servant of a Christian who, winning souls for Christ, then seeks to lead them on, baptizing or teaching them!

Thus every priest of any and every corrupt system on earth who has performed this act is a *fellow-servant* who has in sprinkling or baptizing an infant done a work; and for one to rebaptize is “practically saying that HE CAN DO THE WORK BETTER.” “What work?” one vainly asks. Still there it stands from the writer’s pen; a work has been done! The one who did it is a “fellow-servant,” although all concerned in it are unbelievers. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” is the strict command in 2 Corinthians vi. 14, written by those (Paul and Timothy) who could say, “We then as workers together,” or fellow-workers; but if the pamphlet before us were true how could such a command be given? The reply would have to be, “Why, Lord, I cannot avoid it. I am yoked by Thyself with every baptizer; even though such an one be an unbeliever. He is already in yoke. We are ‘fellow-servants,’ and I must not step into the place of a judge and try to walk and work apart!” Could anything more monstrous

be found in print; or could one imagine that, led on in attempts to support such a fabric of evil, evil doctrine and evil practice combined, any one could have dared, in contradiction to such a solemn injunction, to say that an unbelieving baptizer was a fellow-servant of a Christian indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who therefore is further asked, "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"<sup>1</sup> What agreement? "Much every way," the writer of the tract, to be consistent, would have to say; "we are fellow-servants, both carrying out the initial act, doing a work, and one can do it equally well whether believer or unbeliever; therefore we are yoked." Let the reader pause and consider such statements, if he needs time. Alas for one who does! Surely such words carry their own condemnation with them.

A Christian is<sup>2</sup> one able to say, "I am in no way 'fellow' with a worldling, with an unbeliever; no concord between us, nothing in common; no act done by me can make me 'fellow' with an unbeliever." "Stop," says the tract, "you are wrong! You are only able to do what another can do equally as well. You cannot 'add further' to it. You cannot 'do the work better.' You baptized a man who had believed in the Lord Jesus, whose sins were forgiven, but in so doing you did no more than that unbelieving priest who sprinkled, anointed, and salted the infant of godless parents. You both did the same work. You both brought the baptized 'on Christian ground.'<sup>3</sup> 'They were thus made Christians outwardly'<sup>4</sup>—'brought into the place of privilege, connected with Him, outwardly, on earth.'<sup>5</sup>

Could anything more distinctly go to subvert the Word of God, or hinder the real separation inculcated in 2 Corinthians vi.?

Work has been done, and the work is to bring into a position! In what, though accompanied by an attempt at Scripture reference, does this teaching differ from the old

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 16.    <sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. vi.    <sup>3</sup> Page 17.    <sup>4</sup> Page 31.    <sup>5</sup> Page 33.

threadbare arguments, deductions, and inferences of the Church of England or any other "ism" built up by Infant Baptism? If Baptism alters position, then by that act of man it has been done. The thought conveyed is that there is "VALUE IN IT,"<sup>1</sup> "WORK DONE,"<sup>2</sup> "POSITION OCCUPIED,"<sup>3</sup> and yet no work of Holy Spirit in connection with it! No God, Father, Son, or Spirit; no Christian interested in the matter; yet an act that God owns! and it can never be "cancelled" or "made null." The baptizer, who, with loud swelling words, announces as he performs the act that this child is now "regenerate," has done it all, and is a servant of Christ; nay, more, a fellow-servant of any and every true believer who baptizes one who has believed!

These two things, so opposite, are to S. M. A. all one. Could a principle be more essentially Romanist? The infant, not having been united by faith to Him who died and rose again, its Baptism is not Baptism unto Christ Jesus, but another Baptism; which is not Baptism, but is the invention of man to the concealing of God's own and only teaching concerning Baptism, and is the very masterpiece of Satan to the delusion of millions, leading them to think that they are in a different position from the poor heathen or Jew. They have had a "work" performed on them, and by it *gained* something.

And S. M. A. is not alone in his bold assertion that there is "value" in it. F. W. G., in dividing his subject, set apart one section for the purpose of proving the same thing. On page 40 of his tract we read:—

#### "VI. THE VALUE OF INFANT BAPTISM.

"If a child is baptized as a ceremony without faith, it is of no value. On the other hand, if I bring my child in faith to Christ in it, who shall deny my right to the blessed assurance that He does receive him?"

Here F. W. G. distinguishes between infants who have

<sup>1</sup> Page 32.

<sup>2</sup> Page 34.

<sup>3</sup> Page 33.

equally been baptized and brought into the Kingdom as he teaches. Where no faith on the part of those who brought the one, it is "a ceremony without value"; yet, passing strange, they are in "the Kingdom" as much as any other one brought in faith! But *he* brings, and brings in *faith*; then he asks, "who shall deny his right to the blessed assurance that Christ has received?" J. N. D. says Christ has received, therefore the Church should—*i.e.*, by Baptism. But, according to F. W. G., the reception follows, and is in connection with the Baptism, and his faith gives value to it.

He then, to enforce it, appeals to the case of the palsied man (Matt. ix.) :—

"And when Jesus saw their faith He saith unto the sick of the palsy.' What? rise and walk? Nay, blessed be God! but, 'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.' And I have no right to ask, 'But had he not faith in himself?' Scripture, perfect in all things, tells me it was faith in *them*,<sup>1</sup> not faith in *him*,<sup>1</sup> that Jesus saw. And I cannot be wrong in saying, therefore, that here we have express assurance of the fact that He does give forgiveness of sins itself to one on the faith of others."

Thus, in pursuit of Scripture to uphold his dangerous theories, he fastens upon this account his unsupported opinions, and seems to imagine he has an impregnable position to occupy, by making statements in the boldest and, I would add, most reckless way possible.

"Scripture, perfect in all things, tells me it was faith in *them*, not in *him*." Pray, where does Scripture say this? Nowhere! "When He saw their faith" are the words of Scripture. Now by what right does F. W. G. write as above? Does the word *THEIR* so absolutely refer to the others, and shut the man himself out, that he can safely and without fear of contradiction make such a statement? One would suppose that every Greek scholar would support him in it. F. W. G. should know better; but a desperate cause needed a prop, and no other could be found. Bold assertion often blinds and hinders reflection. "It is so,"

<sup>1</sup> The italics are F. W. G.'s.

not "Is it so?" becomes the thought fixed by such statements. It should not be; but so, alas, we often find it. But, to return. Let us take two scholars (both of them believers in Infant Baptism) and see how they looked at this passage:—

"*αὐτῶν* must be supposed to include the sick man, who was at least a consenting party to the bold step which they took."<sup>1</sup>

"*τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν*, 'their faith'—*i.e.*, of him who was borne, and of them who bare him."<sup>2</sup>

Thus Alford and Bengel agree as Greek scholars in saying that "THEIR faith" would include both; that is to say, they, being translators as well as critical editors of the Greek New Testament, never for a moment entertained the notion that "their" must mean the bearers to the exclusion of the sick man; but they both take it in the very opposite way to include him.

All this F. W. G. passes over in his haste to seize upon a passage (the only one he attempts to give) by which to uphold his dangerous and false doctrine that Christ forgives one person's sins upon the faith of others. Note the words, lest any in view of such alarming teaching should think F. W. G. was being misquoted:—

"Here we have express assurance of the fact that He does give forgiveness of sins itself to one on the faith of others."<sup>3</sup>

Worse still, the passage is brought in purposely to uphold his proposition that, where the parent has faith in connection with the Infant's Baptism, *there* "value" attaches to it. In fact, the forgiveness of sins to the infant on the faith of the parent is the only conclusion; else why the reference to Matthew ix. and the statements made as to "THEIR" faith, not his? There would be no purpose served by the reference to this man in connection with the "value of Infant Baptism" unless this was meant.

Thus, when F. W. G. seeks to show the value of Infant

<sup>1</sup> Alford, Grk. Test., Vol I. p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Bengel, Vol. I. p. 222, Clark's Ed., 1860.

<sup>3</sup> F. W. G., page 47.



Baptism, he teaches doctrine false as it can be, and builds it upon the word "their" as if it could not by possibility include the man himself. The Church of England never taught more glaring falsehood. A more unsafe man than F. W. G. simple Christians could not have as their guide or helper on this subject.

R. T. HOPKINS.

*(To be continued).*

### "TAKING NOTHING OF THE GENTILES."

SUCH is the divine record of Scripture. The same spirit that characterized the early herald of the Gospel should actuate and guide all who are God-sent proclaimers of His free and full salvation. The prophetic utterance of the prophet Isaiah respecting this salvation was "Without money and without price." To preach a free salvation and then to solicit contributions is in flat contradiction to the divine will and eternal purposes of a God of free, sovereign grace. God is a giver, not a receiver. He is independent of the gifts of His own elect, much more of the unconverted, the unsaved, who are not only "dead in trespasses and sins," but in heart and practice enemies of the Cross of Christ.

To solicit contributions for Gospel or so-called missionary work from such is a grave departure from the whole tenour and teaching of Scripture. Yet in some quarters we have known, when a foreign missionary has given an address about his special work, the attention of the general public has been called to the boxes at the close of the meeting. And frequently one sees gifts advertised as coming from "Bible classes" and "Sunday schools," where the unconverted young men or women, little boys or girls, have been encouraged to bring, and put into the box, their monthly offering, either of a penny or more, as the case may be.

True, the gifts may be small; still it is not the amount but the principle of the thing wherein the evil lies. Does it come from the unconverted? If so, can such a practice be called "Taking nothing from the Gentiles"?

He who receives from such a source, as well as they who are encouraged to give, are decidedly wrongly educated in divine principles; and ultimately the one will be led to look to man for support, while the others will in time regard and look upon their gift as a merit. For the want of definite teaching and instruction on this divine principle, "Taking nothing of the Gentiles," how many have come to grief, or have, after a little time, sought to secure a guarantee of monetary supply through "committees" or circulars and private letters soliciting and begging for money to help on their "work" or special "mission." Evidently their faith has been rather in their advertisements than in God alone.

This application for money is not always limited to the Christian; it is, alas! too often extended to the unconverted, or "Gentile."

It was "For His Name sake they [whom the apostle commends] went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles." There was such divine power as well as sweetness in that Name that they were held under its control and spell. His Name was not only the burden of their message in all its breadth and length and depth and height; but "for the sake of THE NAME they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles" (3 John 7, R.V.).

S. BLOW.

## PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

*(Continued from page 84.)*

SINCE the appearance of the first article containing these questions the attention of many has been directed to the New Testament term "Church of God," which some of us

have for a long time believed to mean the assembly in any given place composed of those, and those only, who have been gathered into the Name of the Lord Jesus.

This is now denied, and the denial is supported by two arguments which we shall endeavour to meet in detail.

It has been affirmed that the "Church of God," or "of the Lord,"<sup>1</sup> mentioned in Acts xx. 28 embraces all in this dispensation who are purchased by His Own blood.

Are we then to understand that the elders of the church in Ephesus were charged to shepherd all the blood-bought saints of the present dispensation? Or even all those who were living on earth in their own day? For, whatever the church of Acts xx. 28 embraced, the elders of Ephesus were responsible to feed it as shepherds.

The whole force of the assertion referred to depends, however, on the presence of the word "purchased" in the Authorized Version of this verse. Now there can be no reasonable doubt that "purchased" is simply a mistranslation, and that the best English word is that supplied in the margin of the Revised Version—namely, "acquired." The Greek verb which occurs here<sup>2</sup> means: firstly, "to make entirely for one's self," and, secondly, "to make entirely one's own." Its use, both in the LXX. and New Testament, is quite inconsistent with the idea of purchase.

Would those who insist on the word "purchased" in Acts xx. 28 be willing to insert the words "unto *purchasing* of salvation" in 1 Thessalonians v. 9, or "unto *purchasing* of glory" in 2 Thessalonians ii. 14?

If the question be asked: "How did the Lord acquire such a church by His Own blood?" we submit that the answer is supplied to us in Hebrews xiii. 12-14.

The second argument with which we have to deal may be summarized thus:—"The 'Congregation of Jehovah,' in the

<sup>1</sup> See rendering of Acts xx. 28 preferred by the American Committee. Also the footnote on pages 161, 162, *Needed Truth*, Vol. III.

<sup>2</sup> περιποιῶμαι, peripoioumai.

Old Testament, is the equivalent of 'Church of God' in the New. But 'Congregation of Jehovah' is never applied in Scripture after the rupture of the ten tribes from the two. Therefore 'Church of God' is not applicable to any company of saints in this present time."

Are those who publish and circulate such teaching aware of the following facts:—(1) That "Congregation of Jehovah" only occurs four times in the whole Bible?<sup>1</sup> (2) That "Assembly of Jehovah"<sup>2</sup> is applied as late as Micah ii. 5, and even Lamentations i. 10? (3) That the equivalent for the word "Congregation" is "*synagogue*,"<sup>3</sup> while "Assembly" is synonymous with "CHURCH"? (4) That the only occasion on which "Assembly of God" is employed in the Old Testament is Nehemiah xiii. 1,<sup>4</sup> where we learn that legislation concerning the "Assembly of Jehovah," first enacted in Deuteronomy xxiii. 3-6, both could be and was applied to the "Assembly of God" in remnant days?

How can any examination of Scripture in which obvious facts such as these have not even been noticed be called "careful and exhaustive"?

If it were only a question of how to induce saints to call themselves "Church of God" in the town where they live, we should not desire to enter into this controversy. It is easier to get children of God to call themselves "Church of God" than to persuade them to learn how they ought to behave therein. But, if there are no Churches of God in these remnant days, can there be any House of God?<sup>5</sup> And, if there is no House of God, is there any place on earth where the authority of Christ, as Son over God's House,<sup>6</sup> can be practically acknowledged by those whom He has "acquired with His Own blood"?

In the great majority of cases this question is not put to

<sup>1</sup> Namely, Num. xxvii. 17, xxxi. 16; Josh. xxii. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Deut. xxiii. 1-8, R.V.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Acts vi. 9.

<sup>4</sup> See Revised Version.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. iii. 5, 6.

the test of Scripture at all. An appeal is made to the sentiments, and brethren are asked if they do not think it "a solemn thing to allow themselves to be called Church of God?" It is indeed a *very* solemn thing. But God calls us into solemn things; and it is at once a sign of our weakness and our wickedness that so many of His people are willing to give up the solemn things that God has revealed and to accept in their place vain things which have no solemnity connected with them, hoping to escape responsibility thereby.

Individually, we are, according to the call of God, saints. "What a solemn thing," says one, "to speak about being a saint!" So he calls himself "a member of the visible church." Well, there is nothing solemn in that. Collectively, we are called, not to style ourselves, but *to be*, Church of God in the town where our lot is cast. "Far too solemn a title," say others; "we are content to meet simply as Christians!" But is God content? He calls the individual "a saint," and He calls the assembly to be that which He can own as His.

Another has said, and said truly, "If that which we have left is Assembly of God, it is schism to have left it; if that which we are in is *not* Assembly of God, it is schism to be in it."

If we, in any measure, realize how serious are the titles which God applies to us, then it is well with us. For a divinely granted position can only be occupied and maintained by men who take heed lest there be in them an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the Living God.

A. P. MACDONALD.

(To be continued, if God permit.)

## NOTES FROM NEANDER.

## II.

## OF THE GIFT OF TEACHING.

“THESE presbyters, or bishops, as we variously call the same functionaries considered from different points of view, had the general superintendence of the communities, the direction of all affairs pertaining to the common interest; but . . . *teaching* was not committed exclusively to them. For . . . *all Christians* originally had the right of pouring out their hearts before the brethren, and of speaking in the public assemblies for their edification. It does not follow, however, from this that all the members of a community were fitted for the ordinary and regular office of teaching. A distinction must be made between such a gift of teaching as, like every other cultivated talent, would be always constantly at the command of him who had once acquired it, and those effusions which, proceeding from the inspiration of the moment, were connected with transient states of elevated feeling. . . . On such transient awakenings and excitements of the religious consciousness alone it was impossible to depend for the necessary care in preserving, propagating, and advancing religious knowledge, and in defending the genuine, pure, and apostolical doctrine against the ever-threatening outbursts of corrupting tendencies, whether to Jewish or to pagan modes of thinking. Christianity required for its ministry *knowledge* no less than *feeling*. Wherever either of these two faculties predominated, to the exclusion of the other, a disturbance of the Christian consciousness and life invariably ensued. . . . Care, therefore, was to be taken in the several churches that, along with those utterances of extraordinary inspiration which were not attached to any particular function, there should never fail to be a supply of men qualified to satisfy the needs of knowledge, and capable of unfolding to others

and of defending Christian truth—the function denoted by the *λόγος γνώσεως*<sup>1</sup> and the *χάρισμα διδασκαλίας*.<sup>2</sup> The latter pre-supposed a certain previous cultivation of the understanding, a power of clear and discriminating thought, together with a certain facility in communicating it to others. The possession of all this, when once quickened by the Holy Spirit, became a charisma of this kind. Such as possessed this charisma were thereby fitted to take care both for the continual preservation of sound doctrine within the church and for the establishment and propagation of Christian knowledge, though not in such a manner as to exclude the co-operation of the others, who were at liberty to assist, each from his own position, and according to his particular gift. Accordingly, in the apostolical age, the *gift of teaching*, *χάρισμα διδασκαλίας*,<sup>2</sup> and the order of *teachers*, *διδάσκαλοι*,<sup>3</sup> who were endowed with it, are spoken of as constituting an entirely distinct function and order. All the members of a church might, at particular seasons, feel an impulse to address the assembled brethren, or to break forth before them in acts of invocation or praise to God; but it was only a few that, possessing the *χάρισμα διδασκαλίας*,<sup>2</sup> were *διδάσκαλοι*.<sup>3</sup>

“It is self-evident, however, that this faculty of teaching is a thing quite distinct from the talent for administering the outward concerns of the church, the *χάρισμα κυβερνήσεως*.<sup>4</sup> . . . Gifts so different in their kind could not always be united in the same individual. Though, in the early apostolic church, all arbitrary and idle distinctions of ranks were unknown, and every office was considered simply with reference to the end it was to subserve, and circumscribed by an inner necessity, still it seems to me that the function of teaching and that of church government, the function of a *διδάσκαλος*<sup>5</sup> and that of a *ποιμήν*,<sup>6</sup> as also the

<sup>1</sup> Logos gnōseōs—word of knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> Charisma didaskalias—gift of teaching.    <sup>3</sup> Didaskaloi—teachers.

<sup>4</sup> Charisma kubernēseōs—gift of governing.

<sup>5</sup> Didaskalos—teacher.

<sup>6</sup> Poimēn—shepherd, pastor.

gifts requisite for both, were originally distinguished and kept separate from each other."

"In the development of these relations it is necessary to distinguish different steps, or stages. . . . It would be a mistake to suppose that every arrangement in the churches was the same when St. Paul wrote his later epistles as when he sent his earlier. . . . It must have been held a salutary thing, as tending to the good order and quiet of the churches, that among their presiding officers there should also be some who possessed the talent for administering the office of teaching. And although in some cases, as in St. Paul's farewell address to the elders of the Church of Ephesus, the care of maintaining pure doctrine was committed to the presbyters generally, yet it does not by any means necessarily follow that they were also invested with the office of teaching in the more restricted sense. For the apostle in this passage may perhaps be speaking simply of one among the general cares of church government. But when, in the epistle to Titus, it is required of a bishop that he should not only himself hold fast the genuine pure doctrine of the Gospel, but also be able to establish others in it, and convince the gainsayers, this certainly implies that the bishop must possess the gift of teaching. Indeed, under many circumstances, such as those, for example, which are alluded to in the above-mentioned epistle, this would be highly desirable, on account of the danger which menaced the church from the spread of erroneous doctrines, which required to be met by the paternal authority of the elders not more than by their oral teaching. So, too, in the first epistle to Timothy (v. 17), those of the presbyters who, to the talent of government, *κυβέρνησις*,<sup>1</sup> could unite also that of teaching, *διδασκαλία*,<sup>2</sup> are counted worthy of double honour; and the prominence here given to each may perhaps be regarded as another proof that the two were not *necessarily* and *always* united."

<sup>1</sup> Kubernēsis.

<sup>2</sup> Didaskalia.



## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

*(Continued from page 137.)*

## III.

J. N. D., though holding Infant Baptism and writing privately on it in these "Letters," never went the length of F. W. G.; the reason being that he never went beyond Matthew xviii. and 1 Corinthians vii. If Infant Baptism was not in those passages, he evidently did not believe it could be found, and he knew too much to attempt to build it upon the word "*their*" in Matthew ix. But though we search the "Letters" in vain for any reference to this chapter, S. M. A. is not one whit behind F. W. G. in reckless assertion as to it.

"In the first part of Matthew ix. we have the man with the palsy getting governmental forgiveness, and, as a consequence, perfect restoration to health, through *the act of faith in others.*"<sup>1</sup> "Another case is Acts iii., where the lame man is cured by Peter. In verse 16 Peter explains how it was effected. He says, '*His (Christ's) name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong,*' etc. But where was the 'faith in His name'? Not in the man, but in Peter. It may have resulted in faith on the part of the man afterwards; but this is not said directly, and certainly his faith is not the ground of his being made whole. It was Christ's name, and faith in His name on the part of Peter; and the blessing received related to God's governmental ways. Administrative forgiveness as in Matthew ix. goes on the same principle (see James v. 15, and John's Gospel xx. 23)."<sup>1</sup>

Again, strong assertion is supposed to carry the day and *prove* everything beyond dispute. But it does not, save with those who give themselves up in their infatuation to certain teachings, and who seem to be unable to search the Scriptures for themselves.

Note that here it is not said his sins were forgiven, but he was found "praising God," having been healed as in Matthew ix. "Scripture is perfect," and it does not assert that the lame man had no faith. Though in this instance, doubtless,

<sup>1</sup> S. M. A., page 41. The italics are S. M. A's.

Peter was the one exercising faith, still it does not say (and, seeing that it does not, we have no right to say) that the man himself had no faith, much less to say that he could not be included in the expression. Take it for what it is worth, but a number of commentators on the Acts assume that he had. But then, though believers in Infant Baptism, they had no theory to maintain, as S. M. A. and F. W. G.

One would be almost curious to know what S. M. A. means by "governmental forgiveness" in connection with the palsied man. We know, however, what the Lord said, and that may suffice: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." And He meant what He said; and, what is more, never puzzled the poor man with long words, such as "governmental," "administrative." The man was forgiven; and to deny that he was so equally with any other who believed in Him then or since is to deny the plainest words that could be used by the Lord Himself.

The use of the words "governmental" and "administrative" by S. M. A. inclines one to think that he was somewhat appalled by his own rash assertions, and sought by these words to establish a difference between "forgiveness" and "governmental forgiveness." In the light of "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also"<sup>1</sup> one could understand distinction being made if the assembly were in question, and their action toward a sinning one the theme. But with S. M. A. it is not so. It is Christ's own act; and therefore when He said to the sick of the palsy, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," by what right does S. M. A. attempt to set up a distinction? The Word says "forgiven." Who dare deny it, or lower it down to "governmental" forgiveness? No one would ever dare unless urged on in the effort to get hold of some Scripture that seemed to uphold the thought that Christ forgives one on the faith of others; then upon that to build Infant Baptism, the infant by Baptism

<sup>1</sup> 2. Cor. ii. 10.

gaining something. That which makes many parents so ready to listen to teaching concerning Infant Baptism is the hope that something will be gained by it. How common the question, "Surely you would not have me deprive my dear child of Baptism?"—which infers that, under the Baptism, through it, and in addition to it, the child gains something.

#### DOES BAPTISM BRING INTO THE KINGDOM OR HOUSE ?

Here we get variance at once between the teaching of F. W. G. and of J. N. D. The former says, "into the Kingdom"; the latter, "into the House."

"Baptism was the reception out of the Kingdom of Satan, the world of which he was prince, into the Kingdom of Heaven, where Christ was the acknowledged Lord. Holiness characterized the latter, as sin the former. True, men might come into the Kingdom and be *unholy*; they might sleep, and tares be sown among the wheat; but this did not alter God's Word as to what was His."<sup>1</sup>

Thus he makes it very clear that he believed that Baptism brought *out* and brought *in*—out of the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of Heaven; and he refers to the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares in connection with it. Did it not occur to F. W. G. that in that parable that which is sown is wheat or tares?—two classes, and two only?

The enemy sowed the tares, and sowed "while men slept." But if F. W. G. is right Infant Baptism dates from the beginning. Had men gone to sleep then? Were they asleep when infants were baptized? He would be compelled to say, "No," for he says Infant Baptism was of God; and, being so, the infants baptized were brought out of the Kingdom of Satan. Then they could not by F. W. G. be classed as tares! As what then?—wheat?

The tares are, according to the interpretation of the Lord Himself, "the children of the wicked *one*."<sup>2</sup> The wheat,

<sup>1</sup> "Baptism," p. 19, F. W. G.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii. 38.

“the children of the kingdom.”<sup>1</sup> Thus two very distinct classes are referred to, and no allusion whatever to a third, composed of unconscious infants. The parable, it is evident to the simplest, deals with those who are intelligent and responsible. “All things that offend, and them which do iniquity”<sup>2</sup> is a sentence sufficiently clear to leave no doubt on the mind as to that. As also is the term by which the other are then spoken of—“the righteous.” It is only as “Infants,” and “Baptism” as the means of their introduction, are *thrust* into the chapter that any one can find them there. And when thus thrust in the difficulty arises as to how to speak of them. What are they? And if that when infants, if later on in their life they “do iniquity,” what then? Are they that still?

Thus, to refer to the “Dialogue on Baptism” again. John, who stands for one who has been reasoned into “Household Baptism” and into having his infant baptized, says:—

“But you see, Charles, the Church is now become a great House. And the Lord Jesus likens it unto a great tree. Do you not think the baptizing our children has some reference to that?”

“CHARLES. Alas, John, the Christian profession has indeed become like a great House, and it is also likened to a great tree, and the fowls of the air find an easy lodging in its branches, and God will very shortly pour upon it His fiercest indignation. I do not want, therefore, to identify my child with their House, by baptizing him into it, even if I could; but to which there is not the slightest allusion whatever in Scripture.

“JOHN. Well, Charles, what would you have me do with my child? How would you have me look at him—as a Jew, or a heathen, or a Christian, or what? I must look at him in some position.

“CHARLES. Yes, John; I would have you look at him as your child, given you by God, to be brought up for Him in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This you ought to be satisfied with, and not seek to place your child where God has not placed him, nor to try and fill up by the tradition of men what you think to be a blank in his history.”

H. T. wrote thus confidently as to the notion that the in-

<sup>1</sup> Verse 38.

<sup>2</sup> Verse 41.

fant has to be found a place! And John's question is not an uncommon one: "How am I to look at him—heathen, Jew, or Christian?" Can the baptizing him make him the last? Apart from the privilege of having Christian parents, is the child in any position differing from that which every other child occupies? Will the calling him by some different name make any difference? Yet this is the stronghold of those who hold Household Baptism. There is value in it because it introduces to a position!—to "the Kingdom," F. W. G. and S. M. A.; to "Christianity," or the "House," or "the public body," J. N. D.

"The public body exists, corrupted no doubt, but exists; and to form it again by Baptism is all false: it exists by Baptism."<sup>1</sup>

Thus he assumes that which he should prove. And so in every "Letter" it is taken for granted that Baptism is into a position. "The public body exists by Baptism!" But where does Scripture convey this? There are around us sects of divers sorts, all making use of the Bible to prove their own position a right one, and all naming the Name of Christ. Are all these in the "House"? "the public body"? etc. Numbers of them, the children of those who hold Believers' Baptism and "the Friends" as a whole, are in it by profession, without Baptism. Or will it be maintained that they are not, because they never had Baptism performed on them?

Shall we be told, without one fragment of Scripture, that infidels by profession are in it because in early life, by priest or minister, they were baptized or sprinkled, and yet even Christians who never have been so are not in?

No one who values the place given to Baptism by Scripture, and the precious teaching connected with it, would, for one moment, wish to baptize into this corrupt "public body." Though one grieves over such folly, one is prepared to leave

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 338.

that to such as follow J. N. D. and his coadjutors in this matter—the clergy of Romanism and Protestantism, who are the chief means of adding to this “corrupt public body.” Yet, passing strange, on coming into it these infants are removed from where Satan governs to where the Holy Spirit rules!

No wonder that to J. N. D. Baptism was a form.

“It is either public christendom or christening which we have, or the badge of a sect.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus no doubt is left as to the views of J. N. D. Baptism is a “sacrament,” a “christening” process by which the corrupt public body exists, and the one who baptizes into it, though an unbeliever, is a “servant of God”<sup>2</sup> in the act.

And all this cold, formal dishing up of old views of Baptism is considered the outcome of an original mind, of deep spirituality, to be swallowed greedily and believed implicitly. And, seeing that J. N. D. termed Believers’ Baptism “the badge of a sect,” many, with him, turned from it to take up with that which in earlier days they had judged to be evil and to savour of Popery; whilst men among them, as C. H. M., had been for years asking, but asking in vain, for a single scripture to support such views!

Writing to another, J. N. D. says:—

“I only add that your Baptism in the midst of confusion was *bonâ fide*, the same as your child’s. I was exercised in the same way; but I felt I was introduced in good faith into the church as a public profession in the world, and this is what Baptism is—I was christened.”<sup>3</sup>

This word “christened” occurs so frequently that one can easily see J. N. D. had become quite enamoured with it. In fact the editor of the “Letters” seems to have acted, in their selection, upon the idea that the greater the repetition the better. Letter after letter is printed with the

<sup>1</sup> “Letters,” Vol. II. p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> So S. M. A.

<sup>3</sup> “Letters,” Vol. II. p. 339.

same ringing of the changes upon "christening," "public body," "corrupt Christendom," "the public assembly of God on earth," "infants dying," and "holy"; with references to the "Establishment" as right on this subject, and the Baptists clearly wrong.

"The state of individuals in their souls has nothing to do with it."<sup>1</sup>

Therefore one can only conclude that it is quite immaterial whether the act be carried out in connection with a believer or an infant. It is the act of the baptizer, and he alone has command, and therefore is serving God by daily adding to the "corrupt public body."

Surely, if any one might apply the term "monstrous," it is those who steadily go on their way controlled by Scripture, and not by the mere assertions of one who had to own that he was once "exercised," but, unhappily for him, passed out of that exercise into a firmer holding of his old corrupt notions held by him when in the "Establishment."

Do we again ask, "What good?" then J. N. D. answers:—

"The good done to them is that they are brought within, into the House where the Holy Ghost dwells, to be brought up," etc.<sup>2</sup>

S. M. A. will have it, but without proof, that—

"The children of believing parents ought therefore to be in a distinct place from the world."<sup>3</sup> "Baptism is the admission to the place of a Christian outwardly."<sup>3</sup>

And as Baptism effects this, parents should be quick to gain it by Baptism for their children!

Supposing a parent with a blind boy hears that if he takes his boy to London he can gain something to his boy's advantage there. If he goes, he certainly does so with the idea that his boy will be benefitted in the way he needs—that is, as to his sight. But on going he finds that the gain does not consist in sight, but in having, with mystic incantations, some water dropped on the sightless eye-balls and

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II. p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 333.

<sup>3</sup> Page 26.

the boy's name then registered on a list along with those who can see! On asking, "What has my boy gained?" the reply is, "He is now outwardly on the ground of one who sees"! "But he cannot see! Miserable comforters are ye all!" that parent would exclaim; and, returning home with his boy, blind as ever, he would only be able to say, "What a farce!"

But it may be well to show by reference to "Letters" that J. N. D. considered Baptism as an "introduction" into the House:—

"My thought has always been to connect Baptism ecclesiastically with the House, one of the two characters of the assembly. As a general thing the House and the Kingdom now have the same limits, though not strictly, so that I have not made any difficulty about people saying it. But the ideas are quite different. I was not aware of having connected Baptism with the Kingdom."

"The Quakers, as to formal order, are not in the House; but that does not hinder the sovereign pleasure of God, as in the case of Cornelius—thereupon he was received. But Baptism is only the formal and orderly entrance into the place of privilege. The Hundred and Twenty were never baptized at all, that Scripture speaks of, and could not be."<sup>1</sup>

Needless to quote more—"only the formal and orderly entrance." As to "formal order," Quakers "are not in the House." Curious notion. Not in, and yet he seems compelled to admit that they are in! Exactly what I have sought to show, they dare not say that Quakers are not in the House. J. N. D. certainly did not dare to go that far. Then they were in the House and in the place of privilege, though not in as the result of "formal order." They had not come in by his door, yet they were in, and he has to own it. Nay, more, the Spirit could not be hindered by lack of this "formal order." Then one would like to know what they lost by the non-observance of it? The Spirit, not hindered, would He have been helped by it?

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 491.



How by J. N. D. Baptism is shorn of its teaching and place! reduced simply to a formal entrance into the House! Thus J. N. D. and S. M. A. wrote exactly on the same lines as Presbyterians long since (see "Confession of Faith" and "Catechisms") :—

"QUESTION: What is Baptism?

"ANSWER: Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, . . . whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church."<sup>1</sup>

Again :—

"Sacraments . . . put a visible difference between those that belong unto the church and the rest of the world."<sup>2</sup>

And to refer to one other sentence, with which S. M. A. is in exact agreement, showing the source of his notions :—

"Neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it, but upon the work of the Spirit and the word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers."<sup>3</sup>

Thus clearly do we see that no new thing is being taught, but the old error—Baptism turned aside to infants, for whom it was never intended. Then, as a necessity, robbed of its special meaning as applicable only to a believer, and changed into a "door," a "formal entrance"; and, no matter by whom it may be done, just as efficacious. And all this evil arises from the utterly false idea that Baptism is into a "kingdom," a "house," a "visible church," instead of its being "unto Christ," a symbol of death and resurrection.

R. T. HOPKINS.

<sup>1</sup> Larger Catechism.

<sup>2</sup> "Confession of Faith."

<sup>3</sup> "Of the Sacraments": Confession of Faith.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE TRIBE OF LEVI.

(Gen. xxix. 34, Gen. xxxiv. 25-30, Gen. xlix. 5-8.)

IN these verses we get an insight into Levi's character by nature. In Genesis xlix. Jacob has to say, "Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitation. O my soul, come not thou into their secret;<sup>1</sup> into their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel." As we read this we cannot but praise God for the grace which chose Levi's tribe out of the twelve tribes of Israel to be nearest and dearest to Him. There was no tribe so privileged as Levi. What a manifestation of God's grace do we behold in this! Humanly speaking, we might have thought that God would have chosen the tribe of Joseph, and brought them nigh, as the priestly tribe. But God passes by Joseph, and by Judah (the kingly tribe), and comes to Levi. In this we see the principle of God's grace. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1. Tim. i. 15). How our hearts ascend with thanksgiving to the God of matchless grace for saving such as we! How clearly does God's grace shine in the salvation of the perishing! We know that we never came to Christ of ourselves, nor had a single thought Godward. All that God has done for us, and has made us, and every thought of God, and every desire to live godly that we have, is from God. No flesh will ever glory in His presence, no flesh will ever be able to say, I had something to do with my salvation from hell, or with the earning of the glories that I have received.

<sup>1</sup> Secret in the sense of a secret conference.

Jacob said of Levi, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret conference." What a godless conference was theirs! Yet by grace God could bring them into His secret and into His assembly. This is what God has done for us. He in grace brings us into His thoughts, but He cannot come into our thoughts. Our thoughts and ways are not God's thoughts and ways. Naaman said, "Behold, I thought" (2. Kings 5). It was not for Naaman to think, and this he learned ere he left Samaria. There is no more room for a saint to think than for a sinner. We have just to come in childlike simplicity and take God's thoughts, and thus follow in the footsteps of our Lord, for He said, "I am come down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John vi. 38).

Jacob also said, "Instruments of cruelty are in their habitation." We look back to the time when we were "without Christ," when our all was laid at Satan's feet; to the time when we were devil-possessed (Eph. ii. 2). For the unsaved are not only led away by an influence, but Satan is working in them, as the Spirit of God is working in the believer; day by day they are being conformed to his image, and day by day they are ripening for hell. And as we look back we cannot help noticing how faithfully we served the "God of this age" (2 Cor. iv. 4), and are often led to exclaim, "I served Satan more faithfully than I am now serving God."

When God saved us, what a stoop for God! Never forget the stoop! What a stoop for grace, to lift such as we and bring us nearer to God than ever Levi was! What a stoop for grace when God saved a wretch like you and a wretch like me! Our members, which were instruments of unrighteousness, are now to be "presented to God as instruments of righteousness" (Rom. vi. 13). Here I would like to notice that it is left with us whether we "yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God," or

again dedicate them as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, therefore unto Satan.<sup>1</sup>

God says that we are not our own, for we are bought with a price.<sup>2</sup> Our members are not ours to use; they are to be laid on the altar as instruments of righteousness unto God, to be used by Him, and for Him, whose we are, through the precious blood of Christ.

In the light of this, let us ask ourselves the question, Am I an Ananias? am I a Sapphira?<sup>3</sup> Am I keeping back part of the price? Am I yielding my all to God? If not I am robbing God; I am taking from God what is His and using it for self and Satan. Assuredly there is no middle path; it is either the one or the other. May God help us to yield our all to Him.

Paul says, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."<sup>4</sup> And again, "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me."<sup>5</sup> This is the victorious life, the overcoming life. May it be ours, not only to have life in Christ, but thus to have Christ in life.

In Romans vi. 11 God bids us to reckon ourselves dead. God help us to see that we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God (Col. iii. 3).

What does the worldling live for? He lives for "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life."<sup>6</sup> That threefold temptation that laid Eve in the mire of sin. "She saw the tree that it was good for food (lust of the flesh), and that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eye), and that it was a tree to be desired to make one wise" (pride of life).<sup>7</sup> God says, "The whole world lieth in the wicked one" (1 John v. 19, R.V.)—cradled in the lap of Satan, rolling on to hell. All that is in it is not of the Father, but is of the world,<sup>8</sup> and he that is a friend

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vi. 12-17.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

<sup>3</sup> Acts v. 1-11.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. i. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. ii. 20, R.M.

<sup>6</sup> 1 John ii. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. iii. 6.

<sup>8</sup> 1 John ii. 16.

of it is an enemy of God.<sup>1</sup> We were once of the world,<sup>2</sup> but when God saved us He delivered us from it,<sup>3</sup> and sent us back into it to be a testimony for Him against its thoughts, works, and ways.<sup>4</sup> Once we grasp that we are dead God calls upon us to put to death the doings of the body.<sup>5</sup> While it is true that the flesh is in every child of God, the child of God is not to be in the flesh. Every manifestation of the flesh in us God would have us nip in the bud. Every temptation that comes should put us on our guard, lest that temptation feed the flesh, and there be the growth of sin unpruned by the pruning knife—the Word of God. Temptation in the sense of testing is a blessing to the child of God, for everything that tries a saint ripens and matures him, and the better fits him to stand for God. The temptation yielded to is where the sin comes in.

In Exodus xxxii. we find apostasy in the camp of Israel. Moses was forty days and nights in the mount.<sup>6</sup> The people had lost, as they thought, their leader, and they must have something to take his place. Notice in passing that the calf seems to be instead of Moses, and not instead of God. “Up, make us gods (marg. R.V., “a god”), which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him.”<sup>7</sup> Thus forgetting the one that was with God for them, and making a calf to take his place.

This condition of things is very common among God's people of to-day. There is one “whom having not seen we love,”<sup>8</sup> the “Captain of our salvation,”<sup>9</sup> “Faith's Princely Leader and Completer,”<sup>10</sup> (Rotherham's translation), who “now appears in the presence of God for us.”<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James iv. 4.<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 3.<sup>3</sup> Gal. i. 4.<sup>4</sup> John xvii. 18.<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii. 13, R.V.<sup>6</sup> Exod. xxiv. 18.<sup>7</sup> Exod. xxxii. 1-23.<sup>8</sup> 1 Peter i. 8.<sup>9</sup> Heb. ii. 10.<sup>10</sup> Heb. xii. 2.<sup>11</sup> Heb. ix. 24.

He is only visible to the eye of faith, and only known in His position there by those of the saved who keep His commandments.<sup>1</sup> Those who know Him as the One on the throne are saved by Him from the sin of ever putting a man in His place. But how many saints only know Him as the one who died for them, and fail to grasp that He lives for them, made of God their "High Priest" and the "Minister of the sanctuary,"<sup>2</sup> and through failing to grasp God's mind concerning Him as Lord and Christ,<sup>3</sup> they are found guilty of Israel's sin, gathered round some man-made ministry, and exclaiming of it, "These be thy ministers, O children of God!"

This apostasy in Israel was the time that God chose for proving Levi. Moses stood and cried, "Who is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.<sup>4</sup> Levi (meaning "joined," the tribe that was joined to Simeon in godlessness, whose wrath Jacob cursed) are now by grace joined to the Lord, and have their eyes so fixed on Him, and their hearts so true to Him, that they are prepared to take their stand with and for Him, and at His bidding gird their sword on their thigh and go in and out, from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his neighbour.<sup>5</sup>

In connection with this let us read Deuteronomy xxxiii. 8-12. In these verses we get Moses' estimate of Levi, and his prayer for them. "Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy Holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah." How God operated on the Urim and Thummim we know not, but through them He frequently revealed His will concerning Israel's people. They were placed inside the bag-shaped breast-plate that the High Priest wore (Exodus xxviii. 30). The word Urim means lights, and the word

<sup>1</sup> 1 John ii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. viii. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ii. 36.

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxxii. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xxxii. 27.

Thummim means perfections; so we can speak of them as the lights and perfections of Jehovah, finding their substance, for they were but shadows, now in the Word of God, "the Faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

J. CHARLETON STEEN.

(To be continued.)

## Department of Question and Answer.

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God."—*John vii. 17, R.V.*

QUESTION 40.—*In places where population is thin and the "gospel preaching" in the assembly not of the best, is it advisable to follow the common method of carrying on "gospel meetings" with invincible determination Sunday after Sunday all the year round? Might it not be well to try meetings only at intervals?*

Such questions as the above too often involve local contentions. Replies are therefore not easy, because of the mis-use that betimes is made thereof. However, to guard the truth and ourselves, we may say that the following is not a judgment on a given case, but an endeavour to point out the doctrine of the Lord affecting such work as "gospel meetings every Sunday all the year round." 1 Corinthians xv. 58 needs to be constantly remembered by the individual Christian (Acts xi. 20), as well as by the individual Assembly of God (1 Thess. i. 8).

Note well the words steadfast, immovable, abounding and always. If the labour be in the Lord, it is not in vain. Yet before labour can be IN, it must needs be OF, the Lord! It is good to have that exercise that causes an assuredly gathering that the Lord has called us to preach to those whom we seek to reach (Acts xvi. 10). Then, whether the people respond (as in Acts xiii. 42-44), or we find that we have no more place in these parts (Romans xv. 23), leaving us free to endeavour reaching the regions round about, in the consciousness that we are called to labour, and not to faint, like true husbandmen, having long patience and good hope for the *due* season's reaping-time,

"We shall work while the daytime lasteth,  
Ere the shades of night come on,  
Ere the Lord of the Harvest cometh,  
And the labourer's work be done."

JOHN BROWN.

QUESTION 41.—*Were those in every synagogue that believed on the Lord in the Church of God? Compare Acts xxii. 19, xxvi. 9, 11; 1 Corinthians xv. 9; Galatians i. 13. Did they while yet in the synagogues occupy the position of a God-gathered assembly?*

Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians xv. 9 and Galatians i. 13, "I persecuted the Church of God," carries us back to his unconverted days, of which Scripture first tells us in connection with the murder of Stephen (see Acts vii. 59 to viii. 3). "On that day there arose a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem. . . . Saul laid waste the church." Clearly then the Church of God persecuted by Saul (afterwards called Paul) was the church in Jerusalem. That Saul desired to extend his persecution to a larger sphere is perfectly clear from Acts ix. 1. That God peremptorily hindered him from so doing is equally evident from the verses which follow, and from the parallel passages. In particular we may point out the word "unto" in Acts xxvi. 11—not "in" but "unto" strange—*i.e.*, foreign—cities.

That these disciples who were in the Church of God in Jerusalem frequented the synagogues is manifest from the passages quoted in the Scriptures. Indeed, in the synagogues of Judæa, the holy Lord Himself read the God-breathed Scriptures, and, in much later days, Paul was therein to be found reasoning with the Jews (compare Acts xviii. 4-7 and Acts xix. 8, 9). As we read, they who were by God called out and in unto being Church of God still frequented the places where God's word had a place in the transition time of which the early parts of Acts especially tells; for word from the Lord as yet had not called for separation therefrom.

Whilst, however, clearly affirming that they who were in the Church of God in Jerusalem were to be found in the synagogues at this period, we do not by any means assert that all in the synagogues who had believed on the Lord Jesus were in the Church of God. At any rate, there were five hundred brethren who at one time saw the Lord after His resurrection, and these five hundred (to say nothing of the very many others who became believers during the Lord's own ministry on earth) could not all have been included in the God-gathered company when the number of the names was about a hundred and twenty. Moreover, we know of no Scripture specially telling us of the adding of those who were believers previously to the Day of Pentecost, and who were not included in that hundred and twenty.

C. M. LUXMOORE.



QUESTION 42. — *Please answer and give proof from Scripture as to whether the Church of God is in fragments or ruins, as taught by some.*

We read of many Churches of God in Scripture. First, of one in Jerusalem (see preceding answer). We read again of a Church of God in Corinth (1 Corinthians i. 2; 2 Corinthians i. 2). It was a company of persons called out by God (for the word translated Church means called out) and by God called into a fellowship of Jesus Christ, His Son, as Lord. Again, we read of the Churches of God (in the plural) in 1 Corinthians xi. 16. In all cases in which the expression "the Church of God" is used in Scripture it denotes a company of disciples in a town who have been called out by God and called in by God, who are where they are at His bidding, there to do His will. It is easy to test this statement by Scripture. A concordance may be taken, the word Church referred to, and then each several case where the Church of God is mentioned can be carefully looked into. One difficulty may occur. The reader may have been habitually taught to believe that the Church of God includes all believers on earth at once (which it never did), and putting this thought unconsciously into the Scriptures as he reads them, may be confused on that account. An earnest and prayerful effort must always be made never to get anything out of Scripture that is not in Scripture, to come to it as a learner seeking honestly to know what God teaches. So reading we shall get to apprehend what God does mean by Church of God, as well as what He does not mean.

And if one says to us, "The Church of God is in ruins," we shall say, "What Church of God is in ruins?" And perhaps, on further inquiry, shall find that he means that Christendom is a heap of ruins, as indeed in one sense Christendom is. But then Christendom is not the Church of God. Nor are born-again ones who are in Christendom the Church of God. Moreover, we may go farther, and point out that baptized believers may meet to break bread and exclude from their midst flagrant cases of false doctrine or evil living, and yet such are not necessarily Church of God—no, not even though they call themselves so, or are called so by others.

Happy is the man who hears God call him out and comes out; and doubly happy is he who, having come out, meets others who have also come out at the same call, and who are not only called, but who themselves call on the Lord out of a pure heart. With them may we do God's will, and seek to carry out the principles of the Church of God even to-day. And as to the ruins of Christendom, let them be. If we see God's children sitting among them, God grant us a word in season, and mayhap one who has sat down and wept by the rivers of Babylon may yet say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the House of the Lord."

C. M. LUXMOORE.

QUESTION 43.—*We hear constantly such expressions as : “On Thy broken body feeding” ; “Thy broken body, gracious Lord.” Is there any Scripture warrant for speaking of the Lord’s body as broken ?*

Probably 1 Corinthians xi. 24, “This is My body, which is broken for you,” would be adduced in support of the statement. However, the word broken is not to be found in the four best manuscripts (except by later hands) and is correctly omitted in the Revised Version text.

On the other hand, we read in John xix. 33, 36, “When they came to Jesus . . . they brake not His legs, . . . that the Scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of Him shall not be broken.”

C. M. LUXMOORE.

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## BAPTISM.

(Concluded from page 95.)

THE circumcision of Hebrew children is sometimes brought forward as a warrant for infant sprinkling; but, if looked at closely, circumcision gives it no support, for (1) there is no mention in the Word of sprinkling, or any other ceremony being substituted for it; (2) had it been so the Jews who were converted on the Day of Pentecost<sup>1</sup> would not have been baptized, for they must have already been circumcised; and (3) only males would be baptized.<sup>2</sup>

Some say that it was intended that baptism should not be continued any longer than Jewish prejudices made some such ceremony necessary. They have no authority in the Word for so saying. On the contrary, the command is to make disciples of all the nations,<sup>3</sup> baptizing them, etc. Now we know that (1) Jewish prejudices could not have had any influence in such a nation as Britain, for example, when Christ was first preached here; (2) that less than fifty years ago ALL the nations now known to us had not been reached with the Gospel; and (3) that the Jews are not

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xvii. 10, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19. Comp. Authorized margin and Revised Version.

known to some of the nations lately reached. Further, the Lord Jesus knew at that time all we know now, and His command was to disciple ALL the nations, baptizing them. Besides this, the epistles were written for our instruction until the Lord Jesus come again, and if it were intended that baptism should not be administered beyond a certain time, we should have found it so stated in the epistles.

Others say that the only baptism needed is the baptism in the Holy Spirit; but in Acts we find the fact that believers had already received the Holy Spirit presented as a reason why they should be baptized in water in obedience to the commandment of the Lord Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Receiving the Holy Spirit and being baptized in water mark two distinct epochs in the believer's career.

It is worthy of notice that the word "baptize" is derived from the Greek βαπτίζω (baptizō), "I dip"; and, further, that the *English* "revisers" place after the word "baptize," wherever it occurs in the Revised Version,<sup>2</sup> the word "with" in the text, adding "or IN" in the margin, while the *American* committee prefer that the marginal "IN" and the text "with" exchange places.<sup>3</sup>

When all other holds have been cut away we are frequently met with some such remark as, "If baptism is to be carried out so strictly according to the letter, you ought to baptize in a river, and not in a tank." But this, the last strand of a rotten rope, is worthless too, for we know that the habits of the Romans rendered frequent bathing necessary. Therefore, while it is very unlikely that there was a river running through the jail at Philippi,<sup>4</sup> it is also

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 47, 48, xi. 15-17.

<sup>2</sup> See R.V. of New Testament wherever the word "baptize" is found.

<sup>3</sup> See "List of Readings and Renderings preferred by the American Committee," under heading "Classes of Passages," No. IX.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xvi. 38.

very unlikely that there was *not* a bath in the jailor's house.

As far as I can learn, no other baptism than complete immersion was known during the first centuries. The same baptism was carried on right down the ages by different companies of men who were bold enough to discountenance Papal supremacy and Church tradition. But even if these things were not known, there is only one form of procedure described as baptism in Scripture, which is clearly immersion in water, performed by those who are Christians on those who confess Christ.

Persons who have undergone a different ceremony, whether it be sprinkling or any other,<sup>1</sup> instead of immersion, are not baptized, and are liable to the charge of putting the traditions of men before the Word of God, and of discountenancing the commandment of the Lord, the acts of His apostles, and the epistles written by them.<sup>2</sup>

In this matter of baptism the Devil gets in the thin edge of the wedge of unbelief in God's Word and consequent disobedience. Was it not in this same way that he separated our first parents from God?<sup>3</sup> Let us therefore be watchful, for who is there who dares to say that baptism is unnecessary who would not also say, if it pleased his taste, that any other commandment of the Lord, or teaching and example of His apostles, is now equally null and void?<sup>4</sup> Yet there are those who, although really believers, are wilfully disobedient in this matter, and thus grieve the Holy Spirit, who was given in order to "guide them into ALL THE TRUTH." Alas that brethren should act thus toward Him who loves us so!<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Acts xix. 3-5.

<sup>2</sup> See John xiv. 15, and comp. Matt. v. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. iii. 1-5.

<sup>4</sup> See 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.

<sup>5</sup> John xv. 13; Rom. v. 8.

## PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

(Continued from page 141.)

WE come now to the question: "On what principle should we act when an assembly becomes manifestly such that we can have no fellowship with it?" Any reply to this, within the limits of one article, must necessarily be brief and far from satisfactory, so many and grievous are the misapprehensions with which "Open Brethrenism" has beclouded the minds of its adherents on the whole subject under discussion.

At the very outset we are met with the cry, "There is no Scripture for excommunicating an assembly!" Or, again, "The Lord only can put an assembly out of fellowship!"

Has there ever been a time when Christians gathered into the Name of the Lord Jesus had any real doubt concerning the necessity of deciding on the united non-recognition of an assembly? Have not assemblies been declared such that others could neither commend to nor receive from them over and over again within the last sixty years? Do we not know the names of the men who have taken part in such acts of cutting-off?

If we believed that there is no Scripture for the united non-recognition of an assembly, this alone would put us outside of even such fellowship as exists among "Open Brethren." For, in some of our great cities, we should have to identify ourselves with a little meeting, from which all who desired to hold the Word and not deny the Name of the Lord were obliged to separate themselves long ago, but which, nevertheless, is the original assembly in the city. Indeed, we do not see how a consistent man, holding this principle, could rest anywhere short of an entrance into the Romish communion.

Do those who speak of having "no Scripture for excom-

communicating an assembly" mean that, in an assembly composed of an hundred and three persons, the hundred may, scripturally, put away from among them the three, if the said three have become worthy of excommunication; while, if the latter take the precaution of starting a meeting for the breaking of bread on their own account, we may not, on any account, refuse them fellowship?

Or do they wish us to believe that, while God has provided against an individual going on unhindered in his sin, or his self-will, or anything else that is "contrary to the doctrine," yet, if the evil is on a larger scale, and is condoned or justified by an assembly, He has left us without authority or power to cease fellowship with such an assembly?

Men have held up hands of indignant remonstrance when we have referred to such teaching as "straining out the gnat and swallowing down the camel." But, in truth and soberness, can one call it anything else?

It has been said that "the Lord only can put away an assembly." Do those who speak thus suppose that any two Christians can originate an assembly, but that it takes a special divine interposition, amounting to something like a miracle, before those who call upon the Name of the Lord would be justified in ceasing fellowship with it after it is originated? When will men learn that the Lord only can "add together those who are being saved"? The Lord only can remove an assembly! Be it so. But the Lord only can gather one if it is to be an assembly of God! And, whether He receives in or casts out, He is wont to act in such a manner that His disciples, who are responsible to bind or loose according as the Heavens have bound or loosed, may find it possible to do so.

Who, then, are immediately responsible to deal with an assembly, and, if needs be, to warn the saints to have no further fellowship with it?

Would not the analogy of the Faith lead us to the conclusion that the leading men among the brethren in the district,—who have watched the rise and progress of evil in that assembly—who have had the responsibility and opportunity of endeavouring to stem it at its earlier stages, who know the men and the circumstances connected with it, are the persons who ought to arrive at a decision concerning the impossibility of going on with it any longer? Is not the individual evil-doer “put away” by those who occupy a similar position with reference to *him*? And is not the local assembly a unit among the assemblies of the province, just as the individual is a unit in the assembly of which he forms part?

Has not the practice during the past been to avoid an assembly wherein there was trouble, until the trouble culminated in an open rupture, and there were two companies in the same town who had no fellowship with each other? Thereupon has it not been usual for other assemblies to bestir themselves and invite well-known brethren to come from a distance and decide on the rival claims of the opposing parties? Or again: has not one “of those who seemed to be somewhat” been known to ask a few others to sit on such a case? Could the men who were thus called together be said to form any circle which is recognised in the Word of God? Is it not much more likely that they might, unconsciously, become what is vulgarly called a “packed jury”?

Alas! however glaring the need of separation from a lawless company, and by whatever circle of overseeing men their united non-recognition has been decided on, can our readers recall even *one* case in which this decision has been faithfully adhered to and carried out?

A. P. MACDONALD.

(To be concluded, God willing, in our next.)

## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

*(Continued from page 153.)*

## IV. PAUL NOT SENT TO BAPTIZE.

“FOR Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.”<sup>1</sup>

This verse is constantly brought forward in these “Letters” and also by the other writers. In order that the reader may be in a position to judge the reason for this, it may be well to give a few extracts.

“Clearer views so set one on Paul’s ground—that he was not sent to baptize—and sets it in the background, that we lose our intelligent place when we propagate it.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus, by the word “it,” he would have his correspondent believe that Paul put Baptism in the background, and did not propagate IT; but the passage when read carefully teaches nothing of the kind.

The assertion made by Paul was, that he was not sent to baptize, to carry out the act HIMSELF; and no reference whatever is made to Baptism as such.<sup>3</sup>

“I have no doubt that each one ought to be baptized; but it is not the less true that it formed no part of the mission of Paul. . . . I believe that God intended to leave Baptism in the shade. The twelve were sent to baptize the nations. Paul was not sent to baptize. The ordinance has not been abrogated; and if any one believes he has not been baptized, he ought to be.”<sup>4</sup>

“Paul was not sent to baptize—the twelve were to baptize the Gentiles—but Baptism was accepted by Paul as already instituted.”<sup>5</sup>

Well might one ask: Why all this assertion? “God intended to leave Baptism in the shade.” Intended! Has He done so? What a curious idea to have concerning anything God-given! “In the shade!” Yet not “abrogated”;

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 17.<sup>2</sup> “Letters,” Vol. II. p. 327.<sup>3</sup> Compare John iv. 1: “Jesus . . . baptized . . . disciples, . . . though Jesus HIMSELF baptized not, but His disciples.”—ED.<sup>4</sup> “Letters,” Vol. II. p. 175.<sup>5</sup> Vol. III. p. 467.



and Paul accepted it as an "institution"! Whose institution? If thus forced to admit that Baptism was instituted and not abrogated, why this dwelling upon Paul's mission? "It formed no part of Paul's mission." True, if by *it* he means the act of baptizing; not true, if in any way he uses it as to teaching Baptism.

"For Christ," etc. The word "for" indicates the connection, and at the same time points out Paul's reason for thankfulness that he had not baptized many in Corinth. Baptism gains nothing from the one who baptizes, but in Corinth might have lost if Paul after baptizing the first-fruits had continued to baptize, instead of leaving it to others. "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"<sup>1</sup> is a question pointing out where he saw danger, and avoided it. If he had continued to be the one to baptize every one who believed, there might have been a tendency to say, "I am of Paul." He was thankful that he had not done so. The same principle, though not stated in so many words, was acted upon by Peter when preaching to the Gentiles for the first time. He preached, but when they had believed, instead of baptizing them himself, we read: "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

An apostle could add nothing to it; he might possibly in the thoughts of others take from it, by their giving him a wrong place. When in Corinth the principle at work was the exaltation of man and his place and work, Paul rejoiced that he had, in the act of baptizing, kept himself out of sight. A lesson needed to be learned, and, what is more *practised*, still. Let the evangelist take it to heart. Has he baptized the "first-fruits"? Then let others baptize, and thus no one in particular will figure in connection with it. He will, in so doing, prevent it from being looked upon as a ministerial act.

But, while it is important to learn this from the verse, it

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Acts x. 48.

is well to see that Paul does not in the smallest way by his words weaken the truth of Believers' Baptism, nor does he make light of it. Far from it. But, on the other hand, he connects with this statement several facts worth remembering.

Be it remembered that Paul had himself been baptized<sup>1</sup>; and had baptized others, apart from these in Corinth: Lydia at Philippi<sup>2</sup> and the jailer.<sup>3</sup> He preached the Gospel, and baptized, and taught the truth that is conveyed by it.<sup>4</sup> This being so, how can any one assume from these words that Paul made light of Baptism, or had risen into a higher sphere away from it? He had baptized the Jews at the outset, and his not baptizing more was in wisdom that he might by his acts teach. A most essential part of his teaching! By thus acting he deprived any from thinking or saying that Baptism was an act to be confined to an apostle or an evangelist; as he also prevented them from making him their centre, or being the more ready to do it. To such a question as "Have you been baptized since you believed?" it is no answer to say, "Oh! Paul was not sent to baptize," for such a reply confounds the act of baptizing with the teaching concerning it, and would make the words teach that which is false.

"Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." Acts xviii. 8 witnesses to the fact that Paul not only preached the Gospel, but spoke of Baptism as well. And he so spoke and wrote concerning it as to clearly establish the fact that it was only for the believer. The main thing was to make disciples; baptizing them was subordinate to that.<sup>5</sup> The apostle, therefore, thus writes in 1 Corinthians i. It may be a wonder to those who exalt the baptizing into a position God never gave it, and make it a part of that by which the sinner obtains life and

<sup>1</sup> Acts ix. 18.<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 15.<sup>3</sup> Acts xvi. 33.<sup>4</sup> Rom. vi., etc.<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.

forgiveness; but it is none to one who exalts the Saviour, and who rejoices in salvation as the result of Christ's finished work brought home to the heart by faith. Baptism does not bring into a position. It does not take the one who submits to it out of one circle and introduce him into another. Baptism leaves a person where it finds him. If a sinner, deceiving himself, is baptized (never having believed), he is a sinner still; he is in no circle, he is in no place of privilege, or responsibility, not occupied before. Such teaching is the result of exalting Baptism into a Sacrament. It results from the utterly false notion that it brings into a "House" or into "the Kingdom." Nowhere in Scripture can such a thing be found. Baptism is unto Him as Lord, not into a position.

Let this be clearly seen. Then we shall not, on the one hand, exalt, nor, on the other, weaken the truth of Baptism or the place it occupies in the Word. Nay, more, we shall be delivered at once from the false teaching of Infant or Household Baptism. It was by turning Baptism and the Lord's Supper into external rites, and making them Sacraments in the hands of a human priesthood or clergy, that men in early days drew away the disciples after themselves. This Scripture should prevent us from this, and also hinder us from neglecting or undervaluing the privilege of Believers' Baptism.

Paul negatives the thought that he was sent to baptize. Very different thing to what has been sought to be taken from the words. Not to baptize would be one thing; not to instruct disciples as to Baptism quite another. Not to do the former was wisdom, and, under God's guidance, he refrained from being the baptizing one during the eighteen months of his stay in Corinth and work there. Not to do the latter would have been positive disobedience to a command, and to have left the believers ignorant of that which it behoved them to do, as well as ignorant of that precious truth which it conveys.

Paul himself baptized, and never kept back the truth of Believers' Baptism from others. He taught it, and, by baptizing some, he enabled them to be obedient to it, and they, in their turn, could baptize those who followed.

Baptism was as much for those who had been of Israel as for those who were not. For Paul himself, and therefore he was baptized, as for believers at Corinth. Ananias taught him the privilege and responsibility of being baptized, as he taught others after that where he went. It is a small matter who was the baptizer. Paul was not *sent* to be so constantly, but, while asserting this, he never states that he was not sent to teach Baptism or any other truth of God. Strange that the ones who quote this verse in the present day do so to those who hold and teach Believers' Baptism, with evident intention to weaken their belief in it, or in the necessity for it now; yet those thus using it are holding and practising what is called Household Baptism. Because of that it is necessary to call special attention to what the apostle *did not say*, as well as to point out what he *did say*, so that young Christians may see clearly how the Scripture is misapplied, and be on their guard against accepting the wrong use of it.

The object of this paper is not to teach in connection with Baptism. It is not for the purpose of showing for whom Baptism alone is intended; but to recover this particular passage from a wrong use. The tendency is ever to decline to mere forms, ordinances, and rites, and, worse, to urge them as needful for infants. Thus the "mixed multitude" is brought in, and divine testimony is corrupted. Baptism, kept in the place given to it by God in His Word, concerns the believer only, and believers are to be entirely separated from the world; but when Baptism is taken out from that circle and applied in the world, then those who do it are already in the adversary's toils, and are with rude hands touching and marring the things of God.

It is a distinct gain, when we read such a verse as this in its proper connection, and do not, by a misconception, bring out of it what it does not convey. The only assertion made is that Paul was NOT SENT to baptize, and in no way does the statement lower the place Baptism occupies, nor does it weaken the obligation of the believer to be baptized. It gives no warrant whatever for the attempt to make Paul's mission so much higher than that of Peter and John. The Spirit of God used each of them in their ministry for Christ on earth, and, while He gave them different aspects of truth to minister by their writings, He never led Paul to make light of Baptism nor to put it in "the shade." Scripture does not in any way convey the thought that Paul acted differently from John and Peter in the matter of Baptism. Because Paul was chosen to reveal the precious truths concerning the One Body,<sup>1</sup> no one is justified in saying that he did so act. J. N. D. was bound to admit that Baptism was not abrogated. Then Paul received it, and he taught it. Would he have done so without authority? And was that authority found by him as by others, and by ourselves, in Matthew xxviii.? To say that it was not abrogated is to admit all; for then it must have been instituted by the Lord to be observed, and to be observed as fully by Paul as by any other one.

When distinctions were made in "A Voice to the Faithful,"<sup>2</sup> in connection with "the Bride," and an attempt was made to show (a miserable failure) that it was John's line of things, and not Paul's, J. N. D. could write with vigour against it.

"My objection to what I have read is this: generalizations as to divine teaching in Scripture are drawn from slight expressions without any adequate examination of the word, and consequently, when sifted, found sometimes very imperfect and misleading, sometimes wholly false."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. XIII., etc.

<sup>3</sup> "Letters," Vol. III. p. 449.

He then proceeded in his sifting to show how false these deductions were, and that Paul did bring out the true and proper affections of the Bride. Wholesome words follow, and, seeing that they apply with as much force in this connection, I give them.

I would only add that pretending to be Philadelphia is quite another thing from being Philadelphian, and tends directly to Laodiceanism of heart.

“May the saints be kept in the simplicity that is in Christ. Assuredly I can have no wish to weaken true devotedness to Christ, Christ being all, which only is life; but I have not found this the effect of this teaching, but rather filling people with the thoughts of themselves and the wonderful new things they had got—not a self-judging knowledge of Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

Let these words be remembered in connection with these unscriptural distinctions as to Paul and Baptism. And in view of the fact that it was given to, and observed by, Paul as much as by Peter and John, may we be saved from making such distinctions to our own loss and to the obscuring of Truth for others.

It must be evident as we consider the references to Paul's words in 1 Corinthians i. that they are misapplied, and that this is done (perhaps unwittingly) with the object of making persons think lightly of Believers' Baptism; and in that consists the distinct wrong done by those who have introduced them into the question.

*(To be continued.)*

## THOUGHTS FROM THE TRIBE OF LEVI.

*(Continued from page 159).*

God by grace brought Levi nigh; but before God by grace brought Levi nigh, God in grace proved Levi, and Levi was found true to God. Levi was the one in the day of apostasy, at the bidding of God, to buckle his sword on

<sup>1</sup> “Letters,” Vol. III. p. 451.

his thigh, and to shout, "We are on the Lord's side."<sup>1</sup> Levi was the one who could say, "I love the Lord better than father or mother, wife or child; there is no earthly tie so near and dear to me as the Lord Himself, and at His bidding I am willing to forsake all." Moses might have said, "Levi, you do not know what it means to be on the Lord's side; it means that you are to stand, if need be, alone for God, and to smite at His bidding your nearest and dearest." Yet Levi was true to Jehovah's claims, and of Levi at this time God says, "They observed My word, and kept My covenant."<sup>2</sup>

God has a proving time in every believer's life; and if by grace he goes through the ordeal, God will bless him abundantly. But how few stand the test! The "still small voice" in the heart of the believer says, "Christ is Lord." That still small voice says, "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"<sup>3</sup> God by His Word may be saying to some here, "Why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized."<sup>4</sup> This may be like the girding of the sword on Levi's thigh, like the proving of Levi ere God entrusted him with His Urim and His Thummim.

How often many of God's children shout:

"By Thy grand redemption,  
By Thy grace Divine;  
We are on the Lord's side,  
Saviour, we are Thine"!

How idle are their words! for when God applies His test, puts forward His claims, they have no desire to do His will, and God's Urim and Thummim is never with them, for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him,"<sup>5</sup> and it is only to those who have a desire to do His will that He promises a knowledge of the teaching.<sup>6</sup> God help you and me to stand His testing times.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxxii. 26-30.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Luke vi. 46.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xxii. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xxv. 14.

<sup>6</sup> John vii. 17.

Our weapons are not like Levi's, they are not carnal; "for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."<sup>1</sup> These are our weapons. Are we willing to gird them on? Are we willing to take "the sword of the Spirit"?<sup>2</sup> If so, let us remember that it is "two-edged"<sup>3</sup>—it must first put to death the one who would wield it, before it ever puts any one to death through him.

Levi put God first, Jehovah and His claims were uppermost in Levi's heart. How different from Abraham in Haran! He put Terah, his father, before "the God of the Glory" that appeared unto him, and Terah kept him from obeying God. How important it is for us to examine ourselves day by day, and see if there is a Terah in our lives; and as we examine ourselves let us remember that the thoughts and intents of the heart "are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."<sup>4</sup> He reads the heart, He knows whether a father or a mother, a husband, wife, or child, a chapel, a minister, or any other earthly tie or circumstance, has the place in our lives that His Son should have as Lord. His Son is our Head, "the First-born from among the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence."<sup>5</sup> God help us ever to have a heart so constrained by love to Him that in all things we will put Him and His claims first, and thus enable us ever to be in that attitude of soul which finds its expression in the words:

"Lead on, lead on triumphantly,  
O blessed Lord, lead on;  
Faith's pilgrim sons behind Thee seek  
The road that Thou hast gone."

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. vi. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. iv. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. iv. 12, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Col. i. 18.



How those verses in Deuteronomy xxxiii. 8-12 remind us of the word of our God, "Them that honour Me I will honour."<sup>1</sup> The believer, no matter what his position is here below, that has a heart for God's Christ, as Lord, is the one to whom God is able to teach His judgments and His laws, and thus to bless him and make him a blessing. What a happy life! What a useful life! What a power for God is such a life! This life is within the reach of every child of God, if he only, Levi like, puts God first, and is found with a holy determination, at the cost of severing, if need be, every earthly tie, to deny self, take up the cross, and follow Christ.<sup>2</sup>

In closing, let us look for a little at Levi's service as we have it recorded in Numbers iii. 5-10. I want you to notice, in the first place, that their service was in connection with the Tabernacle, God's first dwelling-place on earth.<sup>3</sup> So godly service now, service which is according to His mind and will, service which will profit and please Him and bring the labourer reward, is in connection with God's house; having for its end the bringing of men "into the unity of the faith,"<sup>4</sup> and the up-building and establishing of God's house on earth. This reveals to us the deep necessity of being found, and that intelligently, in "House of God," Church of living God (which ever is), pillar and basement (*i.e.*, firm foundation) of the truth.<sup>5</sup> The sooner saints see that God has now a dwelling-place on earth, as really and truly as He had one in the past, and into which at His bidding He would have every child of His intelligently brought (the pattern of which will be found as carefully mapped out in "the New Testament" as was the pattern of the Tabernacle in the Old), the better for themselves; for seeing the will of God concerning His House, and being found in it, will place them in a position in which

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xvi. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xxv. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. iv.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15.

they can, and in which only they can, acceptably worship and serve God.

Notice, in the second place, Levi's service, that it was ordered by Aaron, and under his eye. Aaron was a type of Christ in His priestly character; Levi was a type of the believer. We, being brought to God through the blood of Christ, have a work to do, which is ordered of the Lord, and, if wrought out, must be wrought out under His eye. We are so prone to have our service of man and under his eye that it is well for us to examine ourselves in the presence of God, and see how much we are receiving from Him and working out under the eye of our Aaron. In 1 Corinthians xv. 58 we read, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." We often sing, "There's a work for you and a work for me," but there is truly a work which God speaks of as a "work of the Lord"; and our labour in the carrying of it out is to be "in the Lord." Again, in Colossians iv. 17, God calls upon Archippus to take heed to the ministry which he had received in the Lord, that he might fulfil it. From the Scriptures we find that there is a work for every child of God who owns the Lordship of Christ to do. It is spoken of as the "work of the Lord," clearly teaching that it is not in man, nor of man, nor from man, but that it is *in* the Lord, and *from* the Lord, and *of* the Lord. And if we would enter it we are commanded to be stedfast, immovable, always abounding in it, forasmuch as we know that it is not in vain, if we work it out "in the Lord."

If we grasp that godly service is in connection with God's house, over which Christ is Son,<sup>1</sup> that it is "of the Lord" and must be fulfilled "in the Lord," we will be saved from being tossed about with every manner of religious service, and will be able to discern the true and

<sup>1</sup> Heb. iii. 6, R.V.

godly from the base counterfeit of Satan, and will be preserved stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the Lord's work, and will not be found spending our substance for nought; for all service we seek to do we will see that the Lord has the control of it, that it is all most clearly defined in His word as a service He would have us do.

The very nature of this service will shut us in with, as "yoke-fellows in service," those who are like-minded with ourselves; for any fellowship we have in the work of the Lord must be in keeping with the work, therefore must be "of the Lord." In 1 Corinthians iii. 5-10 we have a lovely picture of what "labourers together of God" are—viz., Paul plants, and Apollos waters what he plants,—waters it unto its abiding, growing and being fruitful—with as much care as if it had been of his own planting. This is ever the characteristic of godly fellowship in the Lord's work. May God give us grace to shun every fellowship in service that will not stand this test.

From this time forth may it be your portion and mine to go on the more devotedly with the Lord, being the more obedient to His every claim, earnestly contending for the Faith once for all delivered unto the saints, and building ourselves up thereon, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

J. C. STEEN.

(*To be continued.*)

## REMINISCENCES OF OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

### BEFORE THE MAGISTRATES.

I WAS staying in Brighton. A short time previous to this visit there had been some stir in the town on account of the authorities trying to stop preaching on the beach, and in some measure succeeding. Preaching on the beach at this

time was not popular or respectable. I might have chosen the beach as a place to preach the Gospel, but not being desirous to come into collision with these gentlemen, I thought it wiser to seek some quieter place. Accordingly, I found a small street in a rather populous district among the poor, remembering the scripture: "To the poor the gospel is preached." It being right away from vehicular traffic, and there being few passengers, I concluded there could be no objection; but I had scarcely begun preaching before a policeman marched up to me and bade me "shut my mouth" and "move off." I told him if I was causing any obstruction or hindering persons passing I would immediately desist and go elsewhere; but reasoning with this gentleman was quite out of the question. "Preaching was not allowed, and they intended stopping it." Then, after a few personal remarks of not a very complimentary character, he walked away. Those who had gathered round pressed me to continue, as I was causing no obstruction, and a person offered me his doorstep. As it was a few yards farther back, I accepted his kind offer. But before I had even begun to address the people the same policeman returned, violently pushed me off from my doorstep pulpit, and began twisting me round and round and roughly forcing me along the street, so that at times I found it exceedingly difficult to maintain my equilibrium. As he continued this rough treatment for some time, it created no little stir in the neighbourhood, and drew an increasing crowd. This brought another policeman on the scene, and I soon saw they intended to "*run me in*" to the police-station. While I was thus being roughly handled and pushed about, I saw a little way off an inspector. So I made my way to him, and explained matters as well as I could. But it was like the old saying: I got out of the frying-pan into the fire. This superior officer covered me with abusive epithets, pushing me and twirling me round and round, just like a boy would his spinning-top. Then the

peremptory command was given to his two men to take me off to the station. Immediately I was laid hold of by the arms, and a third policeman followed me behind. Of course, I wanted to walk quietly and orderly; but this did not seem to satisfy the vicious propensities of my three guardians. They kept pushing me on one side, then on the other, the men on each side of me grasping my arms so tightly that they became painful to the extreme; while the third man behind me kept boring his knuckles into my back, just like a carpenter would use a gimlet or screw-driver, my weak, fragile body making me an easy tool for their cruel sport. Still, I trust the Lord gave me grace to bear all this patiently and cheerfully.

As soon as we reached the station, it being almost dark, one of the policemen gave me a push inside, and, flinging my small banner, which they had taken from me, on to the stone floor, said, "We'll stop your preaching here." Here my name and address were taken down; and the person who entered the charge, finding I was staying with a well-known business man in the town, suggested I might be allowed to leave. A few days after this, while at breakfast, a policeman was ushered into the room, and handed me a summons, and the following morning I had to appear in court. It became known, and the place was crowded with sympathising friends. I soon saw the magistrates and officials were dead against me. The inspector who had so violently assaulted me was, of course, the chief witness against me. His statement was a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end. He denied he swore at me, or even touched me; and, while I was giving my evidence and asking this official questions, the policeman who stood behind me in the dock kept pinching the calf of my legs in a most inhuman way. I knew it was no good to report him. He would evidently have denied it; and I expect he hoped I should have kicked him, but grace had taught me to use a more powerful

weapon. So while he kept pinching me I kept praying for him. While I was giving my evidence I quietly unfolded my banner, and, turning an entire circle round, exhibited it to the whole court, giving them plenty of time to read it. Of course I was fined; but a friend would pay it, so I passed out of the court free, and in the report given in the paper on the following morning appeared the text which was on my banner: "REPENT YE, THEREFORE, AND BE CONVERTED."

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## NOTES FROM NEANDER.

### III. FORMATION OF A SACERDOTAL CASTE.

"THE Greek words *κλήρος*, *κληρικοί*,<sup>1</sup> had, it is true, as early as Cyprian's time, had grafted on them the unevangelical sense of persons pre-eminently consecrated to God, like the Levites of the Old Testament—men employed on the affairs of religion to the exclusion of all earthly concerns, and who did not, like others, gain their livelihood by worldly employments, but who, for the very reason that in order to benefit others they had their conversation with God alone, were supported by the rest, in the same manner as the Levites, in the division of the lands, had no portion assigned them, but had the Lord for their inheritance, and received tithes from the rest in return for their care of the public worship. . . . This notion now of a peculiar people of God (α *κλήρος τοῦ θεοῦ*),<sup>2</sup> applied distinctively to a particular order of men among the Christians, is wholly foreign to the original Christian mind. For, according to this, all Christians should be a people consecrated to God, α *κλήρος τοῦ θεοῦ*,<sup>2</sup> and even all their earthly callings ought to be sanctified by the temper in which they are dis-

<sup>1</sup> Klēros, klērikoī: allotted portions, from which is derived the word "clergy." Cf. 1 Pet. v. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Klēros tou Theou: God's clergy.

charged. Their whole life and conduct bearing one continual reference to Christ, . . . should hence become a consecrated thankoffering and a spiritual service (*α λογικῆ λατρεία*<sup>1</sup>). Such was the original evangelical idea. It may be questioned, however, whether that other notion, so much at variance with the primitive Christian idea, was actually associated from the first with the appellation *κληρικοί* as applied to the clergy. If we trace the history of its usage, it becomes much more probable that this sense was brought into the word at some later period, when a change had taken place in the Christian mode of thinking, and the original sense was forgotten. The word *κλήρος* signified originally the place in the church which by God's providence had been allotted to each." . . .

"At first, those who held offices in the church continued, in all probability, to exercise their former trades and occupations for the support of themselves and their families. The several communities, composed for the most part of poor members, would scarcely be able to provide for their presbyters and deacons, especially as they had from the first so many other demands on the church chest—the support, viz., of helpless widows and orphans, of the poor and the sick. . . . As the presbyters, or bishops, were to be patterns to other Christians of hospitality, this also implies that they belonged to the better class, of whom the number was small in the first communities; and how could such persons be induced to support themselves on the scanty earnings of the poor? The Apostle Paul does, indeed, declare that travelling preachers of the Gospel are warranted in expecting that those for whose spiritual necessities they laboured should provide for their bodily wants; but it cannot be inferred from this that the case was the same with regard to the local officers of the churches. It would be difficult for the former to unite the

<sup>1</sup> *Logikē latreia* : reasonable religious service (Rom. xii. 1).

labours necessary for their own maintenance with the duties of their spiritual calling, although the self-denial of a Paul rendered this also possible. The local officers, on the contrary, might easily unite the labours necessary for their maintenance with the discharge of their official functions. . . . But when the communities grew larger, and the duties of church officers increased, . . . when the calling of the spiritual class, if rightly discharged, required all their time and exertions, it became often impossible for them to provide, at the same time, for their own support; and besides, the wealthier communities were now in a condition to maintain them." . . .

"When the idea of the universal Christian priesthood was more and more lost sight of, that of the priestly consecration of the whole life, which was enjoined on all Christians, was also forgotten. As, in contradiction to the original Christian consciousness, a distinction had been drawn between a particular priesthood and the universal and ordinary calling of all Christians, so they now contrasted with each other a spiritual and a secular province of life and action; notwithstanding Christ had exalted the *entire* earthly existence to a spiritual life. And from this view of the matter it would seem that it was deemed necessary to forbid the priestly clergy . . . to have any contact with the world and the things of the world. We have, then, here the germ out of which sprang at length the mediæval view of the priesthood, with its law of celibacy. But by this outward removal of secular things a worldly spirit could not be charmed away from the clergy, nor the sense for divine things awakened in them. This external renunciation of the world was only too likely to introduce into the heart a spiritual pride, hiding the worldly mind under this mask."



## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

*(Continued from page 174.)*

## V. THE COMMISSION.

To compare the writings of John, Peter and Paul that we may learn in the things of God, is one thing; but to do so for the purpose of disparaging John and Peter, or the other Apostles, and exalting Paul, is offensive because unscriptural. For that reason it was important to show that Paul's words, 1 Corinthians i. 17, were wrongly applied. It is also needful to show that he must, in regard to Baptism, have acted upon the same commission as the Twelve, or else have acted apart from one altogether. Scripture certainly does not contain any warrant but the one, Matthew xxviii, Mark xvi., and on that one Paul, equally with others, was baptized, and then he baptized others at Corinth, as elsewhere.

The upholding of Infant Baptism seems to necessitate on the part of these writers the denial that we have a command in connection with Baptism. For if there is one, it certainly is for believers, and for them only; therefore the effort made to reduce Baptism to "a form," "a christening," "an introduction to the public body," and also to deny the command.

Thus J. N. D. :—

"I see the twelve sent to baptize, but not Paul. It is an external but beautiful ceremony which all received evidently underwent, though there was no commandment to baptize Jews."<sup>1</sup>

"The only direction you have to baptize is Matthew xxviii., but this was from resurrection, not from ascension, and only Gentiles."<sup>2</sup>

Nothing could be plainer than this. J. N. D. held and taught that Matthew xxviii. was the only command; yet not for Jews, but for Gentiles. But, while so positive as to this, he never seeks to explain why Peter, a few weeks

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 558.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 233.

after this commission was given, baptized on the Day of Pentecost, JEWS ONLY! Mark the words: only one commission—for Gentiles only—not Jews. These statements raise the whole question, and that is whether, in the face of the Baptism of the three thousand, etc., J. N. D. was correct in thus writing? I would say, Clearly not. Peter was one of those who were addressed, Matthew xxviii., and on the first day (as Scripture records) that he preached at Jerusalem, when Jews from many nations<sup>1</sup> were present, he also spoke of Baptism, and they were baptized.

To revert to "The Letters":—

"Next remark, that they had no direction to baptize *at all*, save the commission in Matthew (though at the same time that was only to the Gentiles); but as none other is given, I always use that of Matthew."<sup>2</sup>

Samaritans as well as Jews were baptized—thousands before one Gentile. Passing strange if J. N. D. were correct in saying, "No command for Jews," but for Gentiles only! It is in reality no more true than when he writes that there is no command to the believer. W. Kelly, writing at a time when linked with J. N. D. in service, etc., says:—

"Remark the absurdity of making this the only commission to baptize. For on the face of it, either Mark xvi. warranted Peter and the rest to baptize the Jews, or the Apostles baptized them without any commission whatever from the Lord."<sup>3</sup>

The tract in question contained such false doctrine, as to faith following Baptism in every instance, that it had to be withdrawn. But the writer was evidently led into it by the subtle reasonings of others. It is most dangerous and unscriptural to state that the Apostles had no commission to baptize Jews when they did so, and it is coupled with the absurd inconsistency of approving the action. Yet could it be approved unless based on a command given?

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 5, etc.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters," Vol. I. p. 497.

<sup>3</sup> "Examination of a Tract," p. 3.

So also to say that there is a command to the baptizer, not to the baptized, is most mischievous.

"I admit that there is no *command* for infants to be baptized: it would suppose a moral effect. But there is none for adults—there is to the apostles to go and baptize the nations they had brought into discipleship."<sup>1</sup>

"The baptizer alone had a command!" But how did his command run? "Make disciples, baptizing them." Is that the verse in which the command is found? If so, is it not exceedingly simple? Would not such a command of necessity include the "disciple" in it? How could the baptizer fulfil the command unless there were those who, having been made disciples, were then willing to be baptized? And who would make them willing? Surely the Spirit of God, through the Word of God, and not man. Intelligent action is looked for. Supposing it were a fact that the baptizer alone had a command, what would prevent the one he wished to baptize saying, "I do not intend to be baptized"? But the baptizer urges, "I have a command." "You may have one, but I have not; and if yours does not include me, though *you* would be able to say you had acted upon God's Word, *I should not!* What could be said to such a reply? Nothing by one who, taking for granted J. N. D. to be correct, simply repeats his words. But J. N. D. told a "Quaker" he ought to be baptized because he never had been. But why? That he might "orderly" come into "the House," and be in "the circle where the Holy Ghost rules." One could not be surprised if the Quaker had said: "You tell me this, and yet you say, I am not commanded to do so. Why, then, do you command when God does not? I am a believer, saved by grace and in Christ; what shall I gain by acting on your command?" "But, my friend, you are not in the House," he would be told.

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 336.

“Wonderful fact!” he exclaims. “Why, the Spirit of God knew where I was, and He drew me to Christ, who saved me by His grace. He was at no loss to find me, nor had He any difficulty in bringing me.” But (according to this theory of Baptism) such an one would have lost an immense deal. His parents did not secure for him all these privileges of outward position, such as belong to the baptized mass in Christendom, including murderers, thieves, rogues, etc., etc.!!! If a Roman Catholic priest had “done it” for him all would have been well; though J. N. D. would have said it was “*irregular*” (whatever that may mean), still he would have counted it as Baptism, and all these doubtful privileges would have been gained, and the position occupied from a few days old! Then, if one with the stigma of “Baptist” put upon him had said, “Scripture shows you should be baptized,” J. N. D. would have replied, “No! you have been so, though irregularly in form; and it would be being baptized over again.” F. W. G., on “The Commission” (p. 27), represents one as asking, “Is not Baptism a command?” And if we answered, “Yes, it is commanded,” his next question is, “Have you then for yourself obeyed this command? It matters not what your parents may have in your infancy done for you, have you obeyed it for yourself?”

Thus, fully seeing that to uphold Infant Baptism they must destroy in the minds of Christians the thought of there being any obedience in connection with it, he adds:

“Go ye and disciple all nations, baptizing them” was to the eleven. It was their commission, and defined their duty. Of course I do not mean but that it shows also the Lord’s will plainly enough, that people should be baptized. Nor do I mean, God forbid, but that His mind, expressed to us in any way, is not as authoritative, and as simply to be obeyed, as any command whatever. Of course it is. But then we gather His mind surely from the way in which He had spoken. . . . He does say to some, ‘Baptize.’ And if, in obedience to that command, I have been baptized in infancy, there is none other relating to me on that subject to be obeyed by me” (p. 28).

Thus he begs the question entirely; and whereas he starts with the bold statement, "no command," edges round to it as fast as he can:—

"If I were a believer, and yet unbaptized, I could understand the Lord's mind as to Baptism to be as strong to me as any command" (p. 28).

To enable the reader fully to grasp this line of reasoning (utterly false though it be—necessity arises for it from false views) I give another extract from the tract:—

"As regards Baptism in particular, it is perfectly certain that, according to Scripture, it is not a matter of obedience. The proof is this: when the eunuch of Candace comes to water he asks, 'What does hinder me to be baptized?' an expression which, if it were obedience, could have no place."

Why not? Surely it could be obedience, and at the same time one wishing to be obedient could ask such an one as Philip, "What doth hinder?" for if (as we believe) only a believer is to be baptized, and in being so he enjoys a privilege, as well as becomes obedient, it would be his first and his anxious question of the only one who could baptize him (for Philip was alone with him). "What?" Implying that he saw no reason himself; questioning Philip as to whether *he* did. But to resume, J. N. D. added:—

"Further, the obedience of a heathen or a Jew to a Christian precept, when not yet within, not yet admitted among Christians, is an absurdity contrary to the whole nature and principle of Christianity. Another case shows evidently that the notion of obedience is foreign to Baptism. Peter says, 'Can any man forbid water . . . which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?' Both these cases prove that it was a privilege desired or conferred, and not an act of obedience—admission amongst Christians the act of the baptizer on behalf of the Assembly, not of the baptized. The truth is, there is no command of Christ to *be* baptized, there was *to* baptize, and it could not be otherwise; Christ could not, as to Christianity, give a command to those without. If the man is within, it is by Baptism, so that there can be no command to be baptized. The importance of this is, that it shows that the baptist system falsifies the whole nature of Baptism."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 328.

If particularly strong and bold statements were enough, then the views advanced in the above extract would be well supported! There are a number of propositions dogmatically laid down by J. N. D. in it, which need at least to be carefully separated and analysed. The first is as to obedience. Here, without any hesitation, he not only writes that Baptism is not an act of obedience, but that, until baptized, a man is without, and until within by Baptism, he cannot be obedient! So that, although the eunuch had believed (after Philip had expounded to him Isaiah liii., and preached unto him Jesus), yet he was not within (one without cannot render obedience—Baptism brings within!). The eunuch was not baptized—therefore he was not within—therefore he could not render obedience! So reasoned J. N. D., correctly enough if his premises were correct; but, alas for him! they were false. Where did he find them in Scripture? He assumed here, as in every letter on the subject, that it was so, but he gave no Scripture. According to J. N. D., being without he was a Jew—a Jew still—though a believer, and able to say, “What doth hinder?” Unable to be obedient, and not a Christian, until the Baptism was over, and he was within! But not so the Scripture, which plainly teaches the very opposite: “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great number of the priests were OBEIENT to the faith.”<sup>1</sup>

“To the OBEIENGE of faith.”<sup>2</sup>

“But they have not all OBEYED the gospel.”<sup>3</sup>

One is at a loss to conceive how, with such simple Scriptures before him, J. N. D. could have written so absurdly. Utterly at a loss, but for the fact that it was a necessity either to separate obedience from Baptism, or to give up Infant Baptism.

If priests (not yet baptized) at Jerusalem could be

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i. 5, A.M. and R.V.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. x. 16.

obedient to the faith, so could the eunuch, and, when obedient to the faith, they could be obedient in the next thing: Baptism. The way in which he plays upon the words "without" and "within" is sad indeed; not applying them to the real position before God, but first and altogether to the position assumed before man. The eunuch had obeyed the gospel, and was no longer a Jew. He had believed and was received by God. He rejoiced in the One who was wounded for his transgressions and bruised for his iniquities, and he had peace. J. N. D. is silent as to all this, able, seemingly, only to regard the man in his relationship to Philip and believers. Again, he brings obedience into contrast with privilege. According to him, if one fulfilled a privilege in being baptized, he could not obey a command; but Scripture does not so deal with the matter. "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."<sup>1</sup>

Could there be a greater privilege than that of obeying the Lord? If a mother singles out one of her children to run an errand for her, that child in going quickly is showing obedience and enjoying a privilege; for it is both, when flowing from love. What would one think of saying to the child, "You have been obedient, but not privileged"! Baptism is a command, and a privilege as well, and so the believer finds it to be; but when Infant Baptism has to be defended, then all command must be taken away, seeing that an infant knows nothing of it. Thoughts that flow in the channel of Infant Baptism are contrary to God's thoughts, and when first heard by us are counted strange. God forbid that our ear should ever become accustomed to them.

R. T. HOPKINS.

(*To be continued.*)

<sup>1</sup> John xv. 14.

## THE TWO NATURES.

WHEN Adam was created he was a sinless being; yet, as one capable of sinning, his sphere was earth, and, prior to the Fall, no promise of heaven was given him of which we are told in Holy Writ.

The last Adam—the Second Man from heaven—differed essentially from the first, in that not only in Him was no sin (this might have been said of the first Adam prior to the Fall), but that a perfect divinity upheld a perfect humanity, for “the Word was with God and the Word was God,” and “the Word became flesh.”

The “RUACH” (spirit) of man (and this must not be confounded with the “N’SHAMAH” (breath) breathed into him at creation)<sup>1</sup> must be distinguished from the Holy Spirit received at the new birth.

It may still further help us in our subject to consider another condition in which we find man described in the pages of truth—that is, possessed by the spirit of demons (not devils, for there is but one Devil). When so possessed man’s own proper spirit would be subjected to the spirits of the demons in him, so that he would lose his identity—the one would be possessed by the others.

The sad picture presented to us in the case of the man amongst the tombs is of one who has lost his identity. His will is subjected, as also his body, to the spirits dwelling in him; they in their turn being subject to the Prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Be it noted that while men were possessed by spirits of evil before the Cross of Christ, it is after the Cross that the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in the redeemed. “He is with you, and shall be in you.”<sup>2</sup> He was with or upon King Saul, and He departed from him<sup>3</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 7.<sup>2</sup> John xiv. 17.<sup>3</sup> See 1 Sam. xvi. 14.



whereupon an evil spirit from God entered into him. No wonder that David prayed, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me,"<sup>1</sup> with such a terrible example before his eyes. This, be it remembered, pertains to a dispensation past.

We would ask our readers to consider for themselves the special mission of our Lord and His disciples, which was aimed at the destruction of Satan's authority upon earth over fallen humanity, but we cannot pursue this subject further here. Let us seek to gather up some of the thoughts that have been suggested:—

First, we see how a perfect being—the first Adam—could yield to the influence of evil which at this point was without, thus falling under the power of the Devil and becoming a transgressor. Further, we have seen how man may become more completely under Satanic influence through indwelling spirits of evil, losing his identity still further and becoming an emissary of Satan. This is what we understand by Romans vi. 19.

We must now briefly consider Him who knew no sin, being holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners. In Exodus xii. Israel is commanded to take a lamb in which there was no blemish, which lamb was to be set apart for redemption. In order to satisfy the eye of God it needed to be without blemish; yet, after having been thus set apart and meeting the requirements of Jehovah, its death was essential to redemption. Its perfection could not satisfy divine justice nor yet save Israel. It had to be slain; and from the slaying of the lamb dates the deliverance of the people, not from the time of its being set apart, nor yet from its spotless character. It was not this last, set to Israel's account, that in any way saved them from wrath, yet it was needed to make the sacrifice perfect and acceptable to God. From the death of the lamb dates the redemption of Israel. It was the night long to be remembered

<sup>1</sup> Ps. li. 11.

—the beginning of months to them. Old things passed away. All things became new.

It is not the perfect and spotless life of the Lord Jesus up to the Cross which delivers the believer from the wrath to come, or renders him acceptable to God in any sense, any more than the lamb rendered Israel safe or acceptable to God before its sacrifice. There is not such a thought as the perfections of the lamb being imputed to Israel as they stood before God, a redeemed people by its blood. Nor does the believer stand accepted before God on account of the righteous life of the Lord Jesus up to the Cross being imputed to him.

Referring again to the life of our blessed Lord up to the Cross, its perfection in every point marked Him as the one in whom God could delight—His beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased. Yet, however beautiful and perfect this life, it could not satisfy the righteous claims of a holy God, for the righteousness of God demanded death. If the believer could stand complete before God on account of the righteous living of the Lord Jesus up to the Cross imputed to him, what need then would there have been for the Lord's death? But death is necessary to redemption, and the life of the Lord Jesus is forfeited on account of others' sins. He suffers the righteous judgment of God.

Moreover, the believer suffers in Him the full penalty of sin, and thus stands in grace beyond the reach of the law and in the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> The believer, as regards his standing before God, is justified from all things,<sup>2</sup> complete in Him who of God is made unto us wisdom, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.<sup>3</sup> Our standing is in the risen Christ, accepted in the Beloved, identified first with Him in His death, then with Him in His resurrection and life. So now as He is so are we in this world.

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xiii. 39.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. i. 30.

The life given the believer is on the resurrection side of the Cross, the Lord having laid it down at the Cross and taken it again; so the believer stands in Christ as a new creation, old things having passed away.<sup>1</sup>

Thus much as to the believer's standing before God, which, as entered into by faith, will give power to live and act for God as His redeemed, as those who have entered into a new relationship—that of children.<sup>2</sup> This change is accompanied by the entering in of the Holy Spirit, and the believer's becoming possessed by that Spirit for God.<sup>3</sup> The desire of this indwelling Spirit is to possess us wholly for God.<sup>4</sup> Our judicial standing before God as sinners has come to an end, for we are reckoned by Him as dead, having suffered the penalty of sin. The practical sanctification of 1 Thessalonians v. 23 and John xvii. 17 is wrought in us by the indwelling Spirit through the Word, producing the yielding of our members unto righteousness.<sup>5</sup> The "old man" is to be put off, which is corrupt with his deeds,<sup>6</sup> and thus the believer, sanctified by the indwelling Spirit sent from God, and putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, becomes continually and practically conformed to the image of Christ. Released from the authority of Satan, the spirits of evil cast out, the righteous man becomes the means in which and through which the purposes of God can be accomplished on earth.

Briefly to summarize what we have stated. The first Adam was created sinless; when he fell, he became possessed of an evil nature. This evil nature is expressed in Scripture by various terms, such as "the old man which is corrupt with his deeds." Satan by his spirits worked in fallen man, the members of the body—that is the natural body—being subjected to his will. This old nature comes

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 17.<sup>2</sup> 1 John iii. 2.<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 19.<sup>4</sup> James iv. 5, R.V.<sup>5</sup> Rom. vi. 13, 16.<sup>6</sup> Eph. iv. 22.

to its end judicially at the Cross. The believer in the Lord Jesus stands accepted in Him, He being made his righteousness as well as redemption. As the spirit of evil works in and conforms the sinner to the likeness of Satan, so the Spirit of God working in the believer conforms him to the image of God's Son. As God reckons the old nature as dead, so the believer is to reckon himself as dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

J. A. BOSWELL.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE TRIBE OF LEVI.

*(Continued from page 179.)*

IN the previous articles we were looking at Levi by nature. We saw how he was fallen, how that Jacob had to say, "My soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united" (Gen. xlix. 6). We also saw the wonderful grace of God in choosing Levi, and saying, "Levi shall be Mine."

In this article we wish to look a little at the substance of which Levi was in the past the shadow. We remember the time when we were like Levi, lying in our sins away from God. In Ephesians ii. God says that while we were unsaved we were without hope and without God, and that because we were without Christ. This reveals to us the awful condition of the unsaved: also revealing to us that God has only one question to put to the unsaved—viz., "What think ye of Christ?"

"No reformation will suffice;  
'Tis life poor sinners need."

Prior to the sinner accepting Christ, he is in his sins, away from God, at enmity against God, vile and abominable in the sight of God.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vi. 11.

What a difference there is between the saved and the unsaved! Looking at them from a worldly point of view, there may be very little difference; yet God sees a difference, and what a difference! God help us to grasp that, no matter how moral or beautiful the life of the unsaved may be, it is a life against God and His Christ, despising and rejecting the one whom God by grace has made to us "the Fairest, the Chiefest, the Best." Just as in fellowship with God we grasp this will we be able to answer the question of God to us, "What part hath he that believeth with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. vi. 15).

We see from Numbers viii. that Levi was brought nigh and kept nigh by blood. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who once were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. ii. 13). Nearer to God than ever Levi was, dearer to God than ever Levi was, we stand accepted in all the acceptableness of God's Christ. Is Christ fair? In Him the believer is as fair as He. Is Christ lovely? In Him the believer is as lovely as He. Is Christ righteous? In Him the believer is as righteous as He. Is Christ God's well-beloved Son? In Him the believer is as beloved as He. All that is true of the Christ, as the one seated at God's right hand, is true of every saint that trusts Him. We are not only forgiven, but we are justified (Acts xiii. 38, 39); righteous, as He is righteous, for we are God-begotten (1 John v. 1). He has saved us and brought us near, as near as His Son; for in Him we are, and that from the moment we accepted Him as God's Christ and our Saviour.

I want you now to read with me Exodus xix. 6: "And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." From this passage we see that God's purpose was, that Israel should be unto Him a kingdom of priests. This purpose was frustrated by Israel's disobedience and sin. Then God, in grace, came in and chose, instead of all Israel, one tribe,—Levi,—and brought them near as the priestly tribe.

So, although all Israel were God's people, God's priests were to be found in Levi's tribe.

Not so now. Every believer is now a priest. That is a part of his birth portion.

In Romans i. 7 we read "called saints." The moment I believed that Jesus was the Christ that moment I was born of God, and constituted by God a saint. In like manner also I was constituted a priest. Let me again say that our titles of saint and priest are our birth portion.

If we are able to grasp the order of the Levitical priesthood we will be able to understand Israel's portion as a worshipping people. Their worship was a worship of relative nearness. Aaron stood nearer to God than his family, his family were nearer than the Levites, the Levites were nearer than the people. The congregation could not come as near as the Levites, and the Levites could not approach as near as Aaron's family, and Aaron's family dared not to go into the Holiest. Aaron alone could enter there, and that only once a year.

In this system perfection was not found (Heb. vii. 11). In it God had no pleasure. With one stroke of His hand He has removed it from His presence; and to go back to it now is to reject the substance and embrace the shadow, and raise an order that is not of God but of the Devil, and therefore to God an abomination.

It is sad to think that what God has abolished many of His people take up and cling tenaciously to. Around us to-day on every hand we find huge religious systems of men; which to a very great extent are based on the principles of Judaism, thus embracing the shadow and rejecting the substance. They seek in their blind ignorance and in their vigorous (though perhaps unconscious) self-will to approach and worship God in a way that can never have His smile and must ever have His frown. It is sadder still to know that in these systems there are many of God's children, some

of whom are there in ignorance, but of the many God would say, "My people love to have it so" (Jer. v. 31). Many of them are going the length of glorying in it, forgetful of the fact that they are glorying in their shame, glorying in their eternal loss.

Children of God are often to be found in systems of men the ministers of which are unsaved, ungodly men, "enemies of the Cross of Christ." This is truly the blind leading the blind, and God says that both shall fall into the ditch.

I want to make you see the exceeding sinfulness of the sects of Christendom, by showing you some of the precious things of God they deny and reject; not perhaps by their words, but surely by their actions, which are the working out of their principles. And let us never forget that actions speak louder than words.

I want you to note in the first place that, in nearly every system of man, the priestly character of the believer is denied and rejected. What we want to grasp from God is this, that every believer is a priest. Paul was no more a priest than the weakest and most feeble saint that was to be found in the earth in his day. Paul was no cleric. God hates clerisy, for it is of the Devil. It denies the priestly character of the saint, and it substitutes the base counterfeit of Satan.

If you went into any of the churches or chapels of men on Lord's Day morning, what would you find? A minister standing there—perhaps an unsaved man. His position there as cleric is tantamount to saying, "I am your priest; you are my people." Let a believer in the congregation rise to give out a hymn, lead in prayer, or speak a word of exhortation, and he is speedily told to sit down, as the "cleric" is ordained by man and paid by man to do all the giving out of hymns, praying and exhorting that is there. Dear child of God, what an ungodly system this must be! Such systems not only thus deny the priestly character of

believers, and constitute instead a select order of men as priests, but they also unquestionably reject the presence and work of God the Holy Spirit, grieve Him and quench Him, and seek to reduce Him to a mere "influence," subject to the power of man, and compelled by man to work in and through one channel, that channel being a false order of priesthood, known as "The Clergy."

Again, I want you to notice that such systems deny the lordship of Christ; for where there is not room for every word that is God-breathed there is not room for Christ as Lord. And in every religious system of man, because it is of man, there is not room for the whole Word of God. And where there is not room for the whole Book, and nothing but the Book, there will be no room for the child of God that has "sanctified Christ in his heart as Lord" (1 Pet. iii. 15, R.V.).

Time forbids me going further into the exceeding sinfulness of the churches, chapels, and sects of Christendom. I trust that the little I have said, some of which is true of all, all of which is true of many, may enable us to see that our place is outside of every religious sect and system of man if we would be found living "godly in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 12).

J. CHARLETON STEEN.

(*To be continued.*)

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## PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

(*Concluded from page 167.*)

A CERTAIN number from among our readers have taken exception to the use made, in these and similar papers, of the term "Open Brethrenism." Some deny the existence of any such "ecclesiastical system"; others deny that they are, or ever were, in it!



We have not, at any time, sought to maintain a cause by applying injurious epithets to the persons or things opposed to it; nor are we, at this time, disposed to enter into a profitless dispute about words. We simply adopted an already current expression, having a generally understood meaning, when we found it necessary to refer to a system to which we *cannot* apply any *scriptural* title from the moment we do not believe that the said system is to be found in the Scriptures.

The thing itself is there before our eyes, by whatever name we choose to designate it—namely, an agglomeration of assemblies having little in common except their rejection of the Church principles introduced by the late John Newton Darby. Some of these assemblies have, in their day, rejoiced in the teaching presented in these columns; and even, in some measure, tried to carry it out. Others are in a chronic state of lawlessness, which it would be difficult to exaggerate. The greater number are going on upon what they call the principles of “the early Brethren,” such as that—“All believers are in the fellowship,” “Each assembly is independent of all the others, and responsible for its conduct to God alone,” “There is no scripture for ceasing fellowship with an assembly,” etc., etc. Notwithstanding such dissimilarities, these assemblies commend to and receive from each other throughout the whole world.

Can we think it possible, within the limits of such an association, to walk together in “fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord” and in separation from that which practically disowns His lordship? Has not each local and partial attempt to carry out scriptural order been a failure from the very beginning?

Such an attempt is made, for example, in a certain district where some of the grosser forms of lawlessness have long been manifest. The company meeting at A— (a

specially bad case) is dealt with and separated from. Now the assembly in B—— (being one of those which took part in the act of separation) would not receive from, nor commend to, the company at A——. But the assembly in C—— (only a few miles distant) remains in fellowship with “both parties.” Therefore it will commend to the fellowship in B—— one whom it has received by letter of commendation from A——, or *vice versa*. Eventually, when C—— has to withdraw from a lawless company in its own neighbourhood, others will act the same part towards it; and so forth without end.

Is there anything in such a system to hinder the worst man from the worst meeting from finding an entrance into the very best, if he only exercises a little carnal prudence in choosing the route by which he approaches it? Is there anything to hinder the most guileless young Christian from the best meeting from being drafted into the very worst?

Let no man say that these dangers are imaginary. Those who have longest and most earnestly contended for “the Faith once for all delivered unto the saints” know that every effort after reformation within an assembly is paralysed by the presence and activity of men coming in from places where they have been trained to oppose, with all the energy of which they are capable, every vestige of godly order. The very joy of leading young converts into the ways of the Lord is damped and chilled by the thought that these young disciples are subjected, from the day they take their place among us, to influences one would give one’s life to shield them from. Even if they are not spoiled under our very eyes, what prospect have they but to be committed, sooner or later, to some self-will meeting (with which the assembly into which they were first received is directly or indirectly in association), where all that they have learned will be trampled under foot?

Will it be believed that at this unspeakably solemn crisis of our history some, who by reason of the time ought to be teachers, are actually making sport of what they call "the triangular method of linking assemblies on to each other"?

Others, while sufficiently awakened to realize that this "linking on of assemblies" is no laughing matter, are found suggesting remedial measures of such a pitifully inadequate nature that they only serve to indicate how little real thought their proposers have, as yet, bestowed on the actual difficulties of the situation. Most of these "remedies" are worse than the evils with which they profess to deal.

Thus one brother says, "We are about to test every letter of commendation that is presented to us." How are they going to do it? Some assemblies receive during the summer season an average of six letters each Lord's Day morning. Many of these are from places almost unknown by name to the brethren to whom they are presented. Most of them in these days are from places where there are rival "meetings for the breaking of bread." The bearers of these letters often remain only one Lord's Day, and so must be received or rejected there and then.

Is it the Lord who lays on two overworked men at the door the burden of judging, in the quarter of an hour at the beginning of a meeting, the endlessly complicated questions that arise out of the first half-dozen letters that come to hand?

Another says, "We are quite willing to accept the judgment of assemblies of a district *provided they can prove to us that their judgment is righteous.*" Surely those who reason thus would not propose so impractical a principle in the things of this life as they do in the things of the House of God? It does not require a very extensive experience to teach that the difficulty of conveying a correct impression

of controverted facts increases with every month of time and every mile of distance.

Is it the Lord who lays on an assembly, as the penalty for having separated from evil in its own neighbourhood, the hopeless task of justifying itself to one assembly after another throughout the world?—of having to prove again and again and again every statement that has issued from it?—while the men from whom it has separated are with us, coming in and going out, having nothing to prove or to explain?

Is it the Lord who lays on each assembly the burden of having to judge for itself the facts and circumstances connected with "divisions" occurring hundreds (perhaps thousands) of miles away, while the means of forming a godly judgment are, in the very nature of things, not to be had?

But it is idle to give further consideration to these half-measures. They are, all of them, a practical denial of THE FELLOWSHIP—a right understanding of which is the only way out of present confusion. It is certain that, so long as each assembly defines the limits of its own fellowship, no two will draw the line at the same place. It is no less certain that those who bind such intolerable burdens on other men's shoulders will not touch them with their own little finger.

These questions were meant to be suggestive, and as such they are left. Some believe that the Lord is leading out into a place where there will be room to own the "all authority" which has been given unto Him. May He enable such to be men who by steadfast faith withhold assemblies lapsing into unfaithfulness. May He cause us to be warned by what has befallen and always must befall patching and compromise and indefiniteness in work that claims to be His.

A. P. MACDONALD.

## FROM.

THE word that we have put at the head of this article is one of the commonest words in our English language, and is, moreover, a word that is understood by every one. It is, of course, of quite frequent occurrence in the English New Testament, where it very often stands for the Greek word *ἀπό*, apo, of which it is beyond all doubt the correct equivalent. We subjoin a few instances of such use :—

Matt. i. 21—" Shall save His people *from* their sins."

„ ii. 1—" Wise men *from* the East."

John xix. 27—" *From* that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

2 Cor. vii. 1—" Let us cleanse ourselves *from* all defilement."

2 Tim. ii. 19—" Depart *from* unrighteousness." (R.V.)

„ „ 21—" If a man therefore purge himself *from* these."

„ iv. 18—" The Lord will deliver me *from* every evil work."

1 John i. 7—" The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us *from* all sin."

„ „ 9—" To cleanse us *from* all unrighteousness."

That the word *from*, the translation of *ἀπό*, apo, in each of these cases, has a very simple and uniform meaning goes without saying. The thought throughout is that of separation, of sunderance. It may be of interest to mention that the same root is found in the English adverb *off*.<sup>1</sup>

It may seem unnecessary to say so much about a single word of such plain meaning as *from*. But, if the reader of Scripture has his spirit raised by God's Spirit to seek after the will of the Lord, and if there be nothing in the state of his soul to hinder his understanding, all that he requires to do is to compare scripture with scripture, and let the words which the Holy Spirit uses carry their simple, undistorted meaning.

Let us apply this principle to the passage in 2 Timothy ii. 21. The word that occurs here, and is translated *purge*,

<sup>1</sup> Liddell and Scott, under *ἀπό*.

occurs only twice in the New Testament. Its other occurrence is 1 Corinthians v. 7: "Purge out the old leaven."

Now, as we all know, when the children of Israel were about to keep the Passover they first had to remove from their houses all leavened bread, as, for the whole week, nothing but unleavened bread was to be eaten by them—no leaven was to be in their houses.

But, as the children of Israel had a Passover, so have we: "Our Passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ."<sup>1</sup> And as they followed the Passover with feast of unleavened bread, so "let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness: but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."<sup>1</sup> All of which, as well as what follows, verses 9 to 13, are in direct connection with verse 7 till the command of verse 7, "Purge out therefore the old leaven," is repeated in verse 13: "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves." Let us then look closely at the expression:—

Ἐκκαθάρατη τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην  
 ekkatharatē tēn palaian zumēn  
 purge out the old leaven.

We have put each English word under the Greek word of which it is a translation. It will be observed that under the first Greek word we have put two English words, these being the two English words that represent the two parts of which the Greek word is composed. In other words, the Greek word καθαίρω, kathairō,<sup>2</sup> *I purge*, or *I cleanse*, has prefixed the particle ἐκ, ek, *out*, or *out of*, and thus forms the verb ἐκκαθαίρω, ekkathairo, *I purge out*, or *cleanse out* (ἐκκαθάρατη, ekkatharatē, *purge ye out*).

The man was within; they were bidden to put him out. That is clearly the meaning of the word here translated *purge out*.

Now, as we have said, the only other occurrence of the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> John xv. 2; Heb. x. 2.

word is in 2 Timothy ii.; and, as we believe that Scripture is its own interpreter, we are bound to take the meaning, so plain in 1 Corinthians v., as our guide in 2 Timothy ii.

The expression there is:—

Ἐὰν οὖν τις ἐκκαθάρῃ ἑαυτὸν ἀπὸ τούτων  
Ean oun tis ekkatharē heauton apo toutōn

If therefore a man purge himself from these. Here too we have put each English word of the Authorized and Revised Versions (they are precisely alike) under the Greek word of which it is a translation. We may just point out that the Greek word *tis*, translated *a man*, is an indefinite pronoun, meaning *any person*, and that the *ek* is just as much here as it is in 1 Corinthians v. (*ekkatharē heauton apo*, purge out himself from). But we find no fault with the translation, which is excellent as it stands. To every unprejudiced reader the separation enjoined is clearly laid down. We may just quote Alford's Greek Testament (1884) *in loco*, footnote, vol. iii. p. 387: "If then any man shall have purified himself from among these,"<sup>1</sup> as an additional confirmation. Also from the commentary of Dr. Ellicott (who is admittedly one of the first of living authorities on New Testament Greek) we extract: "The good and faithful must separate themselves from the evil and faithless." These show at least that separation is the thought of the passage, in the understanding of these two Greek scholars, as well as of almost all others.

Now, if separation be here enjoined, the question is, from WHAT? To this question we will presently come back; though we may refer our readers to previous articles in which we have gone into some detail, and thus save space in our present number.<sup>2</sup> But we desire to point out that if it is once clearly seen that it is separation that is taught here the rest becomes easy.

<sup>1</sup> And so Bengel.

<sup>2</sup> *Needed Truth*, vol. iii.—"The Church in Ephesus," pp. 137, 175.

Accordingly we find that most who seek to oppose what we have taught concerning this passage are not content to object to our translating the word "purge out" literally, but they go further, and seek to rob the verse of its meaning altogether. Thus at the end of a recently issued booklet<sup>1</sup> which is before us there is the following as from a literal (*sic*) translation of 2 Timothy ii. 20-22:—

"But in every great house there are not only gold and silver furniture, but also wooden and earthenware; and those indeed for ornament, but these for use. If, however, amongst these any purifies itself it will be an instrument for distinction, consecrated, and prepared for the Master, ready for any good work. But let them fly from the lusts of youth: and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, towards those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

We do not propose to say much of the booklet itself. That it should have this translation (?) appended to it is, alas! an evidence of how little it is calculated to be helpful to any of God's children.

It will be observed that the translation (?) reproduced above differs in several important points from the A.V. and the R.V. That in each of these points it is utterly wrong would be easy to show if we had space. But we confine ourselves to a few of the more glaring inaccuracies.

We first, then, call attention to the words *ornament*, *use*, which stand in the place of *honour*, *dishonour*, in the A.V. and R.V. We point out the words used—τιμή, timē, honour; ἀτιμία, atimia, dishonour—are the opposites of each other; the latter one, here mistranslated "use," means *dishonour*, *disgrace*, *infamy* (Liddell and Scott). An illustration of its employment in Scripture may be found in Romans i. 26: "God gave them up to vile passions" (R.V.) or "passions of dishonour" (R.M.). According to the mistranslation before us, we should have to read, "God gave them up to useful passions!!"

<sup>1</sup> "Openism and Exclusivism." G. A. Sprague, 18, Limerston Street, Chelsea.



Again, 1 Corinthians xv. 43, "It is sown in dishonour," is another instance. Moreover, when the word *honour* comes up again, another word, *distinction*, is used in this mistranslation; as though to confuse the simple English reader with three words where God uses two only.

"Any purifies itself." The word translated *any man* in A.V. and R.V. is only applicable to persons, consequently the corresponding masculine pronoun, *himself*, is used. The "any . . . itself" here is therefore quite unjustifiable. It was necessary, however, to so mistranslate *tis heauton* because of the most glaring corruption of the whole passage, namely:—

Putting the word *Among* for *From*. We need say no more about this after the instances given at the commencement of this article showing the force of *από*, *apo*, *from*, except to point out the straits to which men must be brought who have to bolster up their cause by such a mistranslation as this.

It may be well now, as mis-statements have been made, to just state what is in common and what is different as to the words here and the words of Philippians iii. The words there are these:—

|              |              |              |           |     |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----|
| εἰ           | πως          | καταντήσω    | εἰς       | τὴν |
| ei           | pōs          | katantēsō    | eis       | tēn |
| if           | by any means | I may attain | unto      | the |
| ἐξανάστασις  | τὴν          | ἐκ           | νεκρῶν    |     |
| exanastasin  | tēn          | ek           | nekrōn    |     |
| resurrection | ...          | from         | the dead. |     |

We have given the Greek text as read by Revisers, and subjoined their translation, which is not quite so literal as those we have previously given. However, these points may be easily seen. As in Timothy so in Philippians the particle *ἐκ*, *ek*, *out*, is found in combination.<sup>1</sup> In one case it

<sup>1</sup> *Exanastasin* is for *ekanastasin*.

is *out-purge*. In the other it is *out-resurrection*. But, whilst in 2 Timothy ii. it is out-purge *from* these, here it is out-resurrection *out of* (or out from among) dead ones. In both cases the  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  is used. In one case it is followed by a second  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ , in the other case by  $\acute{\alpha}\pi\acute{o}$ , *from*. Clearly there is a difference; the separation is, as one may say, *further* in 2 Timothy than in Philippians. Indeed, a man's attainment "unto the *out-resurrection* (or *extra-resurrection*), that FROM AMONG dead ones," is manifested in daily life, whilst actually in their presence and company. Whereas the *out-purging of himself* FROM, as 2 Timothy ii. 21, is a question of separation, and therefore, we understand, the preposition used is *apo*, which goes further. See the diagram of prepositions in Introduction to Newberry's "Englishman's Greek Testament," and compare  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ , *out of*, with  $\acute{\alpha}\pi\acute{o}$ , *away from*.

The truth of this passage, 2 Timothy ii. 20, 21, has also been attacked in a contemporary <sup>1</sup> in an article headed "The Great House Theory." Most of what the writer says will be found of no weight by those who carefully read the Scriptures; and, rather than correct in detail all he says, we refer our readers to what we have actually taught as to the meaning of this scripture, especially in Vol. iii. pp. 137, 175, where we sought to elucidate the history of the assembly in Ephesus.

We cannot meet the writer on his own ground, for he says he has no particular position to uphold. We have. Moreover, God helping us, we mean to uphold it. Yea, to contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the saints. For the position we have to uphold is the position of separation unto God, of which not long ago our contemporary was one of the most doughty defenders.

It is interesting to reprint at this time the following quotation from *Needed Truth*, vol. i. p. 133. Referring to 2 Timothy ii. 20, John Brown says: "This verse is too

<sup>1</sup> *Believers' Treasury*, July, 1893. W. Shaw, Maybole.

commonly quoted and spoken of as if it read 'in THE great house,' from which huge misrepresentations of its voice have been set forth. There is no word 'the.' The statement is simply illustrative of a great and radical principle of service," etc.

In the light of this quotation we are anxious to know what ground the writer in *The Treasury* has for thus speaking of "The Great House Theory." We venture to say that during the five years of the existence of *Needed Truth* "The Great House" has never been mentioned, except to repudiate the expression. So we wish to know where it is that he finds the teaching which he thus summarises:—"The purge-out theory is that the church at that place (Ephesus) had degenerated into a great house—Christendom, in short," etc. He also states that this theory was a foundation pillar of the Exclusive system. It may have been, but we much doubt it. A reference to some of J. N. Darby's letters quoted in *Needed Truth*—e.g., p. 151 (June)—shows what he thought of the Great House where he says "the Holy Ghost dwells," etc. If Christendom is the Great House (which we have never stated) we are so far from adopting J. N. D.'s teaching that we say that the Holy Spirit does not dwell there, and that no child of God has any right to be in it. The writer in the *Believers' Treasury* says that the Exclusives applied it to everything outside their Commonwealth. But he adds that now the theory is applied to a much larger circle—larger than everything outside! This curious statement seems to suggest that the writer has scarcely given much thought to what he was writing. And we are the more inclined to this because he admits that there is in Scripture (he does not say where) a call out from Christendom; which is exactly what we find in this passage.

He and others at this time seem quite to lose sight of why it is that so many of us have been compelled to break off from the old association of meetings. We will therefore, in

concluding this paper, seek again to set forth the ground on which we have acted.

Clearly seeing and fully recognising that in Christendom at large God's will could not be done, we have stood aloof therefrom and sought to know those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart, that with them we might follow after the things of God and walk in the good works which He has before prepared for us. Many of those who called on the Lord out of a pure heart we had long known and recognised to be in the assemblies that we, a short while since, were in association with. But also in this same association were many, as is well known, who had never in heart been separated from sectarianism.

Longing and hoping that this difficulty might be removed, we have waited, ay! waited a goodly while, till at last it has become only too sadly evident that, though we once thought things were getting brighter, they were indeed getting darker. Instead of separation becoming attended to, it was becoming increasingly neglected. Instead of the fellowship getting more defined and the wall being built, the efforts of the adversaries within and without were becoming more vigorous; and although the making known of God's Truth helped individuals, the meetings as a whole were getting worse rather than better.

So that, in brief, we have been forced to conclude that inside the old association of meetings God's will could not be accomplished any more than it could in any of the sects. To apply to the old association of meetings, or to any of them, the expression "A Great House" would, it seems to us, be puerile nonsense. We call them nothing. We had separated before from the sects, and our only godly reason for being in the before-mentioned meetings was that we thought that *there* we could obey the Scriptures. But, though these meetings are composed to a very large extent of most estimable Christians, including some of our dearest

and oldest friends, yet in them the Scripture is not obeyed, and therefore we leave them. We leave them because there remains no reason whatever to continue in them. And now all our hope is in our God, that in quietness and in love we may carry out His WILL.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

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### THE PATH TO THE THRONE.

“THOU tellest my wanderings” (Ps. lvi. 8). “My wanderings.” Such was David’s description of the road he travelled; and how it recalls to mind his flight from place to place—Gath, wilderness of Judah, forest of Hareth, Adullam, Ziph, Paran, Engedi, Ziklag, etc. What experiences were bound up in those wanderings; yes, and what songs, it may be added, for David found his psalms where he had his bitterest trials. But there was One who counted those wanderings, watched every step of that oftentimes weary way, bottled the tears of His sorrowing servant, and recorded all in remembrance for a future day in His book; and, as that conviction took hold of the wanderer, thankfulness filled his heart, and drew from his lips the words of praise and comfort, “God is for me.”

In looking over the records of those wanderings, the first thing which is apparent is the trouble which arose from David’s own deceitful heart. He is but a little while away from Saul, and he is found telling lies in Nob, and then practising deception in Gath.<sup>1</sup> Sad enough condition for any, how much more so in David, the man of God’s choice! There is nothing more reprehensible than a bad condition of soul, expressed in a careless walk and worldly life, when that walk and life is associated with profession of rule according to God. David was truly God’s king, and that fact made his conduct the more culpable. The higher

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xxi.

the calling the greater the responsibility to walk worthy of it. Lies in the lips of those who profess to be willing to go the whole length of the truth merit the severest judgment. Nevertheless, David's conduct does not undo David's position; nor does the failure of any who profess Scriptural guidance as to divine rule nullify the principle according to which God governs in the church, any more than it relieves us of responsibility to ascertain what those principles are and to obey them. Man fails, but the Word of God remains. The former may well fill us with distrust of self and all humility of mind; the latter with hope and thankfulness.

Then disappointment arises as to some from whom David might have expected better things. The men of Keilah are ready to give him up to Saul, and the Ziphites too would betray him into the hands of his enemy (1 Sam. xxiii.)

These appear to be tribesmen of David—their residence in the portion of Judah—the men of Keilah, those whom David had specially befriended, and from whom surely some grateful return might have been justly looked for. But David, like Jeremiah in a later day, is taught not to put his trust in any brother; the arm of God alone can sustain and defend him. Men of Keilah and Ziphites will sacrifice him when their own advantage is secured thereby. David's help is thankfully welcomed to deliver them from Philistines; but now when David's presence involves some risk the love of self is too strong, and David must be sacrificed for their own comfort or betrayed for some selfish end. God's king then had no fields and vineyards to give nor promotions to offer, as with Saul. If David's person did not attract, David's gifts could not.

Worldly shrewdness and policy decided for Saul. To side with David seemed to involve a loss of all. With the one there was a prospect of wealth and promotion, with the other of suffering, poverty, and trial. And are there

not like principles at work to-day? Is there no danger that the love of social position, the greed of gold, the prospect of worldly advantage, may determine the course rather than the will of God, which has set aside the people's man, and coupled His rule with the Person and place outside the camp? To look at present things without regard to the future may induce some to regard as folly the act of those who have estranged themselves from Saul and all his following. To look upon the fast-fleeting little while in the light of eternity satisfies the separated man that "His earthly loss is heavenly gain," and that, when Saul's vineyards and promotions have passed away from the grasp of those who coveted them, a portion shall be his which moth and rust cannot corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. Soon, ah! how soon, all will be reversed, and David shall have loaves and flesh and flagons of wine<sup>1</sup> to give, and the joy of all shall be to see him king over all Israel. May the lesson of it cheer the heart of the true but faint-hearted brother, strengthen the hands still for the conflict and the labour, and nerve onward with quicker pace and more earnest endeavour all who have made the cause of David theirs, and the glory of God's king their aim.

Again, David found difficulties and trouble arising from some of his own company—men who were not animated by the same spirit as he, sons of Zeruah, who were too much for him. They were on the side of David, and yet how unlike him. How strange it must have seemed to the men of David, and to Abishai especially, that once, yea, twice, when Saul lay within reach of David's hand the latter spared his foe! "Let me smite him . . . at once, . . . and I will not smite him a second time,"<sup>2</sup> and fleshly zeal would have removed at one thrust from David's path his deadliest enemy. The path of separation must be trodden with an

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. vi. 19; 1 Chron. xvi. 3.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. xxvi. 8.

unrevengeful spirit. The servant of the Lord contending earnestly for the Faith "must not strive" after the manner of men, carnal weapons must not be his resort, however promising the prospect is. How striking the contrast between David's calm behaviour and Abishai's rashness, a contrast that brings up another scene when David's Lord, with face turned stedfastly towards the Cross, found no reception from the Samaritans. How ready His disciples were to call down fire from heaven to consume them in that moment! What a moral distance lay between those disciples and their Lord! Truly they knew not what manner of spirit they were of.

To hold on one's way in absolute and resolute refusal to own man's rule will bring reprisals and make one the target for man's hatred and persecution. We must not retaliate with like spirit, but rather pray for them who despitefully use us. God can preserve His ark without our steadying hand, and remove our adversaries without our thrusts. Let it be our concern to guard ourselves against an improper spirit, yet to persevere to the utmost in the path of obedience; seeking to present ourselves approved unto God as workmen needing not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth;<sup>1</sup> at the same time, patient, gentle, apt to teach, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves.<sup>2</sup>

But David's wanderings and experiences had their bright side withal. There was sunshine as well as cloud. Like as the pathway of the Son of God on earth was cheered now and again by the acknowledgment of one and another who, like the woman of Samaria, saw in Him the Christ, or, as Peter confessed Him to be, the Son of God; and like as Paul, when all in Asia had turned from him, found an Onesiphorus, who was not ashamed of his chain, ready to refresh him—so it was with David. He became captain

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.



over four hundred, who had discerned in him the one whom God had chosen to be captain over all Israel; and in the day of his rejection and trial these became conspicuous by their loyalty, bravery, and devotion. A noble band, indeed! like some of remnant times, "men to be wondered at," and only excelled by those of later day, whose commendation was they were men who had hazarded their lives for the Name.

Abigail, too, of beautiful countenance and understanding, had her part in ministering to God's king. She believed in him when all, even her nearest kin, were against him, and found her faith and kindness rewarded as David only could have rewarded them.

The prophet Gad and Abiathar the priest were also with David, together forming a triple picture of Him who is Prophet and Priest and King combined.

But, infinitely beyond and above all this, David had a rare and deepening acquaintance with, and experience of God through these eventful times which stood between the flight from Saul and the throne on which he was destined to sit. His trials at the hands of friends and foes but drew him nearer God. Psalms xxxiv., lii., liv., lvi., lvii., lx., lxiii., cxlii., tell us of those times, and let in light on David's inner being. How numerous and how strong his enemies! God alone could be his refuge. To Him he seeks with spirit overwhelmed. For the living God he thirsts. In Jehovah Elohim he trusts, and the cry of "this poor man" is heard, and deliverance from all his trouble, affliction, and fears is given, and the king is made to rejoice in God. The road is rough along which he travels; but the throne stands at the end of it, on which the purpose and power of God will place him, notwithstanding all the mighty ones opposed to him, and the evil of his own heart, that perhaps troubled him more than all else beside.

## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

### V. THE COMMISSION.

(Continued from page 191.)

BEFORE passing from this part of our subject, it will be necessary to refer to F. W. G.'s statements in connection with it, seeing that he does not confine himself to the assertions made by J. N. D., but goes beyond, and, by reference to the Greek, seeks to maintain that the discipling is accomplished by Baptism. He writes:—

“‘The commission binds me to baptize believers, and no others,’ says one. ‘To make disciples, and baptize them,’ says another. A third asks for an express warrant to baptize infants, and finds none in the commission.

“Now it is remarkable that the passage which draws forth these remarks says absolutely nothing about believers, nothing of adults any more than infants, nothing about the Baptism of disciples. This last is indeed the only point open to question; and that is soon settled by a slight inspection of the original. For the words *μαθητεύσατε* (*mathêteusate*), translated in the margin of our Bible ‘make disciples,’ is a simple verb, and not a verb with a noun following. Strictly, it is not ‘make disciples,’ but ‘disciple.’ The difference is plain. If I say, ‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them,’ it may be at least open to question whether ‘baptizing *them*’ means baptizing nations or disciples. But if I say, ‘Go and disciple all nations, baptizing them,’ there cannot be the least question that ‘them’ refers to *nations*. Now in this case the argument as to baptizing disciples is gone irrevocably. And further, it is not said, ‘Go ye and disciple all nations, and baptize them,’ but ‘disciple, baptizing.’ . . . I understand baptizing to be given as a form of discipling. I do not confine discipling to that, because I find it added, ‘teaching them to observe all things,’” etc.

He then concludes by saying:—

“And while, inasmuch as Baptism is discipling, and is in order to training up for God, we could not, in the case of adults, baptize any but such as were by grace made willing to sit at Christ’s feet and learn of Him; along with these, if we are to be guided at all by the words of the commission, we should have to baptize their infant children.”

Thus, while F. W. G. rushes boldly into the statement

that "baptizing them" means *nations*, which, if true, would mean that any and all were to be baptized (and more especially if, as he asserts, discipling is by baptizing), he limits himself at the end to adults by "grace made willing," etc., and "THEIR infant children."

Looking very much as if, after making the path, he hesitated to walk to the end of it himself!

Every point is strained, and Greek introduced in order to sustain what was to him the vital point in connection with Infant Baptism. Not only so, but he refers to Greek in such a way as to catch the unwary and simple, for he assumes. He is careful not to refer to it as a moot point even, or as a question which might be doubtful. "It is soon settled by a slight inspection of the original." And then to his own satisfaction he settles it; and if the many who are unacquainted with Greek accept his statements, then they are involved in confusion and doubt, even if they are not led to give up Christian Baptism as previously held by them. And this it is that makes it so serious. While F. W. G. may have undoubted right to print what he believes, it is gravely to be doubted whether he acted wisely in referring to Greek as if there neither was nor could be the smallest difference raised in connection with it. And apart from such a thought, which may not weigh with him, he might have paused ere he referred to Greek, when such reference might result in many having to doubt his real scholarly ability to do so, as a mere cursory acquaintance with the language would enable one to sift such statements, and therefore to find that they are not only contested, but that thorough Greek scholars (of all shades of thought as to Baptism) utterly repudiate them. As a fact W. Kelly (being then with F. W. G. and J. N. D.) was writing about the same time "An Examination" of the tract from which I have already extracted, and in it took up the very point:—

“But what can one say of the assertion that Baptism is the means of making these heathen disciples? Who doubts that even the least esteemed in the Church can judge this to the writer’s shame? Need I quote John iv. 1 to prove the folly of the thought that baptizing is the means of making disciples? ‘Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John.’ . . . Had the participle translated baptizing been like *πορευθέντες* (*poreuthentes*), in the aorist, before the verb *μαθητεύσατε* (*mathêteusate*), there would have been a ground of argument; as it is there is none.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus it does not appear to be so “soon settled by a slight inspection.” Perhaps it was because F. W. G. only gave it a slight inspection that he fell into such a blunder! Quietly to assume thus in print that references to Greek will pass current does not always do. And let this case be a warning to Christians not to take in every new doctrine that comes to them as the result of altering “the Version” known to them, and by a reference to Greek entirely unsupported save by the assertions “slight inspection,” “soon settled,” etc.

But again: F. W. G. imagines his point proved when he asserts that the word “them” refers to “nations,” and not to “disciples.” Overlooking the fact that *τὰ ἔθνη* (*ta ethnē*), “the nations,” are neuter and aggregate, *αὐτοὺς* (*autous*), them, masculine and individual.<sup>2</sup>

I think I may safely say that the more fully we inspect the original, and the more accurately we grasp the grammar in connection with these words, the further we get from F. W. G.’s dictum. And the more we become acquainted with the number of able Greek scholars who are utterly opposed to F. W. G. on the point, the more surprised we become at his audacity, and the more pained to think that he could have left his simple readers, unable to ascertain for themselves, in ignorance of the fact that it was not considered by others to be so simple or so soon settled. In view of his not doing so, one cannot wonder at the tone

<sup>1</sup> Page 4.

<sup>2</sup> See Bengel’s *Gnomon in loco*

of indignation in W. K.'s sentences quoted above in connection with John iv. 1. "Need I quote?" says W. K. "Most needful," one has to say, "and most needed by F. W. G."

"Jesus made and baptized." Could anything be plainer? Not made BY baptizing, but made disciples AND baptized them. Thus John iv. is simple, and soon settles, and settles beyond dispute, for all who bow to the Word, the fact that Baptism is not discipling in any sense of the word whatever. There is no need to refer to Greek construction or grammar. Here it is beautifully plain for the youngest and the simplest: "MADE AND BAPTIZED."

Before proceeding further, it may be for the benefit of some readers to enable them to look up for themselves the different passages where the word *μαθητεύω* (*mathēteuō*), "make disciples," occurs:—

Matt. xiii. 52—"Every scribe (which is) *instructed*."

„ xxvii. 57—"Who also himself *was* Jesus' *disciple*."

„ xxviii. 19—"And *teach* (make disciples of) all nations."

Acts xiv. 21—"And *had taught* many, they returned."

These passages very plainly show its real meaning; no outward act is conveyed by it, but in each case instruction involving mind and heart. No adult could be disciplined by Baptism, nor could an infant be.

And if F. W. G. were correct as to "them" meaning nations, and "discipling," "baptizing," then the Apostles should have gone forth baptizing every one straight before them. But this was not what F. W. G. wanted to prove. He asserts in the boldest fashion "them," and then limits it to "adults by grace made willing, and *their* children." How crooked the path becomes when Scripture is departed from!

But to return to what is spoken of as "the Commission." Is there not a laboured, unscriptural way of writing about Matthew xxviii. even by some who do not (one is thankful for it) go as far as F. W. G. or even J. N. D.?

Let the reader carefully note that that which is recorded in Matthew xxviii. was the closing scene and the record of the last words of the Lord Jesus as uttered on the Mount of Olives. But that scene is also recorded in Mark xvi. and Luke xxiv., and those words are also recorded, but only in part and as suited to the different gospels in which they respectively occur.

MATT. XXVIII. 18, 19, 20.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, etc.

MARK XVI. 15, 16, 19.

And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. . . . So then after the Lord had spoken unto them He was received up into heaven.

What we now get separately the disciples received at one time. Years elapsed ere the gospels were written. The gospel had been preached as far West as Rome (if not Spain) ere Mark wrote. We now have the complete record and separately in gospels that undoubtedly present different aspects of truth.

The Master of the House is prominent in Matthew. The servant in Mark. The command in the one is brought out, the obedience of the believing one in the other.

Christ risen, but no ascension named, in Matthew. Christ risen and ascended in Mark.

All this, when seen and carefully used in our application of Scripture, is most helpful, but, when carried to excess, results in leading into error, and strengthening it.

It is all important, therefore, to remember that the disciples addressed heard all in one last discourse from the Lord Himself, and then acted upon it, long ere it was in either gospel. And I am persuaded that we are right therefore in asserting that they acted upon authority—the

authority of the Lord's own words. How miserable the expressions in the "Letters" already quoted which would lead us to believe that the words when spoken (afterward to be recorded by Matthew) were the only commission given for Baptism; but not for Jews, for Gentiles only! Yet while refusing any commission to the disciples, J. N. D. acted upon it himself, because he had no other! Does not this prove what I have stated, that *seeing* what is called dispensational distinctions is one thing, but to carry them beyond their place is to help on error? How many now-a-days, scarcely knowing what they affirm, are talking learnedly about Matthew xxviii.—"It is not for us." "It is not for the Church." "It is for the Gentiles." Going to the length of taking away these verses from the Church altogether. If they are correct, then there is no commission, no authority for us to act on. What did Peter mean when he said: "This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel"<sup>1</sup>? Did he go on to say that was its exhaustive fulfilment, and that, seeing it applied *then*, it could not apply in a future day? We know he did not. But just as that scripture could be fulfilled *then* and yet remain to have a *future* fulfilment in the latter day, so with Matthew xxviii. 19. "All nations" may be an expression that looks forward; but it certainly was spoken to and acted upon by the disciples long before it was written by Matthew. Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles, were all baptized. Men of various nationalities were discipled, baptized, taught—on what authority? On that undoubtedly of the Lord's own words, as found complete when Matthew and Mark are both read.

What are we to think of F. W. G.'s bold statements referred to: "The passage . . . says absolutely nothing about believers, nothing of adults any more than infants, nothing about the Baptism of disciples"? Yet he wrests it to teach that "Adults made willing by grace and their

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 16.

infants" are in it! Certainly neither adults nor infants are in it. But "discipled ones," as believing ones, are in Mark xvi. Yet such *only*, for neither here nor elsewhere in Scripture do we find the remotest reference to infants in connection with Baptism, either in the teaching of the Lord or the practices of His servants. It remained for a corrupt Church, with its already formed system of nuns, to institute that which until then was unheard-of.

R. T. HOPKINS.

### Department of Question and Answer.

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God."—*John vii. 17, R.V.*

QUESTION 44.—*Does a brother come under 2 Thessalonians iii. 6, as one to withdraw from, and not to have fellowship with, who persists in going into the sects and unions to preach the Gospel, but who does not teach them to observe all things? Should such an one be recognised as an overseer in an assembly of God's gathered-out ones, seeing that God's overseers are those that speak the word of God, whose manner of life we are to imitate (Heb. xiii. 7, R.V.)?*

There are matters of grave difficulty at issue which need our careful consideration. Were it a matter of one acting in the way described who had come into an assembly that not only had a Divine origin, but was carried on in a scriptural manner, such an one would first be disciplined within; and this might lead to the manifestation of further evil—resulting finally in his having to be put away as a heretic.

But it must be borne in mind that things are not thus to-day. In many companies the larger part believe that what the writer complains of in his question is perfectly right and scriptural—namely to break bread in the morning, and to be found in the various denominational buildings through the rest of the day; and this often on the plea that, as God's gifts are for the edifying of the Body (Eph. iv.), we must go where the gifts are in order to be edified.

However unscriptural this thought, it is a question worthy of serious consideration whether those who find themselves in such a company would not be more honest if they were quietly to withdraw, stating their reasons, and not seek to force principles upon those who so widely differ.

J. A. B.



## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

*(Continued from page 224.)*

## VI. "HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM."

It now becomes necessary, in reviewing the Tracts, etc., before us, to see what they say in connection with the "Households" of Scripture. In so doing we shall find the writers are in no way different from others who before them have sought to bring Infant Baptism out of these Scriptures, save in the temerity with which they make bold assertions which they cannot support, and go to a further length—not only teaching that the infants of a believer should be baptized, but all in his house. Here they do not all hold together, a fact worth noting as we go along. I have to pass over "The Letters" of J. N. D. as to households, as, save a passing allusion in one, he never refers to them at all, basing all upon Matthew xviii. and 1 Corinthians vii. Others, again, include the children, and perhaps the wife; but some boldly state that all in the house should be baptized, servants as well as children. S. M. A. says:—

"It may be said there is no proof he (the jailer) had any children, or, at least, young children. I answer, this does not at all affect the point, which is that all his were connected with him in outward blessing and privilege, and therefore were baptized; and what is insisted on is that this principle includes the very youngest child. It was, as we have already shown, an instance of admitting the house, with the head of it, into the place of privilege. Are they entitled to this on account of their relationship? And if so, they assuredly ought to be baptized. And whether they are adults or infants is not the question, provided they are in the house, and, therefore, under the authority of the head of it."

Thus unmistakably does S. M. A. teach Household Baptism. Mark, it is not Infant Baptism that he would repudiate, nor adult. The head of the house brings all in it on to the same ground of privilege with himself. Equally true

of a grown-up family still under the authority of the head of the house.

Thus, while most keep back from such alarming statements, S. M. A. (and he is not alone) clearly avows his belief in the baptism of adults still with their father. "All under the authority of the head." No matter what their life—no matter what open sin they were indulging in—S. M. A. avers they were to be baptized; nay, more, that they were so. Most wicked and appalling statement, as all are bound to admit when they remember this act of baptizing into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was apart from faith and the cleansing blood. In their sins, and the Name to be named upon them! How horrible the thought when the light of history is shed upon it, and we learn that men from earliest years of manhood practised the vilest sins in the name of their deities, and all excesses were gone to.

Yet S. M. A. would have us to believe that when an idolater in Corinth or elsewhere was converted to God every adult under the authority of that one was to be equally baptized and brought into the place of privilege!

Alas for those who can follow such as S. M. A., instead of turning with shame and disgust from the very thought that the Name of a Holy God should have been linked with such evil. It is abhorrent to one who thinks what it implies.

As has been stated, S. M. A. is not the only one who pursued this line of teaching as to adults. W. B., writing in 1875, says:—

"I did not conceive it possible that adults would be baptized by them, without some evidence of a work of grace in their souls, but I am astonished to hear that this is now earnestly advocated as an important part of *Church* truth. Even 'open rejectors of Christ' are to be baptized if in the household and they will submit. 'Drunkards' too, seeing that the Holy Ghost dwells and works within the circle of the baptized, and all outside are in the domain of the Devil!

"An aged and esteemed brother has baptized a servant girl, and other

baptisms of adults, unbelievers, have followed. I wrote to those concerned in the baptism of the girl, and my questions, with the replies, are as follows:—

“QUESTION.—‘On what ground is the privilege of Baptism granted to this girl?’

“ANSWER.—‘On the ground of my (the mistress’s) responsibility to God as the head of this house. I do not hold “Infant Baptism,” as it is called, but baptize my child as part of my household, which this girl is also.’

“QUESTION.—‘What, in your thought, is the present position (*i.e.* after her Baptism) of the girl in respect to the Lord Jesus, to the Church of God, and to the world?’

“ANSWER.—‘Scripture tells me that she is now *in* the church, *out* of the world, and subject to the Lordship of Christ’ (the italics are the writer’s, but no Scripture given).

“She also said:—

“‘I would not have an unsaved servant in my household who refused to let me teach them of Christ, and none has a right to be taught who is not baptized.’”

W. B. proceeds to say:—

“Wishing to learn the thoughts of those who were labouring at the time where this Baptism took place, I asked them their judgment. Two openly avowed the fullest fellowship with it.”

Here we have the plainest evidence that “an aged and esteemed brother,” a lady, and two who laboured, were all of one mind in the carrying out this teaching of S. M. A.

Without the slightest reference in the Word of God to infants being baptized, those who now hold this doctrine have to try and find some passage from which they can extract it. This may seem severe, but let the reader remember that Roman Catholics, as well as large numbers of others who make up the bulk of those who practise Infant Baptism, never attempt to find it in the Scriptures. Nay, more, they deny that it is there, and rest it upon tradition. Also the fact is not to be forgotten that, so far as history goes, there is not the faintest trace of it until the third century, when it took its rise in Egypt.

Conjecturing and inference are resorted to, and, worse, as

we have seen in the course of our inquiry, and will now have to see again, the Greek is referred to as if none could dispute the teaching brought out.

A large class of infant baptizers content themselves with saying, "But there were households." When challenged as to number, they are in many cases surprised to find they are limited to three as to which Scripture says they were baptized, and more surprised when told that as to the jailer, he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house," and that the house of Stephanas "addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints";<sup>1</sup> certainly not a very infantile pursuit.

Thus they find themselves limited to but one, Lydia's,<sup>2</sup> who could say "*my* house," which certainly would not have been her language if she had been married, seeing that woman's position then and in the East was a very different one to what it is in modern times in the West.

On seeing for themselves that Lydia was a long way from home, engaged in business, therefore with others working for her, and, above all, on reading verse 40, "And when they had seen the brethren," in Lydia's house (which could only refer to those of it converted at the same time, and therefore they are called brethren),—on seeing all this, many have been compelled to give up their vague notions, with the result that each Scripture read brought out the more clearly the simple fact that Baptism is for believers only.

But S. M. A. and F. W. G. would quickly have told them, "You are not aware that there are two different words in the original translated house. But, though translated as if they meant the same thing, they do not; and one of them means the family." But it will be well to let them state it in their own words:—

"Two different words are used in chapters i. 16, and xvi. 15 (1 Cor.). In the first place it is *oikos* (*oikos*), a word which strictly applies, in

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 15.      <sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 15.

New Testament usage, to the children of the house (where applied to *persons*); whereas the word *oikía* (*oikia*) in the other passage is *never* so applied in the New Testament, but rather to the servants. Both alike are translated in our version 'household' or 'house.' The children had been baptized of Paul; the servants had devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints."<sup>1</sup>

I may notice that F. W. G. is not the originator of this utterly untenable distinction. Mr. Charles Taylor in America, and others there, taught it over fifty years ago; and concerning it one then said:—

"It is ingenious but untenable, the terms being *both* used of the *same* households, and having no more difference in them than the terms *brothers* and *brethren*."

And a Mr. Howell speaking also in connection with it said:—

"In view of this explanation, we remark that the house of the jailer is called (Acts xvi. 31) *oikos* (*oikos*), in the very next verse it is called (32) *oikía* (*oikia*), and again in the second verse from this (34) *oikos*."

"Assume as correct the criticism given, and you would read: 'Paul and Silas went into the jailer's house and preached the gospel to him and to his infant children, the servants (who, it seems, lived, not in a cabin or in a kitchen, but with the master) believed. He did not, however, baptize the believing servants, but proceeded to baptize the jailer's infants, his *oikos* as *separate* from his *oikía*!'"

Another tract has come before me in which this difference is pressed.<sup>2</sup>

It is peculiar that this tract is headed "Private," seeing that it is sold at 7s. 6d. per 100, and is solely occupied with what professes to be the true unfolding of Baptism. In it we read:—

"In the case of redemption by blood, we read, 'They shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house (*oikos*) of their fathers' (Exod. xii. 3)."

<sup>1</sup> Page 24.

<sup>2</sup> "Scripture on the Symbols of Christ's Death." This paper may be had of Cooper & Budd.

Then in a note at foot :—

“If you continue to read this Scripture, you will find the word *oikia* used twice when it is a question of eating (or communion), but when it is a question of protection, *oikos* (*oikos*) is invariably the word. There is a very interesting analogy between the change of these words here and a change of the same words in 1 Corinthians i. 16 and xvi. 15.”<sup>1</sup>

But for this reference to the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the LXX., I should not have needed to refer to the tract, as, apart from that, it proceeds on the same lines as S. M. A.

The writer seems to take for granted that his readers will know that these quotations are from a translation ; if not, he certainly ought to have informed them. But, when he set himself to search for authority in the Greek of the O. T. for the support of his theory that the two words are used very differently, it would have been well for himself if he had gone further and examined the Hebrew, the original language itself. For one glance at the concordance would have demolished his distinctions, so dogmatically put forth in connection with Exodus xii. Let us read it again : “You will find the word *oikia* used twice when it is a question of eating, but when it is a question of protection, *oikos* is invariably the word.” Such a sentence leads the simple to suppose that every point has been examined, and that these highly spiritual distinctions are fully established. One can imagine such, in the future, saying, “You see verse 4, that implies ‘eating,’ and verse 3, ‘protection.’” “Indeed ! and how do you show that ?” “Oh, the words are different ; *oikia* is in the first, and *oikos* in the other.” All highly satisfactory till the query is put : “But is it so in the Hebrew as well as in the Greek translation ?” Alas ! the card house is demolished ; for *oikos* and *oikia* are indiscriminately used as the translation of ONE Hebrew

word, which occurs nearly two thousand times from Genesis to Malachi. Thus "house," Exodus xii. 3, is exactly the same as in verses 4 and 7. The one Hebrew word, בַּיִת (ba-yith) is found in both, and all through. What becomes then of the "very interesting analogy between the change of these words here and a change of these words in 1 Corinthians i. 16 and xvi. 15"? The fabric disappears with the false foundation on which it was reared.

The fine-drawn distinctions, whether as to O. T. "protection" and "eating," or N. T. "family" and "servants," are alike a self product, as the evolving of the web from the spider itself; and, whether intended by the writer or not, certainly used by Satan to take captive God's people. At least, those of them who, instead of searching and proving, are apt to say, "How profound!" "How deeply interesting!" "What a spiritual brother! how deeply taught!"

Another sentence, and one may dismiss the tract into its own privacy, with the sincere hope that its writer may consign it to its proper oblivion.

Referring to Acts xvi. 34:—

"The phrase, 'with all his house,' is only one word in the original, and an adverb (πανοικί)."

Then in a footnote:—

"πανοικί (householdly) would express his act in ostensibly bringing his own to the place in which he then stood in this world under the authority of Christ, rather than their act in accepting the privilege."<sup>1</sup>

Let W. Kelly answer him:—

"Large-hearted and intelligent men on all sides admit that the households of Scripture decide nothing as to this. There may have been no infants, or, if there were, the household might be said to be baptized without including them, because of the nature of the case. We hear of people baptized,—men and women,—but not of children; we read of servants of the Lord brought on their way by the brethren with wives and children, but never of children where Baptism is in

hand. If it be a truth and a privilege intended for the children of the saints, does this look like His provident wisdom and way? He knows that multitudes of His own are not subtle-minded, but simple, and would prefer one word of clear Scripture, in doctrine, or precept, or example, above all the theories that ever were spun, even if they could lay hold of them. They feel suspicious when one advocate rests much on the adverbial form, *πανοικί* (panoiki), Acts xvi. 34; another on the difference between *οικον* and *οικίαν*, 1 Corinthians i. 16, xvi. 15; especially as those who ought to know as well, with similar views in general, reject these criticisms. When such evidence is caught at with eagerness, the candid must own that real proof must be sorely wanting."<sup>1</sup>

Sorely wanting, indeed! and it will be well if Christians, instead of being easily beguiled, are on the alert, and suspicious of these references to Greek.

There can be no excuse for a writer not informing himself as to the Hebrew ere he plays upon difference of words in a translation. In not doing so he is as foolish as if he sought to build distinctions upon two English words for the same Hebrew.

The house of Jairus, whose daughter Christ raised from death, by Luke<sup>2</sup> is called *οικος*, and in the same chapter,<sup>3</sup> he calls the same house *οικία*. Mark<sup>4</sup> calls the same house *οικος*. In the parable of the house attacked, Matthew calls it *οικία*,<sup>5</sup> Luke, *οικος*.<sup>6</sup> "Into whatsoever house (*οικία*) ye enter first say, Peace be to this house" (*οικος*).<sup>7</sup> How plain the Scripture! How distorted and stumbling man, as soon as he comes to Scripture, not to learn, but to obtain that which can be made to support, as he thinks, his belief! I trust enough has been written to show that no such support exists, and also to make Christians exceedingly careful to see that when assertions are made they can be distinctly shown to be in the Word itself.

To recapitulate that the reader may have the matter fairly before him:—

<sup>1</sup> Exam. Tract, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> viii. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 51.

<sup>4</sup> v. 38.

<sup>5</sup> xxiv. 43.

<sup>6</sup> xii. 39.

<sup>7</sup> Luke x. 5.



LYDIA'S HOUSE (Acts xvi.).

1. Being named as hers would be in itself a sufficient proof she had no husband.

2. The proof that she had would lie with the one who asserted it, and such proof can never be found in Scripture, which is absolutely silent as to it.

3. Some 300 miles away from her own town, engaged in business, her house, it can be easily seen, would be composed of her workers.

4. As seen from verse 40, Paul and Silas being freed from the prison, went where the only "brethren" could be found—they of Lydia's house. Brethren whom they could "comfort," not children or servants, brought on to "Christian ground."

Note: if a husband and children, he as well as they, though unsaved, would have been included in the Baptism.

THE JAILER'S HOUSE (Acts xvi.).

Note verse 32: "And they spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." What, then, becomes of the thought that it was only a question of the jailer himself, and that all his were only baptized because he was?

Verse 34: "And rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

"Thus the meaning will be, rejoiced that he, with all his house, had been led to believe God" (Alford Greek Test.).

So Alford; but not so S. M. A., who would enfeeble it thus:—

"It is in the original, he rejoiced with all his house, having believed in God. It was a happy household now that he was saved."

Alford shows it means that that was true of his house which was true of him—he believed, they also; he re-

joiced, so did they. But S. M. A. would make us believe that they were happy because he was saved!

Think of unsaved members of a house, dead in trespasses and sins, happy because another member of it had been convinced of sin, and by grace saved! What saith the Scripture: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."<sup>1</sup> "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him;"<sup>2</sup> yet S. M. A. represents those old enough to be happy, and intelligently happy, as being unsaved themselves, though baptized and happy because the jailer was saved! To what lengths can men go in their determination to work out their theories!

To conclude: the house heard the Word as well as he, and believed as much as he, and were baptized with him, as equally saved, and through faith in Christ.

It may be well to note from the use of the word *oikos* (*oikos*), "house," in 1 Samuel i. 21, "And the man Elkanah and all his house went up," that it does not of necessity include every one in the house, for in verse 22 it says, "But Hannah went not up." The word is used, yet Hannah and Samuel did not go.

Thus, when it has been proved (and it has never been done yet) that there were infants in one or all of the three houses—Lydia's, the jailer's, Stephanas'—of which alone Scripture records Baptism, then it must be also shown that of necessity such infants are included in the expression.

A very difficult task in view of Elkanah's house: "All his house went up." Perfectly true, though Hannah remained, unable to go because of Samuel's age.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 23.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 14.

## THE HOUSEHOLD OF STEPHANAS (1 Corinthians i.).

Here F. W. G. creates a difficulty where there is none, that he may solve it in his peculiar style, so as to prove the Baptism of a family outside the assembly.

“*The baptized family were outside the assembly.*”<sup>1</sup> That is the only key to what is otherwise inextricable confusion. Baptism is reception into the kingdom; and they were in the kingdom, not in the Church.”<sup>2</sup>

And this, because he chooses in the most absurd way to read, “I thank God that I baptized *none of you* but Crispus and Gaius,” with a full stop, as if the sentence was not prolonged and added to by the words, “And I baptized also,” etc.

He makes the Apostle say distinctly that he had only baptized two, and then teaches that if the household of Stephanas were in the assembly, then Paul contradicted himself! But where is Stephanas in all this? For though the head of the household, he was a part of it! And if he alone was in the assembly, and not the others, F. W. G.’s difficulty would be as great. But there is no difficulty. One would say far more trifling than difficult.

His difficulty (he refers to it on pp. 23, 24) consisted in making distinction between *οἶκος* and *οἰκία*, but he quietly got over it after he had made it, and thus sums it up:—

“The children had been baptized of Paul; the servants had devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints.”

I have shown how impossible it is for any to substantiate such a distinction, and no one is to be met who makes it save those who, in spite of plainest proof, choose to shut their eyes and maintain it at all hazards, because to let it slip would be the letting go of what they advocate as the main, if not the only support of their false doctrine.

R. T. HOPKINS.

<sup>1</sup> The italics are F. W. G.’s.

<sup>2</sup> Page 23.

## THE CONGREGATION.

THE Hebrew word עֲדָה, 'edāh (from עָד, yā'ād, "to appoint") describes "a general CONGREGATION, inclusive of all."<sup>1</sup>

It must be carefully distinguished from another word, מוֹעֵד, mō'ed (from the same root), signifying a "meeting by appointment," or "at appointed seasons." This latter appears, in the A.V., in the title "Tabernacle of the *Congregation*," which is more correctly rendered, in the R.V., "TENT OF MEETING."

The word under consideration must be still more carefully distinguished from the noun קָהָל, qāhāl (from קָהַל, qāhāl,<sup>2</sup> "to call together"), meaning "an ASSEMBLY, local and partial."

The translators of the Septuagint Greek Version of the Old Testament generally translate the Hebrew word עֲדָה, 'edāh, by the Greek word συναγωγή, sunagōgē, the primary meaning of which is likewise "congregation," although, in New Testament times, it was used to designate a place of public meeting. Still, even in the N.T., traces are not lacking of the older meaning of the word.<sup>3</sup>

The first mention of the *Congregation* occurs in EXODUS xii. 1-3: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron . . . saying . . . Speak ye unto all the Congregation of Israel." The commandment concerning the Passover is introduced thus. The twenty-first verse of the chapter informs us how Moses was able to speak unto "all the Congregation." "Moses called for all the ELDERS OF ISRAEL, and said unto THEM," etc.

Even as the Passover lamb was to be killed by "the whole

<sup>1</sup> See Newberry's "Englishman's Bible," Introduction, p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> We use the Roman letter q to stand for the Hebrew ק. See "Rödiger's Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar" (Bagster), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> See Acts xiii. 43; Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9.

assembly of the Congregation of Israel,"<sup>1</sup> so the two goats on the Day of Atonement were to be taken "of the Congregation of the sons of Israel."<sup>2</sup>

The two trumpets of silver<sup>3</sup> were for the calling of the Congregation.

In the sin-offering of Leviticus iv.<sup>4</sup> and the sin-water<sup>5</sup> of Numbers xix., provision was made for guilt and defilement contracted by the Congregation.

The word of the LORD to the Congregation was: "Ye shall be holy; for I Jehovah your Elohim am holy."<sup>6</sup>

The "sum of all the Congregation of the sons of Israel" was taken in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt.<sup>7</sup>

Besides this demand for an obligatory offering, we read that the appeal for the voluntary offering towards the construction of the Tabernacle was addressed to "all the Congregation of the sons of Israel."<sup>8</sup>

When judgment fell upon Nadab and Abihu, the fear of Moses was excited, "lest wrath come upon all the Congregation."<sup>9</sup>

All the Congregation were gathered together to witness the consecration of the Priests<sup>10</sup> and the setting apart of the Levites.<sup>11</sup>

Concerning the blasphemer<sup>12</sup> and the Sabbath-breaker,<sup>13</sup> the sentence of the Lord was: "Let all the Congregation stone him."

When Aaron went up into Mount Hor to die, he and Moses went up "in the sight of all the Congregation."<sup>14</sup>

When Moses appointed Joshua to become his successor,

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xvi. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Num. x. 2, 3.

<sup>4</sup> See also Num. xv. 24-26.

<sup>5</sup> Num. viii. 7, Heb. Compare Num. xix. 9, 17, Heb.

<sup>6</sup> Lev. xix. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Num. i. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Exod. xxxv. 1, 4, 20.

<sup>9</sup> Lev. x. 6. See R.V.

<sup>10</sup> Lev. viii. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Num. viii. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Lev. xxiv. 13-16.

<sup>13</sup> Num. xv. 32-36.

<sup>14</sup> Num. xx. 27-29.

he "set him before Eleazar the Priest, and before all the Congregation," and laid his hands upon him.<sup>1</sup>

The sin at Baal-Peor was committed "in the sight of all the Congregation"; and in the sight of all the Congregation also did Phinehas come forward and vindicate the offended majesty of the law."<sup>2</sup>

A second numbering of "all the Congregation of the sons of Israel" took place after the plague at Baal-Peor.<sup>3</sup>

When Jehovah and His people had been avenged upon Midian, the spoil was divided between "those who went out to battle" and "all the Congregation."<sup>4</sup>

During the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness frequent mention has, alas! to be made of the Congregation in connection with their repeated murmurings. They murmured, on departing from Elim,<sup>5</sup> for bread; at Rephidim,<sup>6</sup> for water; at Kadesh,<sup>7</sup> because of the report of the spies; and again at Kadesh (Meribah), after the death of Miriam,<sup>8</sup> for water. In the matter of the gainsaying of Korah,<sup>9</sup> the Congregation comes into special and deplorable prominence. The "Congregation"<sup>10</sup> of Korah is referred to in Numbers xv. 5, 6, 16, 40, and xxvii. 3; and that of Dathan and Abiram in Psalms cvi. 17, 18. On the very day after the terrible judgment which destroyed these wicked men, it is written that "all the Congregation of the sons of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD!"<sup>11</sup>

The word "Congregation" does not occur in DEUTERONOMY. Wherever it is inserted in the A.V. of the fifth book of Moses it is a mistranslation (compare R.V.).

Not long after the crossing of the Jordan and the destruction of Jericho and Ai, the princes of the Congregation were

<sup>1</sup> Num. xxvii. 15-23.

<sup>2</sup> Num. xxv.

<sup>3</sup> Num. xxvi. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Num. xxxi. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xvi. 2-10.

<sup>6</sup> Exod. xvii. 1-3.

<sup>7</sup> Num. xiii. 26.

<sup>8</sup> Num. xx.

<sup>9</sup> Num. xvi.

<sup>10</sup> A.V., "company."

<sup>11</sup> Num. xvi. 41.

beguiled into swearing an oath of peace to the wily Gibeonites.<sup>1</sup> For this cause the Congregation were displeased with their princes, but were persuaded to respect their oath.

The most notable occurrence of the word in the book of JOSHUA is chapter xviii. 1, where it is written that "the whole Congregation of the sons of Israel assembled themselves together at SHILOH, and set up the Tent of Meeting there."

Chapter xx. narrates the setting apart of the Cities of Refuge (already legislated for in Numbers xxxv. 9-29), wherein the manslayer might take refuge "until he stand before the Congregation for judgment."

In chapter xxii. we read how the suspicious procedure of the two and a half cattle-rearing tribes (which had already drawn forth expostulation from Moses<sup>2</sup>) culminated in the erection of an altar on the side of Jordan which they had chosen for their dwelling-place. "And when the sons of Israel heard of it, the whole Congregation of the sons of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them."<sup>3</sup> The matter was with difficulty settled without bloodshed.

Passing from Joshua, the book of national unity, to JUDGES, the book of tribal independence, we find, as we might expect, little concerning the Congregation. Indeed, if we except the "congregation of bees"<sup>4</sup> which Samson found in the dead lion, the word only occurs in the account of the gathering of the Congregation<sup>5</sup> to execute judgment on the tribe of Benjamin. It may be well to remark that the events treated of in chapters xvii. to xxi. of the book of Judges actually took place at the *beginning* of the time covered by the book itself.

KINGS AND CHRONICLES.—From this period nothing is

<sup>1</sup> Josh. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Num. xxxii.

<sup>3</sup> Josh. xxii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Jud. xiv. 8, Heb.

<sup>5</sup> Jud. xx. 1, xxi. 10, 13, 16.

said about the Congregation till we arrive at the inauguration of the Temple,<sup>1</sup> in which event "all the Congregation of Israel" participated.

The next occasion on which the people of Israel are thus designated is the very last time that, on the page of God's Word, this term is applied to them: "When all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, they sent and called him unto the Congregation, and made him king over all Israel."<sup>2</sup> The breach of national unity that ensued became permanent. After this date the twelve tribes were never of one accord about anything, and are never called "the Congregation" again.

The expression "CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH"<sup>3</sup> is to be found in four Scriptures, namely:—

Num. xxvii. 17: "That the Congregation of Jehovah be not as sheep that have no shepherd."

Num. xxxi. 16: "The plague was among the Congregation of Jehovah."

Josh. xxii. 16: "Thus saith the whole Congregation of Jehovah."

" " 17: "There came a plague upon the Congregation of Jehovah."

Once only do we find that which is equivalent to "CONGREGATION OF GOD":—

Ps. lxxiv. 2: "Remember Thy Congregation which Thou hast purchased of old."

It is (or should be) needless to add that we do not hear of the Congregation of Jehovah from the time that the title "Congregation," by itself, could not be applied to Israel.

So long as the twelve tribes remained and acted together they formed "the Congregation," notwithstanding an occasional dissenting minority, as in Joshua xxii. or Judges xx.,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings viii. 5; 2 Chron. v. 6.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings xii. 20.

<sup>3</sup> That is to say, as a translation of עֲדַת יְהוָה, 'ēdāth Yehōvāh. Where "Congregation of the LORD" occurs elsewhere in A.V. compare R.V. or margin of Newberry's "Englishman's Bible."



xxi. With the final secession of the ten tribes the title, which described the people as a whole, disappears from the Old Covenant Scriptures.

A. P. MACDONALD.

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## THOUGHTS FROM THE TRIBE OF LEVI.

*(Continued from page 200.)*

WE might now look at a few passages in the letter to Hebrews. In this book God reveals to us that there is now no room for any shadow, for "The Perfect" has come. Hebrews is from God to us, to save us from going back into Judaism, or any form of worship based thereon. Here let me seek to divide the book in such a way that may help us to grasp its teaching. In chapters i. and ii. God sets aside the prophets and angels, and speaks to us "In Son." In chapters iii. and iv. Moses and Joshua are set aside, for God has now a Son over "His House" and a perfect "Rest"; and that Son and Rest is Christ. From chapters v. to vii. inclusive, the Levitical priesthood is set aside to make room for the new order of priesthood which He has founded in and through His Son. In chapter viii. the Old Covenant must make room for the new and better. In chapters ix. and x. the earthly form of worship must cease, for the heavenly has come in (John iv. 23). In chapter xi. we get a glimpse of the men of faith "of whom the world was not worthy." Yet great as they were they too must be set aside, for at the best they were but flickering lights. And now, in chapter xii., God calls us to "look off unto Jesus, the Author and Perfector of the Faith" (R.V.); calling upon us in chapter xiii. 13, to "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach,"—unto Him who is the Substance of every shadow, the Antitype of every type, the

Centre of every purpose of God—Christ Jesus, God's Son, our Saviour, our Hope, our Lord.

If we look at Hebrews, chapter vii., we find that outside of Judaism, and long ere Levi was, God had a priesthood in Melchisedec. According to the Law, Levi received tithes of his brethren (ver. 5); yet Levi, in the person of Abraham, met Melchisedec and paid him tithes (ver. 9), and was blessed by him; God saying that "without contradiction the less is blessed of the better."

I want you here to notice that, in order to make room for the present order of Priesthood, the former order must pass away. In Hebrews vii. 11-15 God reveals to us that there was no perfection through the Levitical priesthood, that the order is changed, and that the law based thereon is changed also. So God has swept Judaism with its Priesthood, and the laws based thereon, away from before Him. And He would seek to bring you and me to see the new order of Priesthood, the head of which is His Son, "made for ever High Priest after the order of Melchisedec."<sup>1</sup> You say, Is this order earthly or heavenly? In Hebrews viii. 4, God says that if He were on earth He would not be a priest, for to be a priest on earth was to be of Levi's tribe, and He came not of the tribe of Levi, but of the tribe of Judah, "Having then a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession" (Heb. iv. 14, R.V.). From these portions of the Word we see that the order is heavenly, and not earthly.

Aaron was called from among the living to be "High Priest"; Christ was called from among the dead. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made High Priest; but He that said unto Him, "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten thee."<sup>2</sup> And (according to Acts xiii. 33-36) that day was the day God raised Him from among the dead.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vi. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. v. 5.

Prior to that He was alone, for "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit."<sup>1</sup> As we see Him lying in the manger, that Holy Thing of God begotten, we see Him alone, we had no part with Him there; as we see Him, the Spotless Lamb of God, travelling this sin-stained and doomed earth, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, suffering as the "righteous One," urged on by every manifestation of sin, every groan of misery, every horror of death, on, on to Calvary's cross (for there, and there alone, could the deep need be met), He is still alone. When we see Him in Gethsemane's garden, dropping sweat as if it were great drops of blood, He is still alone. When we see Him on the middle tree, despised of men, made the curse of God, He was alone in the awful sufferings of that ghastly hour. Thank God He was alone.

"When we see Thee as the Victim,  
Bound to the accursèd tree;  
For our guilt and folly stricken,  
All our judgment borne by Thee;  
Lord, we own, with hearts adoring,  
Thou hast loved us unto blood."

When we see Him raised the third day victorious over death and Hades, no more to die, suffering past Him, the Glories before Him, He is no longer alone, for He exclaims, "I will declare thy name unto My brethren."<sup>2</sup> Then, and not till then, He became the Priest.

In Hebrews viii. 2 God says that He is the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle which God pitched, and not man. Here and there you find some of God's children grasping the truth of His word: "Where two or three are, having been gathered together into My Name, there I am in the midst of them."<sup>3</sup> They have learned from God, through His word, that "there is none

<sup>1</sup> John xii. 24.<sup>2</sup> Heb. ii. 12.<sup>3</sup> Matt. xviii. 20.

other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.”<sup>1</sup> This they proved the day they accepted God’s Christ as their Saviour. Also that there is none other name given under heaven among men into which as saints they must be gathered.<sup>2</sup> Thus they are enabled by God to turn their backs on every name, church, chapel and sect of Christendom, and meet simply as believers gathered together of God by His Spirit, through His word, into the precious, God-pleasing and satisfying name of Jesus Christ, their Saviour, Hope and Lord: knowing that in their midst He is, and seeking by grace to give Him His place as Lord in their entire lives, to bow to His every word, and to be to God through Him a kingdom of priests. These are very often asked, “But who is your Minister?” Thank God we have a Minister, the Minister of the Sanctuary, the One who has passed through the heavens, made of God to us, who are gathered of God into the Name, the Minister of the true Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man.<sup>3</sup> May God ever give us grace that we may always be found satisfied with His ministry for us, as we seek in our corporate capacity “to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”<sup>4</sup> God save us from ever desiring a man to be our minister, for in so doing we reject the One that God has ordained,—the Man Christ Jesus,—and put a mere man in His place.

J. CHARLETON STEEN.

*(To be continued.)*

<sup>1</sup> Acts iv. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. viii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Peter ii. 5.

## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

*(Continued from page 235.)*

## VII. "ELSE WERE YOUR CHILDREN UNCLEAN."

WE have now arrived, in the course of our Reviews of "Letters," etc., at the passage which, strange to say, J. N. D. made the most of. Strange, because there is not the slightest allusion to Baptism in it, nor is there the smallest reference to the bringing of children into any position whatever!

Two extracts will be quite sufficient from "the Letters," as, where this Scripture is referred to, it is nearly always in the same language.

"If a Jew married a heathen, the Jew, who was holy, profaned himself, and the children had no title to be received as holy. Grace reigns now, and, if one party be converted, this one sanctifies the unbeliever, and the children are holy, and have a right to the privileges of the place of God set up in blessing, as in the Jewish case he had not. The child is not sanctified, but holy in contrast with unclean; that is, in Scriptural phraseology, has right to come in."<sup>1</sup>

"Is a Christian parent obliged to leave his child outside with the Devil, or allowed to bring him in where the Holy Ghost and the care of God's house is? Scripture tells one that children of a Christian parent are holy, have a right to be admitted, are not as children of a Jew who had married a Gentile unclean—that is, unfit to be admitted among God's people, but holy. I know it is said the husband was so too. It is not true where the sense is looked to."<sup>2</sup>

Before pointing out the falsity of several statements made in these extracts it may be better to examine the passage in 1 Corinthians vii. with the object of seeing what it applies to. The Apostle was asked as to what was to be done in the case of husband or wife being unconverted. Was separation between them necessitated? His reply is, "No." The Old Testament applied to Israel in its earthly

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. III. p. 465.<sup>2</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 59.

position. "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them" <sup>1</sup> absolutely prohibited such an alliance as that of a Jew and a heathen. And when made contrary to the command, then in a later day the word through Ezra was: "Separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives."<sup>2</sup> Nay, more, Shechaniah "said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God."<sup>3</sup> And they put away not only the wives, but the children born of them. It was this action in connection with Israel that evidently caused Paul to write as he did in reply, calling attention to the fact that if, under such a Scripture, they had to put away their unsaved wives, they would on the same ground have to put away their children. "Else were **YOUR** children," <sup>4</sup> not *theirs*. How many commentators might have saved themselves from ingenious and elaborate arguments on this passage about the legitimacy of **THEIR** children meaning the children of a mixed marriage, if they had only taken note of the word "**YOUR**," meaning all the children of saints in Corinth, even though both parents were Christians. For the words **YOU** and **YOUR** take in all in this Epistle. If a wife is to be separated from her husband because unclean, then children, all unbelieving children, must be acted toward in the same way.

Another thing to be specially noted is the word "holy" in contrast to "unclean." That which is true of the unbelieving wife is also true of the unbelieving child; the one is no more accounted holy than the other.

The wife and the children of all in Corinth "holy" to

<sup>1</sup> Deut. vii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ezra x. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ezra x. 2, 3.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 14.

whom? Those with whom they were, and from whom they would have had to be separated on the supposition that Ezra x. was to guide them in their conduct.

Notice that same word is found in connection with "meats" in 1 Timothy iv. 4, 5. It means no more when applied to children than when applied to meats. It is no more than ceremonial cleanness that is referred to. Is there a word about Baptism? Can it be found in the chapter at all? It is entirely apart from the subject. If children, because holy to their parents, were to be baptized, then wife or husband ought to have been, or these verses that put them on the same level would be incorrect. I know that these theories have reached the length now of Baptism for "all in the house," therefore unsaved adults, if any in it, servants, etc., and all on the ground of the husband's individual faith; but I am not aware of any teaching that on wife's faith husband should be. But as C. H. M. puts it:—<sup>1</sup>

"As to 1 Corinthians vii. 14, there is nothing about conversion on the one hand, or Baptism on the other."

Where in the chapter is there the slightest thought of a "position" not Christian, not heathen, yet "away from the Devil, where the Holy Ghost is"? Or where the thought of "coming in," for J. N. D. said, "that is, in Scriptural phraseology, has right to come in"? The verse says, "now are they holy." What has that to do with coming in? Nothing whatever! F. W. G., taking up same Scripture, differs from J. N. D. The latter says, "baptize because holy," but F. W. G. "holy because baptized."

Writing in connection with verse 14, he says:—

"This will make it plain why children are in this place spoken of as holy. It is as having place in the kingdom that they are so."<sup>2</sup>

One is amazed that J. N. D. and F. W. G. did not pause ere they wrote thus. According to both of them (they have

<sup>1</sup> "Things New and Old," Vol. XX. p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Page 25.

not the smallest doubt), children were baptized in Corinth. How is it then that Baptism is not introduced in this passage, just when to do so would have been not only to settle the minds of saints at Corinth on the point in question, but also for all time to set at rest any question as to whether children should be baptized or not?

Instead of "Else were your children unclean," etc., Paul should have said, "Are you not aware your children are holy, because they have been baptized?" But he did not, for the very simple reason that they never had been. The whole matter of Baptism is dragged in by men at their wits end for some passage by which to substantiate their theories.

How beside the mark all these words, "right," "position," "leave his children outside with the Devil," are can be easily seen by one who holds to the truth and refuses to accept mere statements of men.

As if a few drops of water from the hands of a priest could ever bring a child into a position, and, worse, as if the refusal to allow it on the part of Christian parents was the "leaving outside with the Devil," when constantly praying for the real conversion of their children they look to God to accomplish it by His Spirit and Word. How a sacramental theory can stick even to a Christian and hinder, as it certainly did in the case of J. N. D.!

"OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" (Matt. xix. 14).

This verse, as well as those in Matthew xviii. concerning children, is also used in support of these views.

"The Scripture will have infants received; they that receive them receive Christ, and of such is the kingdom of heaven, and the child of a believing parent is holy. I do not doubt for a moment that children dying are received as saved into heaven (see Matt. xviii.). It is monstrous to think they cannot be received by the Church on earth."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. II. p. 333.



Did it never occur to J. N. D. that in the above extract he was comparing things that differ, and treating them as if they referred to the same thing? He starts with infants, therefore all, and all whether dying young or not, but then he slides off by "the child of a believing parent is holy" to a *class*—a part, and only a very small part—for the infants of believing parents are scarcely to be spoken of when the enormous number of infants all over the world are considered.

"The Scripture will have infants received." Bold statement! but he never referred to the Scripture which "will have it." Clearly enough, however, does he teach that this receiving was by Baptism, or by the "irregular" sprinkling; not only so, but seeing that Baptism, according to him, is "the act of the baptizer," and, however irregular, by whomsoever performed (believer or unbeliever), is accepted of God, every one thus treated in any and every sect, however corrupt, has been received and is henceforth in the house, outwardly Christian.

"I do not doubt for a moment," he says, "that children dying are received as saved into heaven."

He adds: "It is monstrous to think *they*" (to be consistent he should have added the dying, but he does not so limit—"they" with him means "all infants")—"it is monstrous to think they cannot be received by the Church on earth."

But infants dying in infancy and being received into heaven by the Lord Himself has no parallel with infants living, being received by the Church on earth.

If infants dying are received by Christ, then there can be no question that it is true of all infants in all nations. As true of those in heathen lands as of those in any other mis-called Christian land.

But until such die in infancy, will any one be bold enough to say Christ has received them? J. N. D.'s proposition

practically amounts to this. An infant dying (*i.e.*, when dead), Christ will receive into heaven, therefore the Church should receive whom? a dying or dead child? No, a living one who may never die in infancy! Christ's reception into heaven of such an one is after death. If any one speaks of Christ as having received an infant before, he affirms that which is not true; this once seen, it is easy also to see that Matthew xviii. has nothing to say concerning Baptism at all. It is false reasoning from beginning to end. "The Church on earth receives by Baptism,<sup>1</sup> and should do so, monstrous if it does not!" yet Christ has not received; nay, more, they have received tens of thousands in this meaningless way who have grown up to rush into sin, and, alas! this is equally true of the children of believing parents in many cases. They all seem to confound "*of such* is the kingdom of heaven," Matthew xix. 14, with "*theirs* is the kingdom of heaven," Matthew v. Two very different thoughts.

"Years ago, one said to me, when speaking of ministerial labour, a sentence which I never forgot: 'Our business is to bring Christians into the consciousness of their position in the midst of a great baptized house' (J. N. D.)—*i.e.*, to make them conscious that there is a Church of God on earth, a body of Christ of which they are living members. This sentence was one full of meaning and power to my own soul."<sup>2</sup>

A sentence so remarkable arrests attention. "Full of meaning and power," he says. What was? The notion that his business was to bring Christians into the consciousness of their position in the midst of a great house, and this sentence was given him as J. N. D.'s. How like it is to another one of Dr. Pusey's in 1879, when, as President of the English Church Union, he said to them:—

"The first point is to get people to believe in their Baptism."

<sup>1</sup> So J. N. D.

<sup>2</sup> F. G. P., "Paul's Doctrine," p. 36.

He went the full length, and believed to the full in the old teaching of the "Fathers," so called of fourth and fifth centuries; namely, the actual regeneration of the baptized one. But both are on the same lines of error, and both wrote of Baptism as a sacrament. The "lustration" of the child by Pagans perpetuated! For it is nothing but Christianized Paganism. One would have people "remember their place in a great baptized house," the other would have them "believe in their Baptism."

"There is a sacramental introduction into the place of blessing which does not secure a person."<sup>1</sup>

If all this is not evil doctrine, I know not what is. Though it comes in the guise of spiritual phrases and under the authority of names, it cannot be received or tolerated by any one who has learned for himself, from the word alone, the place Baptism occupies there. It is *not* a sacrament, it brings into no position. It involves no privileges—save the privilege a Christian has in obeying it. It is sufficient to quote such sentences, one would think. They carry their own condemnation with them. They are abhorrent to a Scripturally taught believer, to be turned away from as savouring of a Popish-Pagan origin, and as containing in them all the subtle error that is ever to be found in Sacramentalism.

R. T. HOPKINS.

(*To be continued.*)

<sup>1</sup> "Letters," Vol. III. p. 464.

THE COMMUNITY. <sup>1</sup>

I. The word *κοινός*, *koinos*, common, occurs in the following passages of New Covenant Scripture:—

Mark vii. 2: “*common*, that is unwashen hands.” <sup>2</sup>

Acts x. 14, 28, xi. 8: “*common* or unclean.”

Rom. xiv. 14: “nothing is *unclean* (A.M., *common*) of itself, save that to him who accounteth anything to be *unclean* (A.M., *common*), to him it is *unclean*.”

Heb. x. 29: “hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified a *common* thing” (R.M.).

Rev. xxi. 27: “there shall in no wise enter it anything *common*” (R.M., so Tregelles and others).

Contrast with the foregoing nine occurrences its usage in the following four passages:—

Acts ii. 44, iv. 32: “had all things *common*.”

Titus i. 4: “a *common* faith.”

Jude 3: “our *common* salvation.”

II. From the word *κοινός*, *koinos*, there is derived a verb, *κοινώω*, *koinoō*, to make common, to defile, to profane. Its occurrences are Matt. xv. 11, 18, 20; Mark vii. 15, 20, 23; Acts x. 15, xi. 9, xxi. 28; Heb. ix. 13.

This word is evidently derived from the word *κοινός*, *koinos*, as used in the first-named nine passages, where it means common in the sense of profane.

III. Another word in the Greek New Testament derived from *κοινός*, *koinos*, common, is *κοινωνός*, *koinōnos*; it means one who has something in common with another or with others—that is, a communicant, a communist, a commoner, a partner, a joint possessor.

<sup>1</sup> Unless the contrary is stated, we take all English quotations from the Revised Version.

<sup>2</sup> Space necessitates extremely short quotations. The reader is earnestly desired to read the various passages in the Book.

It occurs in the following passages:—

Matt. xxiii. 30: “*partakers* with them in the blood of the prophets.”

Luke v. 10: “*partners* with Simon.”

1 Cor. x. 18: “*partakers* of the altar,” (A.V.), “*have not they . . . communion* with the altar?” (R.V.).  
*Literally*:—Are not the ones eating the sacrifices *communicants* or *partners* of the altar?

1 Cor. x. 20: . . . “*have communion* with demons” (A.M.). *Literally*, become *communicants* or *partners* of the demons.

2 Cor. i. 7: “as ye are *partakers* of the sufferings” —*i.e.*, partners, communicants.

2 Cor. viii. 23: “my *partner*.”

Philemon 17: “me as a *partner*.”

Heb. x. 33: “*partakers* with them.” *Literally*, *partners* of the ones used.”

1 Pet. v. 1: “a *partaker* of the glory.”

2 Pet. i. 4: “*partakers* of a divine nature” (R.M.).  
Not the divine nature in the sense of the nature of God, as Buddhists teach, but a divine nature in the sense of a nature from God; communicants of this, partners in this, joint possessors of this.

Evidently this word occurring in the above passages means a communicant, a partner, one who possesses in common with others.

IV. We may here collect the occurrences of the word *συγκοινωνός*, sunkoinōnos, from *συν*, sun, together, and *κοινωνός*, koinōnos, a communicant or partner.

Rom. xi. 17: “*partaker* with them.”

1 Cor. ix. 23: “a *joint partaker*.”

Phil. i. 7: “*partakers* with me.”

Rev. i. 9: “your brother and *partaker* with you.”

The words in italics in these four quotations represent the Greek word *συγκοινωνός*, sunkoinōnos, a joint partner.

V. As the word *κοινωνός*, *koinōnos*, a partner, or communicant, is derived from the adjective *κοινός*, *koinos*, common, so from it in turn is derived the verb *κοινωνέω*, *koinōneō*,<sup>1</sup> to be a partner, to act as a partner, to have in common, to commune, to communicate, to share entirely, to have fellowship.

It occurs in the following passages:—

Rom. xii. 13: “*communicating* to the necessities of the saints.”

Rom. xv. 27: “the Gentiles *have been made partakers* of their spiritual things.”

Gal. vi. 6: “let him that is taught in the Word *communicate* to him that teacheth.”

Phil. iv. 15: “no church *had fellowship* with me.”

1 Tim. v. 22: “neither *be partaker* of other men’s sins.”

Heb. ii. 14: “the children *are sharers* in blood and flesh” (A.M.).

1 Pet. iv. 13: “insomuch as ye *are partakers* of Christ’s sufferings.”

2 John 11: “he that giveth him greeting *partaketh* in his evil works.”

Evidently the word “partake” is altogether inadequate to convey the force of the verb *κοινωνέω*, *koinōneō*, which means to have and hold and use in common. Compare in Hebrews ii. 14 the use of this verb with that of *μετέχω*, *metechō*, to have with—the children have blood and flesh altogether in common (*koinōneō*); He took part of the same (*metechō*).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Carefully to be distinguished from *κοινώω*, *koinoō*, to defile, previously mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> As this word and its derivatives are frequently translated “partake,” etc., and are liable to be confused with the words under consideration in our present article, we collect here a list of the passages in which they occur:—

*Μετέχω*, *metechō*, (from *μετά*, *meta*, with, and *ἔχω*, *echo*, to have) to

We understand then that this verb *κοινωνέω*, *koinōneō*, means to be a partner, and to act as a partner, as one who shares in common with others.

VI. We may connect with it its derivative

*συγκοινωνέω*, *sunkoinōneō*, to be and act as a partner with.

Eph. v. 11: "*have no fellowship with.*"

Phil. iv. 14: "*ye had fellowship with my affliction.*"

Rev. xviii. 4: "*have no fellowship with her sins.*"

VII. Again, as from *κοινός*, *koinos*, common, is derived *κοινωνός*, *koinōnos*, a partner, and from it *κοινωνέω*, *koinōneō*, to be and act as a partner, so from this last-named word is derived in its turn the noun *κοινωνία*, *koinōnia*, signifying primarily the act of having, doing, suffering in common, and behaving as partners.

2 Cor. viii. 4: "*beseeching us in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints.*"

Paul was to act as their partner in what they were doing.

2 Cor. ix. 13: "*the simplicity of the fellowship*" (singleness of contribution, A.M.). They acted as partners with the distressed saints at Jerusalem. There was no elaboration of excuses. We and they are partners; they lack, we have plenty, so we send them something. Community, or fellowship, or partnership, is such a simple thing after all.

2 Cor. xiii. 14: "*the communion of the Holy Spirit.*"

Phil. ii. 1: "*if any fellowship of the Spirit.*" That which is done in common as the result of the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

have something with another:—1 Cor. ix. 10, 12, x. 17, 21, 30; Heb. ii. 14, v. 13, vii. 13.

*Μετοχή*, *metochē*, a having something with another: 2 Cor. vi. 14.

*Μετοχος*, *metochos*, one who has something with another: Luke v. 7; Heb. i. 9, iii. 1, 14, vi. 4, xii. 8.

Gal. ii. 9: "right hands of *fellowship*"—*i.e.*, they said,  
We are partners.

Phil. i. 5: "your *fellowship* in furtherance of the  
gospel."

Phil. iii. 10: "the *fellowship* of His sufferings."

Philemon 6: "the *fellowship* of thy faith."

Heb. xiii. 16: "to *communicate* forget not"—*i.e.*, forget  
not your proper conduct as partners of the needy.

1 John i. 3: "that ye may have *fellowship* with us:  
yea, and our *fellowship* is with the Father, and  
with His Son, Jesus Christ."

1 John i. 6, 7: "if we say we have *fellowship*, . . .  
we have *fellowship*. . . ."

In some of the above passages a further meaning of the  
word becomes apparent, namely:—

That which is possessed in common—commonwealth, (*e.g.*,  
Phil. iii. 10; Philemon 6). This sense becomes still more  
marked in the following places:—

Rom. xv. 26: "to make a certain *contribution*"—that  
is, a certain amount was made in an especial sense  
common property.

1 Cor. x. 16: "the *communion* of the blood of Christ,"  
"the *communion* of the body of Christ."

2 Cor. vi. 14: "what *fellowship* hath light with dark-  
ness"?—*i.e.*, what common property do they possess?  
(Perhaps Heb. xiii. 16 should be mentioned here.)

But, besides these scriptures, there are at least two<sup>1</sup> which  
cannot be included above.

We refer to Acts ii. 42 and 1 Corinthians i. 9.

In both of these scriptures the word *κοινωνία* evidently  
means not the act of having, acting, and suffering in  
common, nor yet that which is in common possessed; but  
rather the community of those who are partners together.

<sup>1</sup> We say "at least," for possibly a few of the above-named—*e.g.*,  
2 Cor. ix. 13—should rather be put into this category.





who speak of their place of worship—referring to some Church or Chapel of man, or place on earth—are ignorant of the will of God. Our place of worship is inside the Veil, in the very presence of God. It is our blessed privilege on the first day of the week to come together and corporately enter by faith, with one heart, inside the Veil and worship God. Our bodies cannot enter there, but “God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”<sup>1</sup> It is with our spirits that we understand and worship God.

How far God’s saints have departed in these things from His will, His pattern, and His purposes revealed to us in His word! They have rejected their priestly character, and joined hands with the ungodly in countenancing a man-made priesthood, and a worldly sanctuary. In spiritual things they are found yoked in fellowship with the ungodly, denying Him whom they have owned as their Saviour His place as Lord. To all such God is still crying, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you in, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”<sup>2</sup> May God give all such ears to hear and hearts to obey, that they may be found with Christ “outside the camp, bearing His reproach.”<sup>3</sup> And may God enable those who have come out to keep separate from and not to touch the unclean thing, and to be found “blameless in the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In closing, let us read together in 1 Peter ii. 4, 5: “To whom coming, as unto a living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as living stones, are being builded (or “Be ye builded”—both renderings are correct) a Spiritual house for an Holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” These words were written to saints of God.

<sup>1</sup> John iv. 24.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. xiii. 13.

Instead of "an Holy Priesthood," the correct translation reads "for an Holy Priesthood," clearly revealing to us that while God has many priests, for every believer is a priest, God can only have a priesthood inside of His house, in which, alas! alas! so few of His children are found; for, as I read my Bible, outside "the house of God, the Church of Living God, Pillar and Ground of the truth,"<sup>1</sup> there cannot be a priesthood of God. Paul, in Philippians i. 10 (R.V.), prays God that the Philippians might prove or discern the things that differ. Thus we judge that, while every believer is a priest by birth, they only can be to God for a priesthood by being found through obedience to the Word of God in House of God, which house is known by its being "Pillar and Basement for the truth"—seen by man in the companies of believers, wherever found, who have been and are being gathered by God through the truth into the Name, to do the whole will of God.

I trust that while it may please the Lord to leave us here the desire of our hearts may be to be found in the position He would have us occupy for Him, also in the condition of soul that will give Him pleasure, "living godly in Christ Jesus"<sup>2</sup>; "filled with the knowledge of His will"<sup>3</sup>; "increasing with the increase of God."<sup>4</sup> Such a path may be a lonely path, a trying path, but it will ever be a path that will have the Master's smile.

"O how will recompense His smile  
The sufferings of this little while!"

J. CHARLETON STEEN.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Col. i. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Col. ii. 19.

## NOTES FROM NEANDER.

## IV.

“By means of letters, and Christian brethren who were travelling, a correspondence was maintained between the most distant churches in the Roman empire. When a Christian entered a strange city, his first enquiry was for the church; and here he was received as a brother, and supplied with whatever could contribute to his spiritual and to his bodily refreshment. But as deceivers, the evil-disposed, and spies, and false teachers, who sought only to gain adherents to their particular opinions, abused the confidence and charity of the Christians, it became necessary to adopt precautionary measures to prevent the injuries which the indiscriminate practice might give rise to. . . . Church letters—which were a kind of *tessaræ hospitales*, by which Christians from every quarter of the world were placed in fraternal union with each other—received the name of *epistolæ* or *literæ formatae* (*γράμματα τετυπωμένα*), because, to guard against forgery, they were drawn up after a certain form (*forma*, *τύπος*); they were also named “*epistolæ communicatoræ*” (*γράμματα κοινωνικά*),<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as they indicated that the bearers were in the communion of the Church, as well as that the bishops who sent and received such letters were united together in the bonds of Church communion.”

“As a close bond of union was early formed between churches of the same province, so it was also a consequence of the catholic spirit of Christianity that in all cases of emergency, such as disputes on matters of doctrine, of Christian morals, or Church discipline, common deliberations should

<sup>1</sup> *Grammata koinōnika*: letters pertaining to communion.

be frequently held by deputies from these churches. . . . As the Christians, conscious that they were nothing and could do nothing without the Spirit from on high, were accustomed to preface every important business with prayer, so also in these assemblies they prepared themselves for their public deliberations by uniting in prayer to Him who had promised to enlighten and guide by His Spirit those who believe in Him, whenever they should cast themselves wholly on Him, and to be in the midst of all who were gathered together in His name."

"Down to the middle of the third century the annual provincial synods appear to be universal, if we may judge from the fact that we find them assembled at the same time in parts of the Church as widely apart as Northern Africa and Cappadocia."

"As the provincial synods were accustomed to communicate their decisions on all important matters of common interest to distant bishops, they thus served, at the same time, to place the more remote portions of the Church in living union with each other, and to preserve them in this connection."

"With all the heathen the Christians might eat and hold every kind of intercourse; but the society of apostate brethren they were absolutely to shun, in order to show them practically that they had forfeited all claim to the title of Christian brethren. . . . By this very exclusion from the society of the brethren those who had fallen would, it was hoped, . . . be brought to a sense of their guilt, and be awakened to a fruitful repentance. If in their subsequent life they gave any sign of this, they were to be taken under the spiritual care of the Church, and at length, after they had given sufficient proof of the sincerity of their

repentance, were once more to be admitted to the communion."

"That which our Lord Himself, in His last conversation with His disciples, declared to be the mark by which His disciples were always to be distinguished—the mark of their fellowship with Him and His Father in heaven, and the mark of His glory dwelling among them—namely, that they should love one another,—this was the prominent mark of the first Christian communion, and one which chiefly struck the very heathens as remarkable. The titles of "brother" and "sister," which the Christians gave to each other, were not empty names. The kiss of brotherhood, which, after baptism, was given to every one on his reception into the Church, by the Christians into whose immediate fellowship he then entered—which the members of the same church bestowed on each other just before the celebration of the communion, and with which every Christian saluted his brother, even when he saw him for the first time—this was no unmeaning form, but it was originally the expression of Christian feelings, a token of the relationship which Christians believed to subsist among one another. It was this fact . . . which, in a cold and selfish age, struck the pagans with wonder,—that men, differing by nation, rank, circumstances, and education, should be so intimately bound together; that the stranger who arrived at any city should, as soon as, by his *epistola formata*, he had made himself known to the Christians of the place as a brother beyond suspicion, find at once, from those to whom he was personally unknown, all brotherly sympathy and support."

"The places of Christian assembly were at first rooms in private houses belonging to different members of the church. In large towns, where such a place of assembly could not accommodate all, it became necessary that smaller

portions of the community, dwelling at a distance, should choose other places for their meeting on the Sunday. When any one distinguished for the talent of communicating doctrinal instruction settled in a town, he, we may suppose, formed a circle within the church, which accordingly met at his house to hear his spiritual discourses."

"The church in his house, ἡ κατ' οἶκον αὐτοῦ ἐκκλησία.<sup>1</sup> In such passages the reference certainly cannot be to places of assembly for the whole church, since in several instances this ἡ κατ' οἶκον τινος ἐκκλησία<sup>2</sup> is expressly distinguished from the whole community (1 Cor. xvi. 19, 20). At Ephesus the church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla is first mentioned, and then *all* the brethren, which, according to this supposition, would be the same thing. Compare Colossians iv. 15. Again, there is another objection to this explanation—viz., that it would make the church meet in the house of Aquila when he resided at Rome, his ordinary abode, and when he was at Ephesus. Compare Romans xvi. 5 and 1 Corinthians xvi. 19. But it is very unlikely that the church would constantly change its place of meeting on the arrival of Aquila. It is more reasonable to suppose that men who, like the tent-maker Aquila, were obliged by their occupation to have large and commodious dwellings wherever they took up their residence, were in the habit of giving up *one* apartment for the use of a portion of the church."

<sup>1</sup> Hē kat' oikon autou ekklesia.

<sup>2</sup> Hē kat' oikon tinos ekklesia: the church at any one's house.

## Fragments.

PREPARE thyself, not to peace, but unto patience; and seek for quietness, not on earth, but in the heavenly places; not among men nor in the world, but in God alone.

WATER, ever the same in its nature, may greatly vary in condition, and character, and effects. As a stagnant pool, it is loathsome and forbidding; as a running stream, it refreshes by its moisture all the neighbourhood, and gladdens by its glance every eye. A Christian passing through the world, in the Lord's ways, and his heart lifted up in them, is like a swift rushing rivulet making its way over a thirsty land. As it leaps and glitters in the sunshine it is not only doing good as it goes, but manifestly rejoicing in the opportunity of doing it.

A *guilty* conscience needs no accusation, and a *good* conscience fears none.

THOUGH the Lord will never remember the sins of a believer to his *condemnation*, yet the believer himself will always remember them to his *humiliation*.

IF we would *stand*, Christ must be our foundation; if we would be *safe*, Christ must be our sanctuary.

THIS is a sure rule: God never takes anything from His people but He gives them something better in the stead of it.

How is faith strengthened? By being much occupied with the object of faith.

IF I grapple with sin in my own strength, the Devil knows he may go to sleep.

TESTIMONY for Christ must always flow from intercourse with Him. Not simply doing things because we desire to bear testimony for Him, for then our hearts will be thinking about our testimony, instead of about Him.

THE fashion of this world passeth away, as the waters of a river that runs by a city, or as a fair picture drawn upon the ice, that melts away with it. Men come to the world's pleasures as to a lottery—with heads full of hopes, but return with hearts full of blanks.

LET Diotrophes say it is good for me to have the pre-eminence; let Judas say it is good for me to bear the bag; let Demas say it is good for me to embrace the present world; but do thou, O my soul, say, with David, it is good for me to draw near to God.



## THE ASSEMBLY.

IN contrast to the Hebrew word  $\text{עֵדָה}$ , 'ēdāh, "*Congregation*,"<sup>1</sup> let us now consider the meaning and uses of  $\text{קָהָל}$ , qāhāl, "ASSEMBLY."

This noun is derived from the verb  $\text{קָהַל}$ , qāhāl, "to call together." It is a word of peculiar interest, as it is the Old Testament equivalent of the New Testament word commonly translated "CHURCH."

Newberry defines it as "an Assembly, local and partial."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps it would be more exact to say that, while "Congregation" contemplates the whole people, or the people as a whole, "Assembly" views the people, or any number from among them, as coming together upon the same<sup>3</sup> business. Thus the Assembly may be formed by a minority of the people, but not so the Congregation.

The Septuagint translators generally render  $\text{עֵדָה}$ , 'ēdāh, by  $\text{συναγωγὴ}$ , sunagōgē, and  $\text{קָהָל}$ , qāhāl, by  $\text{ἐκκλησία}$ , ekklēsia. They do not, however, adhere invariably to this rule, for, while they *never* translate 'ēdāh by ekklēsia, they too frequently transfer qāhāl into sunagōgē—that is, they substitute "Congregation" for "Assembly." Unhappily, this lack of uniformity on their part has been followed by worse confusion in the A.V., and is not altogether absent from the pages of the R.V.

Passing over the benedictions in the book of GENESIS<sup>4</sup> (where it appears as "company" or "multitude" in both of our English Versions), we find that the first noteworthy occurrence of this word is in EXODUS xii. 6: "The whole Assembly of the Congregation shall kill it" (the Passover

<sup>1</sup> N. T., Vol. V, "The Congregation," p. 236.

<sup>2</sup> Newberry's "Englishman's Bible," Introduction, p. xxiv.

<sup>3</sup> Compare 1 Cor. xi. 20, Greek.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xxviii. 3; xxxv. 11; xlvi. 4; xlix. 6.

lamb). Notice that "all the Congregation"<sup>1</sup> must be spoken to, but it is "the Assembly of the Congregation" that is seen actually killing the lamb. Compare with this Numbers xiv. 5. The expression "ASSEMBLY OF THE CONGREGATION" is peculiar to these two scriptures.

In the ordinance of the Sin-offering, as given in LEVITICUS, it is written: "If the whole Congregation" (that is, the people as a whole) "shall err, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the Assembly" (that is, the definite company exercised concerning this matter), ". . . then the Assembly shall offer a young bullock. . . . It is the sin-offering for the Assembly."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, on the Day of Atonement, the two he-goats and the ram were to be taken "of the Congregation of the sons of Israel,"<sup>3</sup> but atonement is made "for all the Assembly of Israel, . . . for all the people of the Assembly."<sup>4</sup>

Again, the Silver Trumpets of NUMBERS were "for the calling of the Congregation."<sup>5</sup> But, in the particular directions concerning the employment of them, we read, "When the Assembly is to be gathered together, ye shall blow," etc.<sup>6</sup>

Yet again, the ashes of the heifer were to be "kept for the Congregation of the sons of Israel for a water for impurity."<sup>7</sup> "But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from the Assembly."<sup>8</sup>

Moses, in DEUTERONOMY, says, with reference to the Ten Commandments, "These words Jehovah spake unto all your Assembly in the mount."<sup>9</sup> The occasion of the giving of the Law is three times spoken of in this book as "the DAY OF THE ASSEMBLY."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Verse 3.<sup>2</sup> Lev. iv. 13, 14, 21, R.V.<sup>3</sup> Lev. xvi. 5.<sup>4</sup> Verses 17 and 33, R.V.<sup>5</sup> Num. x. 2, 3, R.V.<sup>6</sup> Verse 7, R.V.<sup>7</sup> Num. xix. 9, A.C.<sup>8</sup> Verse 20, R.V.<sup>9</sup> Deut. v. 22.<sup>10</sup> Deut. ix. 10, x. 4, xviii. 16.

The words of the Farewell Song of Moses were also spoken "in the ears of all the Assembly of Israel."<sup>1</sup>

After the destruction of Ai, JOSHUA read the Law "before all the Assembly of Israel."<sup>2</sup>

In the history of the war with Benjamin in the book of JUDGES, we read that "the Congregation was assembled;"<sup>3</sup> but, having been assembled, they presented themselves "IN ASSEMBLY<sup>4</sup> of people of God."<sup>5</sup> Then, when Benjamin had been defeated, the question arose: "Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up *in the Assembly* unto the Lord?" "And behold there came none to the camp from Jabesh Gilead to the Assembly."<sup>6</sup>

The Hebrew word for "the Assembly" is *always* used in KINGS AND CHRONICLES, except in 1 Kings viii. 5, 2 Chronicles v. 6, and 1 Kings xii. 20, where we find "the Congregation." The last-mentioned verse terminates the record of "the Congregation" as such.

The following examples from the PSALMS will be interesting to many:—

- Ps. xxii. 22: "In the midst of the Assembly will I praise Thee."  
(Quoted Heb. ii. 12.)
- „ xl. 9: "I have evangelized righteousness in the great Assembly."  
(See R.M.)
- „ lxxxix. 5: "Thy faithfulness in the Assembly of the saints."  
(Heb. and R.V., "holy ones.")<sup>7</sup>
- „ cxlix. 1: "His praise in the Assembly of the saints." (Heb.,  
"gracious ones.")

Hitherto we have found the words "Congregation" and "Assembly" running parallel to each other, the distinction between them indicating, like all God's distinctions, a difference. Strangely enough the "Revisers," who are so

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxxi. 30, R.V.    <sup>2</sup> Josh. viii. 35, R.V.    <sup>3</sup> Judg. xx. 1, R.V.

<sup>4</sup> LXX., ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ, en ekklēsia. Compare 1 Cor. xi. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Verse 2, Heb.

<sup>6</sup> Judg. xxi. 5, 8, R.V.

<sup>7</sup> LXX., ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἁγίων, en ekklēsia hagiōn. Compare 1 Cor. xiv.

careful, in the five books of Moses, to maintain the distinction, have, in the later historical books, inserted, in almost every instance, the wrong word. But the people are never seen as "*the Congregation*" after 1 Kings xii. 20 and the secession of the ten tribes. "THE ASSEMBLY," on the contrary, comes into greater prominence than ever.

Thus, in a later day, JEHOSEPHAT "stood in the Assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the House of the LORD."<sup>1</sup> Thus again "all the Assembly made a covenant with the king"<sup>2</sup> (JEHOIADA) at the beginning of his reign. And all through the narrative of the reformation under HEZEKIAH we find the king and the Assembly acting together.<sup>3</sup>

Lastly, after the Captivity we see EZRA and NEHEMIAH back at Jerusalem with a returned remnant of the people, who are spoken of as "the Assembly"<sup>4</sup> (yea, as we shall see, *Assembly of God*), thus bringing us down to the close of O. T. history.

Neither of these latter day reformers had the *Congregation* with them, but the ASSEMBLY they did indeed have, however small that Assembly may have been. It is deeply to be deplored that this important point has been misstated in the R. V.

"ASSEMBLY OF JEHOVAH"<sup>5</sup> is mentioned in the following scriptures:—

Num. xvi. 3: "Wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the Assembly of Jehovah?"

„ xx. 4: "Why have ye brought the Assembly of Jehovah into this wilderness?"

Deut. xxiii. 1-8: "Shall not enter into the Assembly of Jehovah" (six times).

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xx. 5, 14, Heb.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. xxiii. 3, xxiv. 6.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Chron. xxix., xxx., xxxi.

<sup>4</sup> Ezra ii. 64, x. 1, 8, 12, 14; Neh. v. 13, vii. 66, viii. 2, 17.

<sup>5</sup> יְהוָה יְהוָה, qehāl Yehōvāh; LXX.: ἐκκλησία κυρίου, ekklesia Kurion  
"CHURCH OF THE LORD."

1 Chron. xxviii. 8: "In the sight of all Israel, Assembly of Jehovah."

Micah ii. 5: "In the Assembly of Jehovah."

"THINE ASSEMBLY" occurs once:—

Lam. i. 10: "That they should not enter into Thine Assembly."

The two last quotations show that Jehovah had an Assembly which He recognised as His Own down till the very eve of the Captivity. That this was still true in the days of the remnant that returned is proved by the only appearance of the title "ASSEMBLY OF GOD"<sup>1</sup> on the page of Old Covenant scripture:—

Neh. xiii. 1: "They read . . . that an Ammonite and a Moabite should not enter into the Assembly of God" (R.V.).

The small and feeble remnant of Nehemiah's day read the first *divine* mention of the "Assembly of the LORD" as it is contained in the fifth book of Moses. They *read* it (for reasons which need not be gone into here) as "Assembly of God," and proceeded forthwith to put in force the portion of the Law which they had read.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, even at that time and in that place, there was still an Assembly of God to which the commandment of Deuteronomy xxiii. 3, 4 applied with undiminished authority.

A. P. MACDONALD.

<sup>1</sup> LXX.: ἐκκλησία θεοῦ, *ekklēsia Theou*, "CHURCH OF GOD."

<sup>2</sup> Verse 3.

## "FROM," AGAIN.

BESIDES the confessedly helpful words that appeared in these pages<sup>1</sup> from the pen of C. M. L. in connection with the doctrine of the words used by God in 2 Timothy ii. 20-22, we offer the following gleanings from the same field.

By certain, who are credited with a knowledge of the original Scriptures, it has been affirmed that the prefix "ἐκ" (ek) is always followed by another "ἐκ" (ek) unto ensuring the meaning "out of," equal to "from."

The very Scripture before us should have been sufficient to save from such a mistake. Yet when these have been confronted with that fact, they have immediately rounded upon the interpretation of the words, and fain would have them read as they assuredly do *not* read, namely, "If a man, therefore, purge out from himself," etc. Whereas, what God does indeed say is:—"If therefore any one out-purge *himself* from," etc. It is the *person* that is the subject as well as the worker in the act of out-purging; and not anything from the person himself.

Moreover, that truth is confirmed by the consecutive words in 2 Timothy.

Let any one in whom the Spirit of God is, but read from chapter ii. verse 20 on to chapter iii. verse 5 (R. V.), at which point occurs the command:

From these **ALSO** turn away  
and see whether the meaning of

"Out-purge himself from"

is not made exceeding plain!

It has been urged that the term "out-purge" has needed to be coined for sinister purposes of a mistaken cause. We answer Nay!

Besides, no one can deny, save through ignorance or wil-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. V. No. 26, pp. 205, etc.

fulness or the like, that God Himself says “Out-purge”; while we have ourselves understood and so used the word for many many years without any challenge.

Again. In Romans xvi. 17 we find the Spirit through the apostle using the identical prefix and preposition and in the same order as He does in 2 Timothy ii. “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them”;

*i.e.* καὶ ἐκκλίνατε ἀπ’ αὐτῶν  
 kai ekklyinate ap’ autōn  
 and avoid them

Literally meaning—And turn ye out away from them. Thus demanding the most entire and intense separation.

But who ever had any difficulty in understanding the words “And avoid them”? We trow none.

While, whatever the avoiding of Romans xvi. 17 verse entails, that is the clean cut unto manifest separateness that the words of 2 Timothy ii. 22 require at the heart and hand of every one naming the name of the Lord.

JOHN BROWN.

A correspondent writes:—

With reference to the ἀπό (apo) following, *e.g.* ἐκκαθάρη ἑαυτὸν ἀπὸ τούτων (ekkatharē heauton apo toutōn) compare 3 John 10: καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐκβάλλει (kai ek tēs ekklēsiās ekballei, and out of the church casteth out), would it not seem that, when the ἀπὸ (apo) follows, the one giving the mandate to purge out is outside himself, whilst in 3 John 10 it is ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας (ek tēs ekklēsiās), because his power could only cast *out of* and not *away from*, for he (Diotrephes) is inside the church. In the Timothy scripture the one command ἐκ, ek, equals (come) out, ἀπὸ, apo (come) away from; this could not be possibly given by one inside the apostate thing.

Have you ever compared Numbers xvi. and 2 Timothy ii. and 1 Timothy i.? The authority of the LORD had been set on one side by Korah, etc., as well as by Hymenæus. Referring to the Septuagint translation, you get the expression: *ἔγνω ὁ θεός τοὺς ὄντας αὐτοῦ*, *egnō ho Theos tous ontas autou*, God knew who are His (Numbers xvi. 5; compare 2 Timothy ii. 19). Also Numbers xvi. 26: *λέγων ἀποσχίσθητι ἀπὸ τῶν σκηνῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν σκλήρων τούτων* (*legōn aposchisthētē apo tōn skēnōn tōn anthrōpōn tōn sklērōn toutōn*—saying, Depart from the tents of these wicked men).

It would almost seem that this scene in the O.T. was distinctly before the apostle when he gave the mandate: "Depart," etc.

Yours in the Lord, J. H.

## A REVIEW OF LETTERS ON BAPTISM, ETC.

(Concluded from page 251.)

### VIII. WHAT IS BAPTISM THE SIGN OF?

It remains but to notice the views put forth in connection with that of which Baptism is a sign or symbol. For, as the object has been specially to review the most important points referred to in the "Letters," etc., there is no need to attempt in these papers to take up every detail in connection with the subject. The analogy between Circumcision and Baptism has not been referred to. Let the Christian see the place the former occupied from its first introduction, and there is no difficulty left to deal with. Suffice it to say that it was for living children of an earthly people, as Baptism is for living children of God belonging to the heavenly family. Those who talk about Baptism having taken the place of Circumcision might as well speak of the



Lord's Supper as having taken the place of the Passover, and the Lord's Day as the Christian Sabbath, as if the latter had been changed into the former.

The notion that Circumcision has thus been superseded should be left to those who (ignorant of the fact that Israel will yet be restored) speak and write as if all the judgments recorded as the result of Israel's rejection of their Messiah had fallen on them, but all the blessings scattered throughout the Old Testament had become the possession of the Christian Church. The covenant is not rescinded. "The gifts and callings of God are without repentance,"<sup>1</sup> and the time is hastening on when Israel shall be saved, and shall again have their place in the land.

In writing on "Else were your children unclean," etc., I took the opportunity of showing that if there had been such a thing as Infant Baptism in Paul's days, he would not have reasoned as he did, but simply stated that their Baptism proved their position.

So in reference to Circumcision, and with greater force, it applies. If Baptism had taken its place, why did not James say so, as the question so sorely troubled, almost to the causing of division? Yet Acts xv. is silent as to it. Why? Simply because Baptism had *not*, but they were looked at and spoken of as being entirely apart. And what shall we say as to Peter,<sup>2</sup> who refused to eat because certain were not circumcised? These two passages leave us without excuse, if we allow ourselves to be troubled by such so-called analogies.

The teaching connected with Romans vi. of necessity comes in, as (if the teaching there and in other passages is that Baptism is a sign or symbol of the death and resurrection of the believer in Christ) the infant, not having faith, and not being in Christ, cannot be spoken of as being thus united to Him in death, burial, and resurrection.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xi. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. ii.

So J. N. D. writes :—

“As many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ. They were not baptized because they had already done it. None but those who are in principle Roman Catholics suppose that the work is done in it, but it is the sign of dying and rising again, not of being dead and risen. No Sacrament is a sign or profession of what is done, but of the doing of it.”<sup>1</sup>

It is significant that J. N. D. (never having given up the old teaching of the Church of England on Baptism as to its including the infants of believers) was careless as to immersion being adhered to, although he believed that alone carried out the meaning of the Word. Yet he considered that sprinkling or pouring was sufficient, though he calls them “irregular.” Just as he continues the use of the term “Sacrament,” seemingly never seeing what gross error links closely with the word. He finds great fault, in the extract given, with those who say Baptism is a sign of being dead and risen with Christ. It was necessary for him to do so, or his own position would be proved at once untenable. He says it is a “sign of dying and rising again”—rather a confused thought, to say the least of it.

Did he mean the “dying and rising again of the Lord Himself,” or “dying and rising again” as an abstract fact, or as being true in or at the time of Baptism? If the last, then he would make out that it was done by the sign, which he says only Roman Catholics do. The one who has believed is dead, and risen with Christ as the result; and Baptism is the symbol of it. It is refreshing to turn from the vague, meaningless sentence given above to the plain and conclusive words of Charles Stanley :—

“Baptism is a most striking figure of our identification with Him. Buried once unto His death, now for ever one with Him in resurrection. As He died only once, and rose again, so there is one Baptism. The believer is buried once in water, and then for ever out. We have not to die or be buried again; we reckon ourselves dead with Him,

<sup>1</sup> “Letters,” Vol. II. p. 329.

and alive again. It is very blessed when once the figure of Baptism is understood." <sup>1</sup>

It may be well to note here that the passage Galatians iii. 27 was the one in particular which fixed J. G. Bellett in his judgment as to Baptism being an act of a believer only, and that led him clearly to see that Baptism was immersion. Thus he wrote to C. E. M. Paul, of Exeter :—

" Oct. 4th, 1842.

"I believe that Galatians iii. 27 more fixed my judgment as to Baptism than any Scripture, for it told me that Baptism was the intelligent act of a believer, the personal act of one's own faith, so to express it. I do not see in 1 Peter iii. 21 anything to give the mind a pause. For while it owns that the answer which the conscience is enabled to give when it reads and receives the value of the resurrection of Jesus is the great thing, still it *implies* the putting of a believer's body under water." <sup>2</sup>

Baptism is a profession of having died with Christ. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized unto His death?" <sup>3</sup> In other words, we, at our Baptism, set forth that the old Adam life is laid down in the grave, and, having life in Christ in resurrection, we walk with Him in newness of life. Paul's whole argument is: "What! continue in sin? You who are baptized? What! do you not know what it means? Do you not know that you profess to be dead and buried with Him?" But it goes much further. Christ did not remain in the grave, nor does He leave us there. He is risen, and we in Him, <sup>4</sup> and the appeal is to those who are thus raised up. Their Baptism speaks to them; it testifies to them that there must be no living to the flesh. Death to the flesh there should be; no living in it.

Who can make this profession? Can the unbelieving world make it? Can unconscious infants? Certainly not; and therefore the effort to get rid of resurrection in connec-

<sup>1</sup> "Things New and Old," Vol. XXIX. p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> "Showers upon the Grass," p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. vi. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. vi.; Col. iii.

tion with Baptism, and to make it stop short at burial, or, as is said by advocates of Household Baptism :—

“Romans does not look at believers as risen with Christ at all.”<sup>1</sup>

Significant that this kind of teaching started in connection with Infant Baptism, and increased in volume as fresh adherents were gained, whose constant occupation seemed to be to make light of Believers' Baptism, and to attempt to rob it of one of its most significant teachings—namely, resurrection!

Surely Scripture is definite enough. “Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.”<sup>2</sup> A risen man in Christ is to live as dead to “vain rudiments” and philosophies of the world. Thus Baptism, precious in its teaching, is full of import for the believer. But for the unbeliever or infant it is but a meaningless form, or, if anything more, it is by constituting it a Sacrament—that in which “they are to believe,” or that by which they gained a “position.”

Did Christ ever mention the Baptism of an infant? Did He command it? Did He perform it? We know there is no such mention.

Did the Apostles? No. Is there to be found some example, plain and unmistakable? No, again it must be emphasized, no! No precept! No precedent! No example! Nothing of the kind can we discover in the Word.

How then can the want of that which God hath not enjoined endanger salvation or hinder blessing? How can it be supposed possible that Infant Baptism is of God when these are facts undeniable. I again repeat, “No precept! No precedent!! No example!!!” Nothing do they give us but distorted Scripture or doubtful Greek. Or, as we have seen, an attempt at originality and deep teaching, as

<sup>1</sup> S. M. A., p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Col. ii. 12.

the result of harping on a supposed difference between two words in a translation both of which stand for one word in the Hebrew language, in which the Old Testament was written:—

“Baptism is just christening—that is, the introduction into Christianity, and nothing else. Every other view of it is unscriptural and false.”<sup>1</sup>

J. N. D. thus wrote imbued with his notions, clinging to the traditions of the old National Church, which he had stepped out of early in life, but taking with him this great evil, Sacramental nonsense—the introduction of an infant by Baptism into a position.

It is doing the very thing that is so solemnly spoken against in Colossians ii. “Holding the head” we fully learn how incurably evil the flesh is, and learn the impossibility of God’s taking it up.

The Baptism of any but believers as such is an unmixed evil, for it occupies flesh with itself, and gives men in mere nature to pride themselves that they are something, and that they have something in which to glory, whereby they differ from others.

Therefore, to repeat the sentence of Dr. Pusey, the effort is to get “People to believe in their Baptism.”

There is nothing in this so-called Baptism but the religion of the flesh; that which man can see and glory in.

Take away entirely the thought that it does something for the infant, and you at once remove that which is the stronghold for it. Let parents clearly see that it is no Sacrament, and that it is a meaningless form where the one baptized has not himself living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they will turn from it with disgust, and wonder how they could ever have been ensnared. The brick has been substituted for stone, and the slime for mortar, in this Babel-building. But the Christian who stands on the simple

<sup>1</sup> “Letters,” Vol. II. p. 38.

word alone refuses the thought, and is enabled to remain distinctly apart from the rubbish around, built up as the result of man's intellect working to the introducing of that which pleases the flesh. The success of Infant or Household Baptism lies there, and the multitude who hold and practise it are the sad witness to that success and to the extent that Satan has been enabled to work in and through it. That Christians may be delivered from it is the reason for these papers; and the earnest desire of the writer is that they may be used to that end, and thus lead to more complete bowing to the Word of God, and to the Word alone.

R. T. HOPKINS.

## THE COMMUNITY.

*(Continued from page 257.)*

"Unto the church of God which is in Corinth, even to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place. . . . Faithful is the God by whom ye were called into a Community (or Partnership) of His Son Jesus Christ the Lord of us."<sup>1</sup>

It will, we think, be clear to all that it is the saints who are called into the Community. This Community, or Partnership, is world-wide in its extent. It has no local limits, it has no geographical boundary.

Within this Community, this Fellowship, this Partnership, the saints are set in churches or assemblies of God. This is an arrangement of Divine order, suited for the circumstances of human responsibility. Thus saints are not only called into the Community, the Communion, they are also brought into assemblies of God. The assembly of God is the local expression of the world-wide Community. The assembly of God has geographical limits, it has a local

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians i. 1-9.

boundary. Its area is the city, or the town, or the village, in which it is.

Into the assemblies of God the Lord Jesus receives us. See 2 Corinthians vi. for instance: "I will receive you in, and will be to you for a Father (so the Greek),<sup>1</sup> and ye shall be to Me for sons and daughters,<sup>2</sup> saith the Lord Almighty,"—that is, the Lord Christ. Compare Hebrew ii. 13 and iii. 6: "I and the children which God hath given me. . . . Christ as a Son over His house, whose house are we." In the house of God the Lord Christ is the Son, taking the place of rule and authority at the bidding and in the will of the Father.<sup>3</sup>

But how and in what manner does the Lord Christ receive into the assembly? We ask, does not Matthew xviii. 20 settle this matter? The two or three gathered there are gathered into His Name; that is to say, the cause of their being there and the manner of their being there are alike in the Name, that is, within the circle of the authority, of the Lord Christ. Therefore He identifies Himself with them. What they do as thus being together, and as thus acting (that is truly in His Name), that is His doing. He is in the midst to give virtue and validity to their action. Their receiving, if indeed in the Name, is His receiving; for, whoever else may or may not be present, He is present and that in the midst. Not present to speak Himself, nor present to act Himself. By His Holy Spirit's dwelling in and among the saints doth God work, that the Divine will may be known and done. The presence of the Lord Jesus in the midst is not for this; His presence in the midst is that which alone gives value and efficacy to what is at that time done under the guidance of the Spirit and in the name of the Lord Jesus. This is the "power" of the Lord Jesus.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> εἰς πατέρα, eis patera.

<sup>2</sup> εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας, eis huious kai thugateras.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Matthew xxviii. 18.

<sup>4</sup> See 1 Corinthians v. 4, 5; also compare *Needed Truth*, vol. iv. p. 137.

Each church of God in a city, or town, or village, then, has its own local responsibility. Care must be taken that all matters of reception, of discipline, of out-putting, are carried out in accordance with the will of God,—that all assembly acts are done under the counsel of the united circle of overseeing men,—done in the name of the Lord Jesus, on the first of the week, when the saints are gathered into the Name,—done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that they may have attached to them the power of the Lord Jesus, present in the midst.

Then God links together neighbouring churches into districts of natural and convenient extent, so that the shepherds may not lord it over their allotted portion, but become ensamples of a UNITED flock. Moreover, the periodical coming together of overseeing men in a district is the only means whereby it may be well known what are and what are not the churches of God in that district. It is not for the assembly in A—— to say, “We do not think B—— is in fellowship, although they in C—— receive therefrom and commend thereto.”

In the city, or town, or hamlet, the overseeing men are jointly responsible to know all in the assembly. Equally, in the district, the overseeing men are collectively bound to know the assemblies in the district.

We might carry this thought further, and expand it to yet larger areas; but, for the present, we forbear. What we desire to point out, as of very especial practical importance at this time, is the following:—

It is true that God calls into the Community, and not man; and whether one be or be not in the Community depends solely on whether he or she has or has not obediently heard the call of God thereinto.

They who by God are called into the Community of His Son are received in by the Son, and received into churches of God.



The reception into a church of God is by means of those who, being already in the said church, are gathered into the Name on the first of the week, and under guidance of the Holy Spirit receive in, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and because He is present in the midst, with the power of the Lord Jesus.

That a saint is in and of a church or assembly of God is the only evidence whereby another person may know him or her to be in the Community, in the Fellowship.

Does it not, we ask, equally follow that:—

The only means by which individuals or assemblies can be assured that a given company of persons is an assembly of God and in the Community, is to be found in the fact that such a company is known and recognised as an assembly of God by the united overseeing men of the district in which it is.

May God at this time give grace to us who have ceased a doing of evil, that there may indeed be on our part a learning to do well. For unless we first learn we can never do; and too much have all our hearts and minds been clouded by traditions received from the brethren. Be it ours to set ourselves to know God's perfect will for us that we may do, and thus experience in all its blessedness,

THE SIMPLICITY OF THE FELLOWSHIP

that is

THE SINGLENESSE OF THE COMMUNITY.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

## NOTES FROM NEANDER.

### V.

“As the Sabbath was regarded as a distinctive mark of Judaism, Sunday was looked upon as a symbol of the new life consecrated to the risen Christ and grounded in His resurrection.”

“The reading of the Scriptures was of the greater consequence since it was desirable that every Christian should be familiar with them; and yet, in consequence of the rarity and costliness of manuscripts, and the poverty of the great majority of the Christians, or perhaps because all could not read, it was idle to think of placing the Bible itself in the hands of all. The frequent *hearing* the word must therefore, in the case of many, be a substitute for *reading* it. The Scriptures were read in the *language* that all could understand. This, in most of the countries belonging to the Roman empire, was either the Greek or the Latin. Various translations of the Bible into Latin made their appearance at a very early period; since every one who had a slight knowledge of Greek felt a desire to make the word of God his own in his native tongue. In places where the Greek or the Latin language was only understood by a part of the community, the educated class, while the rest were acquainted only with the ancient dialect of their country (as was the case in many cities of Egypt and Syria), the church appointed interpreters, like those in the Jewish synagogues, who on the spot translated what had been read into the provincial dialect, in order to make it intelligible to all.”

“The reading of the Scriptures was followed, as in the Jewish synagogues, by short, and originally *very simple* addresses, in familiar language, the momentary effusions of the heart, which gave an exposition and application of what had been read. . . . It was among the Greeks, among whom a taste for rhetoric prevailed, that the *sermon* first began to take a wider scope, and to assume an important place.”

“*Singing* also passed from the Jewish service into the Christian church. The Apostle St. Paul even exhorts the

primitive churches to sing spiritual songs. For this purpose were used either the psalms of the Old Testament or hymns composed expressly for this object, especially hymns of praise and of thanks to God and to Christ."

"At the beginning . . . those (among the Jews) who confessed their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, or (among the Gentiles) their belief in one God, and in Jesus as the Messiah, were, as appears from the New Testament, immediately baptized. In course of time, however, it was thought necessary that those who wished to be received into the church should be prepared by a careful instruction and a strict examination."

"In respect to the manner of baptizing: *in conformity with the original institution and the original import of the symbol*, it was generally administered by immersion."

"Men were accustomed to conceive baptism and faith as strictly connected. There does not appear to be any reason for deriving infant baptism from an apostolical institution."

"Immediately after Irenæus, in the last years of the second century, Tertullian appears as a zealous opponent of infant baptism; a proof that the practice was not universally regarded as an apostolical institution; for otherwise Tertullian would hardly have ventured to express himself so strongly against it."

"From the Jewish passover, the prayer of praise and thanksgiving had, through Christ, passed over to the Lord's Supper among the Christians. This prayer of praise and thanks, was, moreover, always considered as an essential part of the solemnity; and from it the Lord's Supper obtained its name of the *eucharist*."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Εὐχαριστία*, eucharistia: thanksgiving.

“ The idea of a sacrifice in the supper of the Lord was at first barely symbolical. . . . But as one error begets another, it was quite natural that the notion of a particular priesthood in the Christian church, corresponding to that in the Old Testament, should give birth to that of the notion of a sacrificial worship in the New which should stand in a similar relation to that of the Old; and so it came about that the whole idea of sacrifice in the Lord’s Supper, which in the first instance was simply symbolical, took a direction altogether wide of its true import, the earliest indications of which we find in Cyprian.”

“ As the church of North Africa was the first to bring prominently forward the necessity of infant baptism, so did they also join with it the *communion of infants*; for as they did not sufficiently distinguish between the sign and the divine thing which it signified, and as they understood all that is said in the sixth chapter of John’s gospel concerning the eating of the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ of the mere outward participation in the Lord’s Supper, they concluded that this, from the very first, was absolutely necessary to the attainment of salvation.”

“ And so it came about that to children who were not yet able to eat bread they gave *wine*—another example of a superstitious abuse, contrary to the original institution, leading to a separation of the elements of the supper.”