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Wholesome Words.

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No. 1.

WHOLESOME WORDS, we welcome thee;
Healthful may thy teaching be.
Only set forth what is right;
Let thy words be clear and bright—
Easy speech that's understood,
Simple truth to do us good.
Open be for all God saith;
Make us healthy in the Faith;
Earnest for the Faith contend.
 May God use thee to this end.

With intelligence combined,
 Word and work thus intertwined,
Of God's workings seek to tell,
Reading which will us compel
Deeds of service thus to do,
Strengthened, cheered, by words from you.

A. F.

FOREWORD.

It is with great pleasure that we write a few brief words as a foreword to introduce **WHOLESOME WORDS** to the Community.

It is our hope and belief that the Community of the Son of God is now entering on a new era in which it may be, perhaps,

less liable to some of its past troubles, but in which new difficulties will arise as truly as new opportunities will offer.

It is time, is it not? that, as redeemed servants of the Most High, we should more systematically give to Him that which is His due, that we should better anticipate the day when His servants shall do Him service—that is, worship—because they see His face. May the New Year mean for us all more true and heart devotion to the Eternal Father of the Incarnate Son.

To God it is pleasing that with our lips we should praise Him, verily at all times, but more especially in the opportunity afforded in the morning of the Lordly day, when the remembrance of the Lord Jesus in the breaking of the loaf should call forth increasingly a pæan of praise to Him who gave this precious gift unbought, unmerited, unheeded, and unsought.

If God receive what is His from the heart in words, the fruit of our lips, this will have joined on with it other expressions of devotion and worship. There will then accrue the true conception of giving—namely, of offering to God as an act of worship the first fruits of all we have, and, more than that, of all we are. But firstly to speak of the former. We shall not consider what we can give to God after what we think to be our needs are satisfied. To speak plainly, God will not get our leavings. We shall consider His claims first, and reduce our needs to what we can afford after God's claims have been met. This was better understood in some by-gone days, perhaps, than now. We think we remember to have heard of very poor folk who gave to God first, though left to dry bread or less for themselves afterwards; but we do not remember to have heard that they really suffered for it.

But it is hard to-day to speak of God getting His portion first, for it is supposed at once that it arises from a total lack of sympathy with those whose means are very small. But the fact remains that it is the first fruits with which God may be honoured, and that He honours those who honour Him.

What is true of money and the like is equally true of time, abilities, and all else. Let us not be content to seek God's Kingdom; let us seek His Kingdom first.

Then we wish to say, ere we bring this brief word to its conclusion, that the claims of all others are best met when brought into relation with God and His claims. For instance, that first fraction of money, be it wages or profit or what else that is given

to God, has to be spent for Him. Some of it will go to His needy ones in memory of the One who became poor for our sakes. Some will go to His servants in imitation of the women who ministered of their substance to the Great Servant. Some will be spent in the needful expenses of the meeting-place. And some—oh, may we not hope, some will yet be found for a worthy effort to reach the myriads who know not God? We say a worthy effort, an effort worthy of Him who left His home above, who wandered a stranger in the world His hands had made, of Him whom we call Master and Lord, and we say well, for so He is. If He, then, our Master and Lord, so did, what ought we to do?

C. M. LUXMOORE.

“WHAT IS OUR LIFE?”

REFLECTIONS of a serious character often come as one year draws to a close and another begins. The passing of days, weeks, months, and years is calculated to remind one of the brevity of life, and to awaken memories of used or misused opportunities, with their varied feelings of gladness or sadness.

In this connexion the words of the sweet singer of old are reasonable for our consideration:—

“Lord, make me to know mine end,
 And the measure of my days, what it is.
 Thou hast made my days as handbreadths.
 Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity:
 Surely every man walketh in a vain show:
 Surely they are disquieted in vain:
 Surely every man is vanity.”

—Psalm xxxix.

The brevity, frailty, and the vain glory of life are thus presented as one answer to the inquiry “What is our life?” And of the same it is necessary we should be again reminded, and likewise that it “passeth away,” but “he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

“Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days,” is a prayer but seldom uttered. The present passing moment occupies the heart so exclusively that little time is

found for reflection on the end and the measure of our days. The most important of life's purposes are thus lost sight of, to the eternal ruin of the sinner on the one hand and the eternal loss of the saint on the other.

The words of Luke xvi. 25, tell of the former, and of 1 Cor. iii. 15, of the latter. Surely, in the light of these eternal issues, we ought to pray—

“ So teach us to number our days,
That we may get us a heart of wisdom.”

Three score and ten years, or if, by reason of strength, four score years, number the measure of our days, and yet the time is short and the fashion of this world passeth away.

“ To every time there is a purpose,” and the question, “ What is the purpose of our life-time ? ” is an important one to consider.

God, indeed, “ desireth all men to be saved,” and in their lifetime is the opportunity wherein such purpose may be effected. This opportunity, alas ! is commonly misused and lost, through the delusion of Satan that there is time enough yet, and through putting such matters off till a more convenient season, which never comes, while God says, “ He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.”

The words of the aged Zacharias unfold a further purpose to be effected in our lifetime's opportunity—namely, “ that we . . . might serve Him (God) without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.”—Luke i. 74, 75.

This is that purpose referred to by the Son of God in His reply to the Tempter when He refused his offer of the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said, “ It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve,” quoting from Deut. vi. 13 ; x. 20, that which then was spoken of—“ it is your life.”—Deut. xxxii. 47.

This, again, is referred to in Rom. xii. 1, as “ your reasonable service,” and in Heb. xii. 28, as “ serving God acceptably.”

Such, then, present possibilities calculated to arouse aspirations to effect such a purpose, so great and so wondrous as to make life worth living, and to raise it from the mere duty or drudgery that it often becomes, or from the vain manner of

living of gratifying “the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain glory of life.”

What, then, is our life, as viewed in the light of such possibilities? Is it embraced and used for such purposes? Do we view our brief life as such an opportunity, and do we hold it as a stewardship for which we are accountable; or is it being frittered away in a sort of butterfly existence, living only for present enjoyment?

The character of our life's service is to be “in holiness and righteousness”; holiness, as characterising our inward condition, as relating to our thoughts, desires, and motives, all of which are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do; holiness, “without which no man shall see the Lord,” so that it is fitting we should pray—

“Search me, O God, and know my heart;
 Try me and know my thoughts,
 And see if there be any way of grief in me.
 And lead me in the way everlasting;
 Cleanse Thou me from secret faults.”

But the service also is to be characterised by righteousness, as relating to our outward behaviour in our actions and ways. This means not merely doing that which is right in our own eyes, or in the eyes of fellow-saints and fellow-men, else we may become men-pleasers and time-servers, but the higher standpoint of doing that which is pleasing in the sight of the Lord.

Then, such service is to be “all our days.” How many have begun well, and for a time have run well, but they have not continued in well-doing, and their lives have become a reproach to society, a dishonour to God! How solemn is the consideration that this is possible to any of us in our lifetime!

Unto the fulfilment of God's purpose it is ever necessary to give heed to the exhortation, and to accept the provision, presented in the words of Heb. xii. 28, “Let us have grace whereby we may offer service well pleasing to God, with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.” Thus the grace of God instructeth us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; and, receiving the grace of God not in vain, such we may be and such we may do. What is impossible otherwise is possible thus, so that we are inexcusable,

and the non-fulfilment of such can only be accounted a falling short of the grace of God, concerning which we are warned in the words of Heb. xii. 15.

It is necessary, unto rendering such service acceptable, that we have a due appreciation of God's claim upon us. He who in his lifetime presents a pattern of acceptable service had learned the deep significance of the words "Whose I am." The recognition of this is a necessary precursor to—as well as the motive upon which such words can have their fulfilment—"they gave their own selves to the Lord." This will likewise result in "presenting your bodies a living sacrifice to God, which is your reasonable service," and "presenting yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Then and thus we may expect to be "vessels unto honour, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work." For such there are great opportunities at the present time, and great inducements in the shape of honour and reward.

The "to-day" of our opportunity is a very important one. Amidst the deepening gloom of an apostate night, the indifference and lukewarmness of a Laodicean condition, and the giving up and going back of such as have been stumbled or offended, there are abundant opportunities for proving our devotion to God.

The call seems to come very loud and very clear—"Whom shall I send; who will go for Us?" Who is there to answer—"Here am I; send me"? It is to go as the Lord's messenger, in the Lord's message. No light matter indeed! No easy task to accomplish! Yet the privilege is great, and the honour is great, and the reward will be great of those who faithfully fulfil such a stewardship.

This opportunity is swiftly passing away. Each succeeding year brings it nearer a close, and very soon it will be gone for ever. "And this, knowing the season, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand; let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."—"The night cometh when no man can work."

DAVID SMITH.

THE TIMES OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.

I.

UNDER DEBORAH'S PALM TREE.

“ I said, ‘ I will climb up into the palm tree ;
I will take hold of the branches thereof.’ ”

—Song of Songs, vii. 8.

“ A woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands ;
And let her works praise her in the gates.”

—Proverbs xxxi. 30 and 31.

NOT without a purpose has Jehovah coupled Deborah's name with a palm tree;* these two were His object-lesson for Israel. High on the hills of Ephraim, between Ramah (height) and Bethel (House of God), with its lofty stem outlined against the sky and its perennial leaves waving in the breeze, the palm tree stood as a landmark ; and as men caught sight of that emblem of the righteous,† their thoughts turned to the godly woman who dwelt beneath its shade, whose heart beat true to Jehovah—to her whose spiritual stature was like a palm tree compared with themselves.

It is unusual for the palm to grow at such an altitude as this (between 2000 and 3000 feet above the sea level) ; it thrives best in sultry lowlands. Unlike its fellow evergreen, the glorious cedar of Lebanon, which stands firm upon the everlasting hills, and bears undaunted the fury of the storm, the palm tree is usually found in a less exposed position.

That which is true of the tree is also true of the sex of her who sat under it. It was unusual—nay, it was unique—for one of the weaker sex to be both a prophetess and a judge. It is not God's ordinary way of working ; but here in His infinite wisdom He raises up a woman.

* Judges iv. 5.

† Psalm xcii. 12.

Why was it so ? Why should it be so ?

In attempting to answer this, let us look back over the past.

There had been a period in the history of God's ancient people when "Israel was holiness unto Jehovah, the first fruits of His increase"; a time of which God says, "I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."†

But those early days of devotion to God are past, for Israel has left her first love and forsaken Him who delivered her out of the house of bondage. "How is the gold become dim ! how is the most pure gold changed !"

There had been a time, under Joshua's leadership, when Israel was a nation of soldiers, when "the shout of a king" was among them—an awe-inspiring sound, the shout of a people strong in Jehovah—when mighty armies turned to flee from them, when five Israelites might chase an hundred, and an hundred might put ten thousand to flight.

But that time is also past; for Israel has forgotten Him who was the source of all their strength, and is now well nigh a nation of slaves, sold by their Rock into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, who for long years has mightily oppressed them.

So abject were they that the question, "Was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?" needed no answer. It was too evident. God's claims had been first ignored, and then forgotten. "They chose new gods," and then the enemy waxed bolder still, and fought in the very gates of Israel's cities.

Commerce, which enriches nations, was in a very depressed state. The highways, along which long caravans of merchandise used to pass, were unoccupied, and occasional travellers went through wild and unfrequented paths, to escape the spoilers.

We look for priests to stem the lawlessness around; for "the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and the people should seek the law at his mouth";** but it was "like people, like priest."††

"The rulers ceased in Israel"; those fitted by God to guide His people forsook their responsibilities—dull apathy seized them all.

† Jeremiah ii. 3.

** Malachi ii. 7.

†† Hosea ii. 9.

Through all this spiritual deadness the eyes of Jehovah ran to and fro among the thousands of Israel in search of a man whom He could use to judge and teach His people.

But, oh! the disgrace, the bitter shame of it; His search among the men was in vain.

At length His eye rested on a woman. A woman's faith shone out bright and clear amidst the thick darkness of a nation's apostasy, and that woman was Deborah.

“ Rise, Deborah! The opportunity of thy life has come! Because of the men's sad failure thou must link with thine honoured woman's work the duties of a judge in Israel! Thou shalt experience in thine inmost being the vast resources of the Living God!”

Deborah responded to the call. She rose in simple dependence upon Jehovah. But who can tell how she humbled herself under the mighty hand of God, or the deep exercise of her soul concerning her people's sin—how she purged herself from it, and thus prepared herself for being a vessel unto honour, sanctified, meet for Jehovah's use, prepared unto every good work?

To her Jehovah revealed His purpose of deliverance; for the secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him.***

She was a prophetess—one whose work was not so much to foretell future events as to forth-tell, to out-tell, the mind and will of God—and with the untiring industry which her name suggests (Deborah means bee) she laboured and planned to bring back apostate Israel to a knowledge of their true condition before God.

In the morning she sowed the precious seed, and in the evening she withheld not her hand, knowing not which should prosper. As time passed on her sphere widened. Her words went beyond the limits of her tribe to the coast lands of Dan and Asher, up among the highlands of Zebulun and Naphtali, down into the plain of Issachar, and across the Jordan to wild Gilead and the sheep-folds of Reuben.

E. MATTHEW.

(To be Continued.)

THE RESURRECTION.

THIS theme is one of the most important and awe-inspiring that we know in all the range of Holy Scripture.

We propose in this article simply to marshal some of the scriptures bearing on the subject.

Think of earth's teeming millions of human beings ; think also of the myriads whose dust now mingles with the dust of earth. Not one of these but shall know the resurrecting power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament is not silent on this subject, as the following passages prove (Job xiv. 12) :—

“ As the waters fail from the sea,
And the river decayeth and drieth up,
So man lieth down and riseth not ;
Till the heavens be no more,
They shall not awake
Nor be roused out of their sleep.”

Also Psalm xxii. 29—

“ All they that go down to the dust
Shall bow before Him.”

When we turn to the New Testament we find the truth of the resurrection amplified and explained. In John v. 29, the Lord Jesus says—“ Marvel not at this : for the hour cometh in which all that are in their tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment.”

But as it is to-day so was it in Apostolic days. There were those who denied the resurrection. As the apostle Paul clearly pointed out to those in Corinth who were being affected by this erroneous doctrine, if it were that there was no resurrection of the dead, then Christ had not been raised, and faith in Him was of no value ; believers in Him must yet be in their sins ;

whilst the apostle and others who were one with him in such service had been bearing false witness concerning God, for they had testified that He had raised Christ from the dead. In spite of all the theorizings and speculations of men, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ remains a veritable historical fact, as saith the scripture—"But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that are asleep."—1 Cor. xv. 20. "He appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then He appeared to above five hundred brethren at once . . . then He appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as unto one born out of due time, He appeared to me also."—1 Cor. xv. 5-8. Such testimony surely constitutes proof in itself that the Lord Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead. Luke confirms this when he says that by many proofs He shewed himself alive after His passion, appearing unto His disciples by the space of forty days. Matthias also was chosen, because, having companied with the apostles all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, unto the day that He was received up, he was a credible witness with them of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "And with great power gave the apostles their witness unto the resurrection."—Acts iv. 33.

The importance of the resurrection of Christ cannot be over-estimated. Had not He been raised then there would have been no resurrection of the dead. No ray of light would have penetrated the eternal darkness. Satan's triumph would have been complete. But blessed be the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His great mercy, begat us again unto a living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.—1 Peter i. 3. He was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father.—Romans vi. 4. Thus we can joyfully sing:—

"Up from the grave He arose
 With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;
 He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
 And He lives for ever, with His saints to reign.
 Hallelujah! Christ arose."

Regarding the Risen Christ we note that He is

The First-fruits of them that are asleep.
 The First-born of the dead.

Also that He

Was raised for our justification,
Is the Resurrection and the Life.

And that by His resurrection

We have been begotten unto a living hope.

In the light of the Scriptures it is safe to affirm that the resurrection of Christ is the pledge and the basis that all who have known death will quit their tombs. Having thus seen that the Scriptures testify to the truth that the dead shall be raised, and also to the importance and blessedness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, let us consider further "How are the dead raised, and with what manner of body do they come?"

Again do the Scriptures give the reply—"Thou foolish one, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest thou sowest not the body that shall be but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other kind, but God giveth it a body even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own."—1 Cor. xv. 36-44. We have here the matter in a nutshell; the grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies is quickened again; out of death there is life in resurrection. If we sow barley, we reap barley; if we sow wheat we reap wheat. The same, we say, and yet not the same. Some mysterious change has taken place, for God giveth it a body even as it pleased Him. And as with the grain of wheat, so is it with the natural body. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. The same, we say, and yet not the same. The resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ was the same as hung upon the Cross. The same and yet not the same. A mysterious change had taken place which is incomprehensible to human understanding.

When the Lord Jesus, fresh from His triumph o'er the tomb met the weeping Mary, and she heard His sympathetic voice and saw His blessed person, was she mistaken when she ran to His disciples with the startling news, "I have seen the Lord"?

When the two disciples were on the way to Emmaus, and the Stranger drew near and spoke those wondrous words that banished all their sorrow and caused their hearts to burn within them, and when He was made known unto them in the breaking of the bread, did their eyes deceive them that it was even He

of whom they had spoken—"Jesus of Nazareth, a Prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" ?

When those few disciples were in the upper room with doors closed for fear of the Jews, and He so mysteriously appeared in their midst, shewing them His nail-marked hands and spear-marked side to prove that it was Himself and not another, surely they could not but believe and rejoice that they had seen the Lord.

Yet again, when, to dispel the unbelief of Thomas, the Lord graciously reveals Himself and calls upon Thomas to thrust his fingers into the nail-prints and his hand into the spear-wound, no wonder, was it, that broken-hearted Thomas exclaimed "My Lord and my God !"

All this proves to us that the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ was the same as hung upon Golgatha's tree. The same, we say, and yet not the same, for some incomprehensible change had taken place. Thus, though we comprehend not this change, we rest in the testimony of the word—"Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory according to the working whereby He is able to subject all things to Himself."—Philippians iii. 20, 21.

Let us now briefly look at the order of the resurrection. As man reaps the harvest of the earth at different times, each fruit in its own time and order, so also in the resurrection. Of the mighty harvest that God will reap from the earth Christ Himself is the First-fruits, the blessed Wave-sheaf, the sure token of a great and glorious harvest to follow. Then comes the fulfilment of the Lord's promise in John xiv. 3—"If I go I come again and will receive you unto Myself." This will be when He comes to the air, and, with the voice of archangel and with the trump of God, shall summon the dead in Christ and the living in Christ to be for ever with Himself.—1 Thess. iv. 13-18.

"We may sleep, but not for ever ;

There will be a glorious dawn.

We shall meet to part—no, never,

On the resurrection morn."

After the resurrection of the dead in Christ there will still be left in the earth the precious dust of all others who have died

in faith, as also of the infant dead. These are included as belonging to Christ, and will be raised after the tribulation and previous to the ushering in of the reign of millennial glory (see Daniel xii. 13) along with those who have been put to death by the Man of Sin during the great tribulation, but each in his own order. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over these the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."—Rev. xx. 6.

The closing scene in this great drama will be the resurrection of the unjust, those of whom it is written—"Till the heavens be no more they shall not awake nor be roused out of their sleep." With them shall be countless myriads of righteous heathen (see Romans ii. 7, and Revelation xx. 12-15). These will stand before the Great White Throne, before the face of Him from whom heaven and earth fly away. The earth and the sea will yield up their dead; yea, even Death and Hades will deliver up the dead which were in them; and every man shall be judged according to his works. 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. 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. Amen.

A. ANDERSON.

LIST OF ASSEMBLIES.

WE thank the 20 brethren who have promptly sent in the information requested in December *Intelligence*. Our hope is that this record of your good deed may stir up others to follow your praiseworthy example.

CONFERENCE MEETINGS.

SPECIAL meetings for the ministry of the Word will be held, God permitting, as follows:—**ABERDEEN**, January 3, in Thistle Hall, 11 Belmont Street, at 2.30 p.m. and 7 p.m. **GLASGOW**, January 3, in 35 Dundas Street (addresses by Dr. Luxmoore

at 2.30 p.m. and 7 p.m.). BATHGATE, January 4, in the Institute, Mid Street, from 11 a.m. till 7.30 p.m. MOTHERWELL, January 5, in Lesser Town Hall, from 2 p.m. till 8 p.m. GREENOCK, January 9, in Bank Street Meeting-Room, from 3 p.m. till 7.30 p.m.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

It is particularly requested that *Intelligence* items be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding issue of the number of *Wholesome Words* in which they are desired to appear. These should bear the signatures of two overseeing men.

We would again seek to stir up by way of remembrance the pure minds of those in whose hearts God has put care for the sheep and lambs that they may be encouraged to write short and simple articles that shall realise that which was written of a good man of early days, who exhorted believers to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. Stir up then, beloved fellow-workers, the gift that is in thee each, and strive, if it be but a little gift that you have, to use that gift—if you seem to fail try again—and if needs be yet again, and send the articles to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor.

Fellow-Saints will be interested to know that the assembly in Brantford, Ont., Canada, is now holding kitchen meetings in the houses of several brethren. Prayer is requested that this effort may be owned by God to the Salvation of many.

PUBLICATIONS.

“NEEDED TRUTH,” consisting of articles by accredited writers on subjects likely to prove helpful to Christians generally. Published quarterly, or as occasion may require. Price 3d. per copy.

“EAGLES’ WINGS,” a monthly illustrated booklet for the young; ½d. each, postage extra.

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MONTHLY TEAR-OFF CALENDAR, illustrated, 2d. each, or, if post paid, 2s. per dozen.

"TINY TEXTS," comprising monthly messages and weekly texts, nicely illustrated, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each, or, if delivered free, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per dozen; 50 for 2s.

All the above, and *Wholesome Words*, may be obtained from:—

LONDON—Mr. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road.

LIVERPOOL—Mr. W. Gainford, 43 Moss Grove.

BIRMINGHAM—Mr. J. Dorricott, Saltley.

NEWCASTLE—Mr. E. Jameson, Wallsend.

LEICESTER—Mr. C. Belton, 5 Linton Street.

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CARDIFF—Mr. Gould, 27 Rectory Road.

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GLASGOW—Mr. A. Anderson, 27 Wilton Drive.

ABERDEEN—Mr. J. Christie, 123 $\frac{1}{2}$ Crown Street.

GREENOCK—Mr. R. Stewart, Campsie Terrace.

KILMARNOCK—Mr. J. Willock, 3 Paxton Street.

KIRKCALDY—Mr. D. Oswald, 8 Maria Street.

BELFAST—Mr. A. Taylor, 14 Thorndyke Street.

Orders for *Needed Truth*, in quantities value not less than 10s. (for which buyers may receive from 70 to 120 copies, according to cost, which will be governed by the total number ordered), as also for *Wholesome Words*, in lots of 50, at 2s. post paid, may be sent to Mr. John P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead, near Glasgow. Cash should accompany order.

New volumes of *Needed Truth* will be bound up to supply those who may order by January 11th, price 2s.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

FEBRUARY, 1909.

No. 2.

HOW WE KNOW THAT GOD HATH SPOKEN IN THE SCRIPTURES.

I.

BECAUSE OF THE JEWS AND FULFILLED PROPHECY.

It was said by a great man of this world that "the universal dispersion of the Jews throughout the world, their unexampled sufferings, and their wondrous preservation, would be sufficient to establish the truth of the Scriptures if all other testimony were sunk to the bottom of the sea."

The Scriptures again and again make an appeal to prophecy fulfilled as a test of the Divine signature. "I am God, and there is none like Me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient time things that are not yet done."*

"I have declared the former things from of old; yea, they went forth out of My mouth."†

The Lord Jesus Himself applied the same test.

"From henceforth I tell you before it come to pass that when it is come to pass ye may believe."‡

There are three great lines of prophecy in the Old Testament, which are as follow:—

I.—Those relating to God's people, Israel.

II.—Those relating to Christ.

III.—Those relating to the nations outside Israel.

I.—As to the first, we read in Leviticus—"I will bring the land into desolation, and you will I scatter among the nations; and I will draw out the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste."**

* Isaiah, xlvi. 10.

† Isaiah xlviii. 3.

‡ John xiii. 19; xiv. 29.

** Leviticus xxvi. 32, 33.

The fact that this was contingent upon their disobedience in no way affects the prophetic character of the declaration. Israel were disobedient, and the scripture quoted has been fulfilled to the letter.

“The Lord put a word in Baalam’s mouth—‘Lo! it is a people that dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.’”*

“And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples whither the Lord shall lead thee away.”†

These are but a few of many prophecies which could be adduced to prove the same thing. They were written many centuries before their fulfilment; the latest not less than four hundred years before its fulfilment. Unquestionably the Jews are a living and standing proof that God hath spoken in the Scriptures.

Frederick the Great said to one of his marshals, who was a devout believer, “Give me, in one word, a proof of the truth of the Bible.” “The Jews,” was the pithy, unanswerable reply!

II.—The prophecies relating to the Messiah are many and comprehensive; about 100 of these have been fulfilled to the very jot and tittle; 100 more await fulfilment at the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

Space forbids to mention more than a few of these, some before His decease and some after.

(1) *His virgin birth.*

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.”‡ No sooner has ruin fallen upon the Adamic race than God thus gives what we believe is the first great Messianic prophecy.

“Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel—that is, God with us.”**

(2) *His birthplace.*

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall One come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”††

* Numbers xxiii. 5-9.

† Deuteronomy xxviii. 37.

‡ Genesis iii. 15.

** Isa. vii. 14.

†† Micah v. 2.

Matthew ii. shows that this prophecy was literally fulfilled.

(3) *The price of His betrayal.*

“Thirty pieces of silver.”* Matthew xxvi. 15 tells us this was the price actually given to Judas by the chief priests.

(4) *His manner of death.*

“They pierced My hands and My feet.”

“And they shall look unto Me whom they have pierced.” †

All the scriptures in the New Testament which speak of Him having been crucified attest this. See also John xx. and Revelation i. 7. Truly these things came to pass that the scriptures might be fulfilled (Luke xxiv. 40).

(5) *His burial.*

“And they made His grave with the wicked [men], and with the rich [man], in His death; although [because—R.M.] He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth.” ‡

This is precisely what took place. The Romans would have put Him in a malefactor’s grave, as they put Him on a malefactor’s cross, but God allowed no injury or insult to be offered to the lifeless but holy body of His Son. After He, in that body that was prepared for Him, had done the will of His Father God perfectly, His body was laid in the rich man’s sepulchre (Joseph of Arimathea’s). The piercing of His side by the soldiers** instead of the breaking of His bones, as in the case of the two malefactors, was also that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

(6) *His resurrection.*

“For Thou wilt not leave My soul to Sheol;
Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see
corruption.
Thou wilt shew Me the path of life.” ††

(7) *His ascension.*

“Jehovah said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand,
Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” ††

We could adduce other Old Testament scriptures instead of the last two, but we choose these because of the fact that in the will of God both Peter and Paul, in the Acts of the Apostles, cite these to shew that Jesus is both Lord and Christ,

* Zechariah xi. 12.

† Zechariah xii. 10.

‡ Isaiah liii. 9.

** John xix. 36-37.

†† Psalm xvi. 10-11.

... †† Psalm cx. 1.

raised from the dead by the mighty power of God, and it would be far more difficult to believe that all these prophecies were concocted by man, and their fulfilment brought about by preconcerted plans, as sceptics and sundry say, than to believe the plain statement of Scripture that God, who knows the end from the beginning, hath spoken.

III.—Prophecies relative to the nations outside of Israel.

Mention is frequently made in the Old Testament of the nations which were brought into direct contact with Israel. The prophecies concerning these nations have been fulfilled in a startling manner.

We cannot look at more than two of these now.

EGYPT AND BABYLON.

In the prophecies concerning Egypt we are never told that it should be entirely blotted out. Past and present history, as we are aware, affirms this fact. Egypt is still a living country with a current history, notwithstanding God's hand upon her in judgment.

“Blessed be Egypt, My people”* will have a literal fulfilment. Babylon will know no such blessing.

“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited.”†

One word, dear reader. It is intensely solemn, seeing that God has spoken so unmistakably in the Scriptures, to see so many turning a deaf ear to His voice.

If thou art still a stranger to God and His grace, hear His voice to thee, and own thyself a guilty, lost sinner, and know God's only Saviour as thine own; rest not content until thou art able to say from the heart, “The Son of God loved me and gave Himself up for me.”‡

J. CROSTHWAITE RADCLIFFE.

(To be Continued.)

EXTRACT.

FROM Addison's essay on the Dispersion of the Jews, we cite the following:—

“ . . . If, in the last place, we consider what providential reason may be assigned for these three particulars [their number,

* Isaiah xix. 25.

† Isaiah xiii. 19-20.

‡ Galatians ii. 20.

their dispersion, their adherence to their religion], we shall find that their numbers, dispersion, and adherence to their religion, have furnished every age, and every nation of the world, with the strongest arguments for the Christian faith, not only as these very particulars are foretold of them, but as they themselves are the depositaries of these and all the other prophecies which tend to their own confusion. Their number furnishes us with a sufficient cloud of witnesses that attest the truth of the Old Bible. Their dispersion spreads those witnesses through all parts of the world. The adherence to their religion makes their testimony unquestionable. Had the whole body of Jews been converted to Christianity, we should certainly have thought all the prophecies of the Old Testament, that relate to the coming and history of our Blessed Saviour, forged by Christians, and have looked upon them, with the prophecies of the Sibyls, as made many years after the events they pretended to foretell."

THE WILL OF GOD.

THE scene in which we live is one of disorder and lawlessness in relation to the will of God. Hoary tradition on the one hand, and modern thought and opinion on the other, influence the minds of men. There is no certainty; theories wax and wane, and men are carried about by every wind of doctrine. It is possible to become so habituated to these conditions that at last the impression is formed that there is no positive standard of right and truth.

Evil originally came in by the setting aside of God's will and man asserting his own; and blessing comes to men as they are led to abandon their own and to submit to God's. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord," is the way laid out for the blessing of the sinner.

But this is only the first step, for it is speedily discovered that God claims His redeemed for Himself, and it is because of this that the exhortation of Romans xii. is uttered, in view of the mercies of God. The living sacrifice is sought with the object that the one who so lays himself out for God shall prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

So there is a will of God for His people, and that will is good,

acceptable, and perfect. There is no need to go on in uncertainty, for God has spoken. Let every child of God have this clearly established in his mind, that God's will—concerning himself, as well as others—is expressed and may be known. Moreover, it is his business to know and prove it. Need it be said that this is not possible except there be an honest purpose of heart to *do* His will; but if such purpose there be, then we have this word, "If any man willeth to *do* His will, he shall know of the teaching" (John vii. 14.).

We live in difficult times, it is said, and doubtless with truth; but every time is difficult, and surely the will of God may be known now as ever. Then shall we not make up our minds to this, that it shall be our business to prove His will? One of old said, "I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way" (Ps. cxix. 128). Is this our persuasion? Do we believe that God's will is the only right thing, and that every deviation therefrom is lawlessness leading to ruin? What are man's traditions, man's opinions, worth when God has spoken?

Further, may we not say that God is *speaking!* Man is not to live by bread alone, but by every word that *proceedeth* out of the mouth of God; and of the Spirit of truth it is said "He shall guide you into all the truth." "What things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak, and He shall declare unto you";* and, again, "The word of God is living and powerful."† We may indeed read the Bible like any other ancient book, and find interest in it, but if we want to hear God's voice, and to receive present help, we must recognise that it is a present living word ministered by the Spirit of truth.

How, then, can we prove God's will? By applying it to the different circumstances and conditions in which we find ourselves. Am I a mother or a father, a husband or wife, a child, a master or a servant? Then it is for me to ponder those parts of the will of God which relate to these things, and to give heed thereto. Am I an old man or a young one? Have I a fitness for service? Then I must go to the Word with the expectancy of faith and prove God's will in these things.

Let us be men of the Book, making it our life's aim to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

A DEACON.

* John xvi. 13.

† Hebrews iv. 12.

THE REVEALER.

(1 Cor. ii. 9-16.)

EYE hath not seen, ear hath not heard,
 Nor hath man's heart conceived,
 The wondrous things God hath prepared
 For them that have believed—
 Things from above
 For them who love
 Him, who hath first loved us.

But now these things, though once concealed
 And hidden from the wise,
 God, through the Spirit, hath revealed,
 And opened ears and eyes.
 Things great and small,
 He searcheth all ;
 Yea, the deep things of God.

For no man knows the things of man
 Save as his spirit knows.
 The things of God His Spirit can
 Alone to us disclose.
 He gave Him, so
 That we might know
 The things God freely gives.

The things which He hath thus made known
 God's Word doth now contain,
 And what is written there alone
 The Spirit doth explain—
 That unto each
 He thus may teach
 The things God hath prepared.

O God the Father ! by Thy Word
 Teach us Thy holy will ;
 May God the Son, our Saviour Lord,
 His purposes fulfil.
 Thy Spirit, too,
 Bring Christ in view,
 And teach us more of Him.

THE TIMES OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.

(Continued from page 9.)

II.

AT HIS FEET.

MONTHS and years of patient service thus pass on, until the time draws near for Israel's deliverance.

That which had been revealed only in bare outlines gradually assumes shape and form, and the details are filled in, and at length Deborah is told the name of the man who is to be leader and captain.

She sends for him—for Barak, the son of Abinoam from Kadesh-naphtali, the city of refuge of the northern tribes.

Barak comes at her bidding—a man who had doubtless proved his fitness as a leader in many a desperate sally or bold defence, when the battle was turned back at the gate.

She tells him Deborah's purpose; and Barak, with the plain command of God ringing in his ears, hesitates—nay, refuses to go unless Deborah accompanies him. Barak's obedience is dependent upon Deborah's presence.

He who would serve God acceptably must be prepared to go forward on the bare word of Jehovah; he must be content at times to tread the path of faith in direct dependence upon God alone, uncheered by the inspiring presence of a loftier faith or stronger will than his own, or that honour which might have been all his shall be shared by another, and that crown which might have adorned his brow shall be taken by a neighbour. Let no one take thy crown.

Barak looks at circumstances instead of God. He thinks of the raw, undisciplined material to be found in Zebulun and Naphtali; he compares those who are to fight with Jabin's nine hundred chariots of iron and his multitude of footmen; he measures himself and his inexperience in great enterprises with the able and successful captain, Sisera; and his heart quails at the tremendous responsibility of acting alone.

Yet, in spite of his failure here, Barak's further course commands our admiration. When once he decides to go forward there is no weakness or shilly-shallying; rapidity of action and bold strokes henceforth characterise him. His name means lightning, and as his name so was he. Hebrews

xi. tells us the golden secret of his after-success—where he is mentioned in company with God's mighty men, "who through faith subdued kingdoms, . . . from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens."

There must have been special qualities of mind and heart about this man—the stuff of which heroes are made—or ten thousand tribesmen would not have followed him with unquestioning obedience. 'Tis true they realised that Barak's summons was the call of God to them, yet coupled with this there was the utmost confidence in his leadership. Of no other army is the expression used in Scripture—"there went up ten thousand men at his feet"—suggesting perfect control and absolute obedience.

A leader for God should have courage, patience, wisdom, promptness, endurance, calmness; but, above all, faith in God; this rises high above earth's difficulties and tumults and alarms, and lays hold of the Eternal Strength.

But let us return to Deborah. No journey was too long and no peril too great to this high-souled woman, if only Jehovah's purposes of deliverance for Israel were served.

She accompanies Barak to Kadesh-naphtali, where he assembles the picked men of Zebulun and Naphtali, and thence to Mount Tabor's level summit.

The sowing time and the long waiting time were over at last; but who would have expected such an abundant harvest! As she watched the sheaves coming in, methinks tears of joy ran down those womanly cheeks. The sower and the reaper rejoiced together.

It has been suggested* that Deborah had ten thousand sons. The long years of training and teaching have not been spent in vain; and as she looks into their ardent and resolute faces and their kindling eyes she sees the fruit of her labour. Her children rise up and call her blessed, and ten thousand stalwart sons, for whom any mother might well be thankful, are ready to do Jehovah's bidding.

As we picture them gathering on Mount Tabor do we not notice a striking family likeness to this mother in Israel? Like her in courage, like her in faith, for at the call of God they are

* "Needed Truth," Vol. xvi., p. 274.

willing to jeopardise "their lives to the death upon the high places of the field."

Thus for the present we leave that devoted band preparing for the eventful day, and using the limited time to the very best advantage—now and again looking down into the valley of Jezreel, where, some ten or twelve miles distant, Sisera was gathering his nine hundred chariots of iron and all his host.

Meanwhile they were learning to trust and not be afraid; learning not to lean upon an arm of flesh, but upon the living God; learning to keep rank, to order the battle array, and not to be of double heart; learning to recognise and obey their leaders—captains of thousands and captains of hundreds—for the leaders took the lead, the governors offered themselves willingly among the people (Judges v. 2, 9).

E. MATTHEW.

(To be continued.)

A REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

"COME unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matt. xi. 28-29.) This well-known portion of Holy Scripture has often been used by God in shewing the sinner his need and giving him the assurance of rest through faith in Christ Jesus. But there is something here for the Christian as well as for the sinner. We who have received rest are invited to take His yoke upon us and to learn from Him; thus shall we find rest to our souls and know in our experience that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. How different is His burden from the burdens which the traditions of men would fasten upon us! As the Scriptures testify, these are heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, which neither our fathers nor we are able to bear. (Matt. xxiii. 4.)

How thankful we should be that God has been pleased to reveal His Son in us, even He of whom He said, "This is My beloved Son,

HEAR YE HIM!"

Surely it becomes us to take His words to our hearts and to make them our constant meditation. (Luke ii. 51.) "If ye

abide in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John viii. 32.)

Both Scripture and experience show that it is sadly possible for God's people to become enslaved through the traditions of men. Please read Jeremiah vi. 16—"Thus saith the Lord, 'Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein; and

YE SHALL FIND REST

for your souls.' But they said, 'We will not walk therein.' " Thus it was that the prophet spake of them dwelling among the heathen and finding no rest. They failed to enter into the promised rest because of disobedience. To the outward appearance all might seem right. They brought their sweet cane and offered their burnt offerings and their sacrifices like a people who were delighting in their God. But what was His estimation of their service? "Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto Me." (Jer. vi. 20). Since God has caused this to be written for our learning, let us fear lest haply a promise being left us of entering into His rest anyone of us should seem to come short of it. (Heb. iv. 1.) As in water face answereth to face, so does the heart of man to man. (Proverbs xxvii. 19.) Thus where others have fallen we too may fail. May we realise our danger, and give diligence to enter into that rest, that we fall not after the same example of disobedience—

" By other people's faults
Wise men correct their own."

This rest that we may know can only become our realised portion as we learn from Him, who, "though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered"; who was meek and lowly in heart, and who always did the things that pleased the Father. A meek and lowly heart is the first essential. It was the lack of this that led on to the overthrow of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. For surely, although professedly charging Moses and Aaron with pride, it was of this that they themselves were guilty! They were jealous of the honoured position occupied by those divinely called thereto. But God vindicated His faithful servants and manifested His

sore displeasure with those who dared to say to them, "Ye take too much upon you." (Numbers xvi. 31-33.)

May we be delivered from a desire to be famous. May we covet the low place. See Matt. xviii. 3, 4. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." "The heart is deceitful above all things." May we then heed His words, "Learn of Me, . . . I am meek and lowly in heart."

H. MERCER.

Brantford, Canada.

A NEW YEAR PRAYER.

In Thy grace and mercy, lead us every day ;
 With Thy presence near us we can never stray.
 In the year we've entered may we shine for Thee ;
 Faithful, true and stedfast, may we ever be.

As Thy love unbounded fills with joy the soul,
 Brighter gleams the glory, nearer comes the goal.
 Richer, greater treasures still to us outpour,
 While we bow before Thee, worship and adore.

Thro' Thy strength sustaining, for Thy truth we'd stand ;
 Tho' the darkness deepen, dense on every hand.
 What tho' hosts of evil 'gainst our ranks are hurled ?
 We would, like the Master, overcome the world.

Let Thy tender mercies crown the present year :
 Guard and guide us alway, till the Lord appear,
 Fashioned in His likeness, soon to take us home,
 From His blessed presence never more to roam.

ROBERT SMART.

CONFERENCE MEETINGS.

ABERDEEN.

It is our privilege and pleasure to record a time of blessing and cheer in the meetings here at the New Year, at which we had present Messrs. Boswell, Coyne, Smith, also Mr. Aitken, of Edinburgh, and Mr. Donaldson, of Barrhead, who ministered the word of the Lord along with other local brethren.

The meetings commenced with the Children's Treat on Thursday night, at which were present a good number of young people, with some of their parents and other friends. It was very interesting to hear two of the elder girls repeat the verses of Tiny Texts for the year 1908 so well and so correctly, also three of the youngest girls repeat Isaiah liii. Several of the brethren thereafter addressed them.

Friday's meetings commenced with reading messages of greetings, with Psalm xxv. 14, xxxiv. 7, 9, from Mr. Park, Glasgow, and 1 John v. 19, and Rev. iii. 21, from Mr. J. C. Radcliffe. Mr. Milne, Aboyne, referred to the armour of the Christian (Eph. vi.), which he said was light to be carried about, and exhorted us to put it on, and make good use of it. Mr. D. Smith read and commented on Psalm ciii. Mr. E. Coyne read Luke xv. 1-6, 10, 24, and referred to the joy of God, first in our salvation as sinners, then His greater joy in us as saints walking in the truth (3rd John), and the "exceeding joy" (Jude 24) that would be His when we should be presented without blemish before His presence. He emphasised and urged on us the great possibility within the reach of each one of us to give present joy to God in our life's devotion to His service and obedience to His will.

Mr. Boswell read Deut. xxix. 29, and referred to the secret things that belong to the Lord, which will ever remain secret. Things that are revealed belong to us, for the purpose that we may do all the words of the law. He said that the purpose of God in revealing His will was that we might pass on the same to others. If we have the heart, and are in a right condition of soul, God will give us open doors to do so. He referred to Israel's "limiting the Holy One of Israel," and said—"This may be my last message to you. If so, let it be—Don't limit the God of Israel."

The meetings on Lord's day were well attended, a number of strangers being in at night, and an interest manifested on the part of some. Bro. Coyne remains in these parts for a time, preaching the Gospel and ministering the word of the Lord, for whom we solicit the prayers of saints in the Community. With greetings in the Lord, we are, yours in His service,

J. CHRISTIE.

JOHN MILNE.

GREENOCK.

A refreshing time was experienced here at the special meetings on January 9th. It was, indeed, cause for regret that there was not a better attendance of the saints to hear the solemn wholesome words that fell from the lips of those who were privileged to be the Lord's messengers in His message. Mr. Henry Elson spoke from John xvii. 21, 23, Eph. i. 10, Col. i. 27, and Gal. ii. 20. Mr. D. Paterson (Glasgow) followed with helpful words on Eph. ii. 10. Mr. Boswell gave a solemn message from 1 Sam. iv. There was ever a danger of our degenerating to the condition in which Israel was at this time, and we need to be on our guard lest, like them, we are found trusting in externals—things that are quite right in their own place, but which are never intended to occupy the place that God Himself should fill. Our trust must be in the God of the Ark rather than in the Ark of God. Defeat and disaster accompany the latter, victory and joy the former. Mr. David Smith backed home what had gone before by an earnest appeal from Heb. iii. to take heed lest there should be in any one of us an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God. We should seek, like the Lord Jesus Christ, to be faithful unto Him who appointed us to fill a place in His house. Words of warning and encouragement were also spoken from 1 Cor. x. 12, 13. Mr. D. Whittet brought the ministry to a close by a short message. A telegram was received from Mr. Norman Miller, which read, "Moses looked unto the recompense of reward (Heb. xi. 35-39)."

GLASGOW.

The conference meeting on New Year's Day was fairly well attended. Mr. Elson was expected, but found himself unable

to reach Glasgow. Dr. Luxmoore ministered the word from Luke x. 23-27, from which he drew many very helpful lessons. There was a period set apart for answering written questions, but this was found far too short to dispose of all those handed in. Mr. C. M'Kay brought before us the striking statement of Joshua xxiv. 31—"And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua and had known all the work of the Lord that He had wrought for Israel," with which he connected the word of New Testament Scripture, Heb. xiii. 7—"Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the word of God, and, considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever"; also 2nd Timothy ii. 2—"And the things which thou hast heard from me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."

Mr. J. P. A. Taylor gave an encouraging word from Joshua xxiii. 14—"Not one thing hath failed"; Psalm xxvii. 4—"One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after"; Philippians iii. 13, 14—"One thing I do . . . I press on"; Philippians iv. 19—"My God shall fulfil every need of yours"; 2nd Cor. xii. 9—"My grace is sufficient for thee."

Dr. Luxmoore spoke in the evening from 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14—"I charge thee, in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession; that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." Mr. D. Whittet also spoke from Job xxxviii. 1, 2; xl. 1-7; xlii. 1-6.

On Saturday, 2nd January, between 60 and 70 young men assembled in Dundas Street Hall to consider the subject of the printing and publishing of healthful literature, at which meeting Dr. Luxmoore, Mr. J. C. Radcliffe, Mr. C. B. Oxley, and quite a number of overseeing men in the assemblies in Scotland, were also present. Good progress was made in the desired direction, of which more may be heard later.

BATHGATE AND MOTHERWELL.

Reports of meetings held here have not yet reached us, nor have any from the South.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

It is particularly requested that *Intelligence* items be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding issue of the number of *Wholesome Words* in which they are desired to appear. These should bear the signatures of two overseeing men.

We appreciate the ready response to our appeal for articles, and now urge a *special effort* to increase the circulation. To better admit of this we are seeking to make the booklet suitable for general distribution. Friends will please note that postage must be added for all orders for less than 50. For example, 25 cost 1s. 3½d., *not* 1s.

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Orders for *Needed Truth*, in quantities value not less than 10s. (for which buyers may receive from 70 to 120 copies, according to cost, which will be governed by the total number ordered), as also for *Wholesome Words*, in lots of 50, at 2s. post paid, may be sent to Mr. John P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead, near Glasgow. Cash should accompany order.

New volumes of *Needed Truth* will be bound up to supply those who may order by February 11th, price 2s. We are extending the time owing to late issue of January *Wholesome Words*.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. I.

MARCH, 1909.

No. 3.

THINGS OF WHICH WE SHOULD NOT BE IGNORANT.

I.

ISRAEL'S PAST AS A WARNING TO US.

PAUL, by the Spirit, writes to the church of God in Corinth, and says, "For I would not have you to be ignorant how that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness."—1 Cor. x.

The word "For" at the commencement of this chapter links on what he had been previously saying in chapter ix. He had been defending himself as an apostle of Christ and preacher of the Gospel, and showed to the saints the privilege and responsibility of supporting such, even as the Lord had ordained, though he (Paul) had used none of these things. And as a servant of Christ he was ambitious to finish his course with joy, so he kept his body in subjection, lest by any means, after he had preached to others, he himself as a servant should be rejected.

Then he draws attention to Israel's past as a warning to those at Corinth, and to us. Israel started their course well, with the good hand of God upon them, and were baptised unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea. Thus, acknowledging Moses as their Divinely-appointed leader, they sang their song of triumph on the resurrection-side of the Red Sea. The waters had rolled together again, and they were dead to Egypt, and alive and separated unto God. Whilst in Egypt they had been saved from the judgment of God through the death of the paschal

lamb, their substitute; now it is their death to the place. In this we see a type of the twofold aspect of the death of Christ as it affects us:—Our death in the Person of our Divine Substitute saving us from the judgment and wrath of a holy God (Isaiah liii., and Gal. ii. 20), and our death to the world, whether religious or profane, as expressed in the words, “But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me and I unto the world.”—Gal. vi. 14, and i. 4. This we publicly confessed at our baptism, and as disciples we acknowledged ourselves to be under the authority of the divinely-appointed Leader, the Lord Christ. Dead to the world, alive unto God. We started our course well, and our hearts were filled with praises for our great deliverance, and we loved our Lord Jesus Christ. We could sing—

“O worldly pomp and glory,
 Your charms are spread in vain;
 I’ve heard a sweeter story,
 I’ve found a truer gain.
 Where Christ a place prepareth,
 There is my loved abode,
 There shall I gaze on Jesus,
 There shall I dwell with God.”

We had not then experienced the wilderness path, nor known the difficulties which are sent to discipline us and to teach us dependence upon God and submission to His will. But now, knowing something of these, let us ask ourselves if our hearts are towards Him in the simplicity and love of early days. Have these wilderness trials produced in us a greater dependence upon Him, and taught us more of His faithfulness and love? For it is written, “They that know Thy name shall put their trust in Thee.” Or, is there pride of heart, rebellion, and self-will still reigning within?

Wonderful, indeed, were Israel’s privileges, for they did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and all drank of a spiritual rock. Here is divinely-appointed food and drink in which they all shared, and, as the apostle tells us, it speaks of Christ.

For the sake of young believers we will mention a few thoughts upon this heaven-sent manna. It was their appointed daily portion. So the Lord Jesus, the true Manna, is God’s

appointed portion for us; the Giver and Sustainer of our spiritual life as we feed upon Him as revealed in the Scriptures.

It was to be gathered in the morning before the sun was up. Morning is the best time to get our portion for the day; it will be something to feed upon, and will sustain us and enable us to rise above the trials and difficulties of the way. If we allow Satan to rob us of our daily portion, he has accomplished a great deal, and our souls will soon loathe "this light bread," as we shall grow to esteem it. The writer remembers attempting to go out one morning hurriedly, as there were matters of urgent business to attend to, when he heard the plaintive voice of his little boy behind him saying, "Father, aren't you going to read this morning?" A well-deserved rebuke, which humbled him and made him retrace his steps. Heads of households, you may think other duties very pressing, but, if you neglect this, may "Father, aren't you going to read this morning?" ring in your heart as it rang in mine for many a day.

Whether old or young believers, we need the daily food. They could not gather enough on the first day for the whole week—neither can we. Spiritual decay will set in if daily gathering be neglected. We should read to feed, and, feeding, we shall grow. It is soul-nourishment we need. We shall then live not in the power of intellect but in the power of God. Well it is for us when we can say, "Thy words were found and I did eat them, and they were unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

The taste of the manna was like wafers made with honey. This tells of its sweetness. The Psalmist could say concerning the Word that it was sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. There will be no portions of the Word dry or tasteless to us if we come to the Book to learn of Christ in dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Feeding thus we shall say, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste."

The colour of the manna was like bdellium. This was one of the precious stones mentioned in Gen. ii. Some say it was like a pearl. This would suggest to us the preciousness of Christ. We are told in 1 Peter ii. that unto us who believe is the preciousness. We do well to ask ourselves continually the question—"What think we of Christ?"; this is the true test of everything as to what we are and what we do.

The manna was small. In this we may learn the humility and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ in His humanity. In the

prophetic language of the Psalmist He could say, "I am small and despised." He made Himself of no reputation; He took the form of a servant. Disputation arose amongst the disciples as to who should be greatest, and our Lord rebuked their pride and told them that he who took the lowest place and became servant of all—he was the greatest; and He gave His own life-service as an example. What a rebuke to our pride is the life of Christ! Do we desire to be well-thought-of? He was despised. Do we desire to be great? He humbled Himself. Let us learn from Him to grow downward, and bring forth fruit upward. The manna was also round—no beginning, no end. This would suggest the eternity of Him who was the living Bread sent down from heaven. Concerning Him it was truly said, "From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." He is "The Father of eternity" (Isaiah ix.), and He Himself said, "Before Abraham was I am," "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever."

"We laud the Everlasting Word,
The Father's only Son,
God, manifestly seen and heard,
And heaven's Beloved One."

The manna was white. This would suggest the perfect purity of the Christ. The angel said concerning His birth, "That which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God." The Father's testimony was, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Son's witness of Himself was, "I and My Father are one." The Holy Spirit testifies that He was "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Demons said, "We know Thee, Thou art the Holy One of God." Judas the betrayer confessed that he had betrayed innocent blood. Testimony might be multiplied, but space forbids. Let us be very jealous of His honour as we proclaim Him to be the Christ, the Son of God. Thus it is our happy privilege to feast upon Himself, the true Manna, the living Bread, eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood—that is, our souls to be entering by the Holy Spirit into the unfathomable depths of the Word, who became flesh, and poured out His blood for us, and who now lives in the power of an endless life.

As we have said, Israel, though miraculously fed and refreshed every day by Jehovah, rebelled against Him, and in

heart turned back to Egypt. And with the greater part of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now, these were our examples to the intent that we

Should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.

Neither be ye idolaters as were some of them.—Compare 1 John ii. 15-17.

Neither let us commit fornication as some of them committed.—Compare 2 Cor. vi. 14-18.

Neither let us tempt the Lord as some of them tempted.—See Luke iv. 9-12.

Neither murmur ye as some of them murmured and perished by the destroyer.—Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

Our God is a jealous God and a consuming fire, and if we practise these things we shall surely fall by His hand as they also did. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Well might we cry—

“ O Lamb of God, still keep me
Near to Thy wounded side ;
'Tis only there in safety
And peace I can abide.
What foes and snares surround me !
What lusts and fears within !
The grace that sought and found me
Alone can keep me clean.”

J. DORRICOTT.

(To be continued.)

SERVICE.

SALVATION has not in view solely or primarily the blessing of the sinner ; God's glory is the ultimate object. Moreover, not only will God be eventually glorified in His redeemed, but His will is that even here and now they should be for Him. Immediately after the firstborn had been redeemed by the blood of the lamb in Egypt, Exodus xiii. opens with the declaration of God—“ Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn : it is Mine ” ; and this claim is repeated several times.

Later on, as we read in Numbers iii., God was pleased to accept the tribe of Levi to be His ministers in lieu of the firstborn, and a most careful reckoning of the relative numbers of the firstborn and of the Levites is made; and so jealous was God of His due in this matter that, inasmuch as the firstborn were more numerous than the Levites by the number of 273, each of these had to give five shekels as compensation for his lack of service. Chapter iii. of Numbers is worthy of careful reading, and the impression left on the mind will surely be that God values the service of each one of His redeemed, and will not lightly lose it.

When we come to chapter viii. we have a very interesting scene presented to our gaze, worthy of diligent perusal. The Levites who have been substituted for the firstborn are taken, the water of expiation sprinkled upon them to cleanse them from defilement, and they are required to thoroughly cleanse themselves. Then the children of Israel being present lay their hands upon the Levites, so identifying themselves with them, and then Aaron offers the Levites before the Lord for a wave offering, and they are accepted by the Lord for His service on the ground of the sin offering and the burnt offering. So we read in verses 21 and 22—"And the Levites purified themselves from sin, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them for a wave offering before the Lord. And Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. And after that went the Levites in to do their service in the tent of meeting."

Is it possible that such a portion can be read without the opening words of Romans xii. coming forcibly to mind? "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

Is God less careful of the service of His redeemed now than in the old time? Does redemption by the blood of the paschal lamb constitute a stronger claim than redemption by the precious blood of Christ? Does God say of Israel's firstborn "He is Mine!" and yet make no claim to the born again one now? Of course we are bound to own that what we are we owe to Him, and what we have is His, and that in view of mercies far greater than ever shown to Israel.

So we acknowledge that we ought to serve God, but do we realise that it is a great favour on God's part to accept our

service, and, further, that we must observe His requirements in the matter if we would have our service accepted ?

The mercies of God must be appreciated by us ; we must desire, as a matter of gratitude for what He has done, to do what we can to please Him—not to serve as slaves, but as sons. Then, inasmuch as it is by the body that the service must be rendered (for we remember that at the Judgment Seat of Christ we shall be examined concerning the deeds done through the body), we must be careful that true sanctification—separation by the operation of the Spirit through the Word—takes place. The Master uses vessels that are sanctified, meet for service, and prepared, and He is not willing to use unclean vessels. Then, having experienced after a spiritual manner the conditions of Numbers viii. 7, we may seek to offer our bodies to God as a living sacrifice by means of our Great Priest, even the Lord Jesus. Then shall we go on by the renewing of the mind through the Word and Spirit to prove in our own ways and service what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Certain it is that all who have known the redemption that is in Christ Jesus should go on to the appreciation of God's claims on their service, and thus God would have a saved and a serving people.

May such words as these exercise the minds of all. Let those who are serving do so more whole-heartedly, ever seeking to be clean and ready for use, and those who as yet have been contented with being saved reach out to the further will of God in this respect.

A DEACON.

MY PEOPLE.

“THE ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib ; but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider.” (Isaiah i. 3.) How grand it is when we can sing from the heart—

“Not my own ! Oh, not my own !
 Lord, I now belong to Thee ;
 All I have, and all I hope for,
 Thine, for all eternity.”

But in these days, instead of this condition being characteristic of the Lord's people, the words quoted from Isaiah set forth what is more generally true.

THE OX

is brought before us in Scripture in a most interesting and instructive way. Would to God that the truth in connexion therewith was more thoroughly and practically acknowledged by the Lord's people; especially the frequently quoted but too little obeyed injunction—"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." Think of the patient ox, silently plodding on, treading out that which is needful to preserve life, even, it may be, to the one guilty of putting on the muzzle, thus adding suffering to its labour.

Is it possible that those who have known the saving power of the Gospel and the sanctifying power of the truth can be guilty of doing this, whilst at the same time toiling and saving in order that wives or daughters may be adorned after the fashion of Isaiah iii. 18-23? If such there be, may the question move them to shame.

THE ASS,

like the ox, is a beast of burden, and very often is much abused. The blessed Lord Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem upon a colt, the foal of an ass. And are there not to-day those who answer to the ass, who in their testimony bring the Lord Jesus into this place and that place; who are under His control; who take the lowly place of service? Thank God for all such. But let us not forget the channel through which they are to be sustained. It is good to remember in the prayers those who have gone forth for the sake of the Name, taking nothing of the Gentiles; but to our shame be it if in regard to practical fellowship in the work, in regard to giving of our substance, the words of Isaiah apply to us—

"My people doth not consider."

Trinidad, Colorado.

W. ALLINGHAM.

"WORKING TOGETHER."

"YEA, since the day was, I am He, and there is none that can deliver out of My hand: I will work, and who shall reverse?" "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork." "When I consider Thy heavens,

the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained ; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him ? ”

What wondrous condescension, that man has ever occupied such a unique place in the divine mind, and that God should actually be found associating men and women with Himself in various branches of His work ! Not in His creative work, it is true, but in connexion with His grace, who worketh all things after the counsel of His will.

The moment came in the life of the Lord Jesus when He said, “ My Father worketh even until now, and I work.” The fulness of the time had now been reached, and the Eternal One had appeared, after having had a work given Him to accomplish. And what a work ! The reconciling of all things unto God. Yet we find Him almost immediately linking others with Himself, and patiently instructing them, and fitting them, so that after His ascension, and on the descent of the blessed Spirit, the work of God might be carried on.

After He had taken His seat at the right hand of God, it is written that “ they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word by the signs that followed.”

Thus, through ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit, a people were brought together, that they might dwell together, and that they might be found working together. Yet, from a human standpoint, God would almost seem to be defeated in His purpose, for gradually those centuries of dense darkness were reached, after the apostasy had set in. Not in a moment, but gradually, as the truth of God was allowed to slip, and the traditions of men were allowed to take its place.

But as gradually as had the light become darkness, so through God’s patient working amid all the gloom of centuries one glimmer of light was added to another, until, little by little, we reach the present, and within recent years we have in the goodness and grace and mercy of God a people again called and brought together, a people for Himself, and He has so raised the spirits of many of His own, and so revealed His will, that they are found as brethren dwelling together in unity, in the place He has chosen to cause His name to dwell there ; even where He can command the blessing.—Psalm cxxxiii.

We say that after all these years God has brought us together in the apprehension of His holy mind and will, and now

His desire is that we be found working together. And surely, as we take a glance backward, we see how much we have failed in this respect, and we have need to ask ourselves, as the Community of the Son of God, if we are really "working together" to the best advantage, having the glory of God alone before us.

Working together does not, of necessity, imply that we are all at the same work. 1 Cor. xii. might help us, if we take the body as an illustration. "God tempered the body together." The foot, the hand, the ear, and the eye—each has a work to perform, and yet all are seen working harmoniously together.

"To each one his work," as in Mark xiii. 34.

"Everyone unto his work," as in Neh. iv. 15.

There is great need at the present time for all of us to recognise that work for which God has fitted us, and to be found doing whatsoever our hand findeth to do with all our might. Not what others might be inclined to force upon us, but whatsoever our hand findeth to do. That which we can do by His grace, and do it as unto Himself.

"To each one his work." Nothing can be more beautiful than a man or woman, boy or girl, in a God-given sphere, doing that for which God has given fitness, and nothing is more un-gainly, or unsightly, than one trying to fill a place, or to do a work, to which God has not called him. It is even as "a jewel of gold in a swine's snout." The jewel, so very beautiful in its proper setting, is surely just as much out of place set in a swine's snout.

The special sphere of labour which has suggested this contribution is the work of the Gospel—a work that should occupy a very distinct place in every heart, and a work that calls for the spiritual and bodily energy of all in the Community of God's Son. We speak of Gospel work as carried on, more particularly, in our various halls and meeting-places, for it is difficult to have organised outside work, owing chiefly to the severe climatic conditions that very generally prevail in these lands.

Now, Paul's letter to the Philippians furnishes the divine requirement in order to ensure power. "To all the saints . . . with the bishops and deacons . . . let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ . . . that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the Faith of the Gospel." There we get the thought of working together; yet in Gospel work there is great diversity, and room for each one.

Firstly, there is the room, which should be not only clean but tidy; and someone must of necessity do this. It is an important and very definite work. The Lord Jesus Himself appreciated this comfort, and made inquiries for “the guest chamber.” “He will shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.” But it is the seemingly smaller duties that are so manifestly lacking to-day. Oh for young men with grace and tact to “entertain strangers” in our Gospel meetings! “The Lord loveth the stranger,” was written so often of old. And there are so very few who can shine in this blessedly opportune sphere of labour. It is often for the want of suitable persons, fitted by God to take up the task of courteously shewing strangers to a seat and handing a hymn-book, that the work of the Gospel is hindered. But—“To each one his work.” Then there is the herald, he who preaches; but he is only “a voice,” yet a necessary part of the divine machinery. And, when saints come together, instead of attending simply to bear an address, should not hearts rather be lifted up unto Him to whom salvation belongeth, on behalf of those unsaved, if such are present, that He would use the Word being spoken; and should we not seek in a quiet way to get near to some, and to thus manifest a genuine and godly interest in their souls’ welfare? It is not everyone who can do this, but, when the opportunity does present itself, if not fitted oneself for such delicate work, let the grace be forthcoming which will “beckon for a partner” who is fitted to come and help. Thus we may be found “working together.” What scope there is here for beloved sisters, as well as for beloved brethren!

“Heed we the steward’s call,
 There’s room enough for all;
 This vineyard of the Lord
 Constant labour will afford;
 Ours is a sure reward,
 Work, brethren, work.”

But let us each try and find out from God what our work is, and do it heartily, as unto the Lord.

As in Gospel work, so in other departments. Some are fitted to attend at the bedside of the sick. Others are as definitely not fitted, and only do harm by venturing, when pressed, perhaps, by others, well meaning, but ill-advised. “To each

one his work." Then, however trifling it may seem, or insignificant, yet it will appear now, and in the coming day, beautiful, as having been done in one's own sphere, and, at the same time, as "working together."

"Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants,
 And Thy glory upon their children.
 And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us :
 And establish Thou the work of our hands upon us ;
 Yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." Amen.

NORMAN D. W. MILLER.

"TO HIMSELF AND TO GOD."

THESE words suggest a private exercise which should not be neglected.

The subject dwelt upon in chapter xiv. of 1st Corinthians, from which they are taken, is the public exercise of gifts ; how interesting, then, to find private exercise dropped in so suggestively !

If the Holy Spirit bring up some precious thoughts before a brother fitted to minister, and there is no interpreter, he is not to conclude that there is something wrong, or that he is being deceived, but he is to speak to himself and to God.

May not those who are graced to help others, by speaking to them what the Lord has made precious and helpful to themselves, find guidance in such a scripture as this ?

There are times when thoughts seem to come without the suitable opportunity to speak (apart, of course, from the question of an interpreter), and distress of spirit results. Does not this precious little side-help suggest a way of using up what is thus given, "that nothing be lost" ?

What self-edification would result ! What delight to our God !

May we not lawfully use this further, and extend it to each brother and sister at all times and in all places, in order that we may, one and all, cultivate the habit of speaking to ourselves and to God ?

We must not neglect ourselves and our God in our desire to edify others.

W. J. LENNOX.

THE TIMES OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.

(Continued from page 26.*)

III.

THE BATTLE.

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses :
But we will make mention of the name of Jehovah our God.”
—Psalm xx. 7.

“He bowed the heavens also, and came down ;
And thick darkness was under His feet.
And He rode upon a cherub, and did fly :
Yea, He flew swiftly upon the wings of the wind.
He made darkness His hiding place, His pavilion round
about Him,
Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.

And He sent out His arrows, and scattered them ;
Yea, lightnings manifold, and discomfited them.”
—Psalm xviii.

THE day and the hour came at last for Barak to set the little army in motion. Why was the leader's heart so strangely calm, his voice so confident, his bearing so fearless, and his arm so strong? Because Jehovah was his Strength and Stay. Would he ever forget that momentous day, or the strange, deep joy he realised in being used by God? Every incident would be engraved on his memory: the thrilling message through the prophetess—“Up . . . is not Jehovah gone out before thee”; the striking of camp; the willing obedience of the ten thousand as they rushed down into the valley at his feet; when Zebulun rejoiced in his going out, and Naphtali was as a hind let loose; the march along the plain of Jezreel till in about six hours they were abreast of the enemy; the halt to allow the rear to come up; the forming in line to outflank the Canaanite camp; and then (perhaps at daybreak) the mighty shout as they threw themselves upon the sleeping host (Judges iv. 14).

Realising that the Mightiest of the mighty had taken the field in person; that Jehovah the Man of war had gone forth at their head, that He rode upon the heavens for their help

* In the fifth paragraph, page 24, “*Deborah's purpose*” should be “*Jehovah's purpose.*”

and in His excellency on the skies, they endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

It was upon some rising ground, the high places of the field, that the fight was fiercest, where perchance the kings who came and fought attempted a rally. But all in vain, for it was there the men of Zebulun and Naphtali distinguished themselves; it was there that they jeoparded their lives unto the death (Judges v. 18). Nothing could withstand their desperate and determined onset. They made up for lack of skill by their valour; they counted not their lives as dear unto themselves; and with their homely weapons they drove the terror-stricken foe before them in headlong flight, as their forefathers under Joshua a century and a half before had defeated another Jabin king of Canaan by the waters of Merom.

The words

“The River Kishon swept them away,
That ancient river, the River Kishon,”

and other circumstances, indicate a storm. Josephus, the Jewish historian, says that a terrific storm of rain and hail came on, driving full in the faces of the Canaanites.

The low-lying ground surrounding the Kishon was quickly converted into a quagmire—the tough, tenacious mud making it almost impossible for horses and chariots to get along. The terrified steeds, with snorts of terror, plunged their hoofs deep into the treacherous ground, and could only withdraw them with difficulty.

“Then did the horse-hoofs stamp

By reason of the prancings, the prancings of their strong
ones.”

Along the fatal path, jostling one another in wild confusion, horses and chariots and men struggled along towards Harosheth. As they neared it on the opposite bank, the pass became narrower still, until, when nearly abreast of the garrison city, the rocky cliff of Carmel came sheer down to the torrent's edge. Now they must take the fatal leap into the swiftly flowing river; one upon another, rank upon rank, they dash into the flood, driving the foremost still deeper into the tenacious mud, till the River Kishon swept them away lifeless.

Thus in that scene of tumult the might of the Canaanite perished. Sisera, the captain of the host, died by a woman's hand—but not in battle.

E. MATTHEW.

(To be concluded.)

REPORTS.

A LETTER to hand from Aberdeen, under date February 2nd, states :—“ We have had brother Coyne here for the last four weeks. He is in Inverness this week, and expects to go to Aboyne on his return. He had a good hearing in Aberdeen. We hope the seed sown will yet spring up to eternal life in many cases.”

We give the following interesting excerpt from a letter received from Mr. David Smith, dated Mountain Ash, 4th February, 1909 :—“ As you will see, I am now among the Welsh mountains—the scene of my adventures some ten or twelve years ago, of which you may have heard. Since coming here I have learned of a very interesting sequel to these. In Merthyr Vale (the place we came to by mistake after having lost our way in crossing the mountain) there is now an assembly, and a brother in it was the young man who directed our way again across the mountain to Mountain Ash. The circumstances leading to the start of the assembly were, one of the brethren from Mountain Ash having met this young man on the mountain, gave him a tract, and got into conversation with him; this led to meetings to look into the Scriptures together, with the result that some twelve to fifteen were helped and delivered. I hope to go to Merthyr Vale next week, and will be staying with the very person I met there years ago. Truly ‘ God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.’ Meetings here are very interesting, some strangers coming in, both saved and unsaved. I hope to return again after I visit Merthyr Vale, next week being more suitable for them there, owing to the different shifts. We shall value continued remembrance in the prayers.”

GONE HOME.

MR. ADAM STEVENS, formerly of the assembly in Burnbank, Hamilton, but lately of the assembly in Kirkcaldy.

MRS. JAMES GARDNER, of the assembly in Rothesay.

Prayer is requested for Mrs. Stevens and Mr. Gardner that they may be sustained of God in this trial.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

We regret to state that the need in the North-Eastern District of England, due to trade depression, still continues; indeed, this is now more acute. Mr. Wm. Fisk's address is 81 Bewicke Street, Willington Quay-on-Tyne.

SUTTON, SURREY.—In consequence of business premises changing hands, the assembly in this place, formerly meeting at 32 High Street, is temporarily meeting at the house of Mr. Bond, 44 Warwick Road, to whom communications should still be sent.—S. J. HILL; A. C. LEAMY.

It is particularly requested that *Intelligence* items be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding issue of the number of *Wholesome Words* in which they are desired to appear. These should bear the signatures of two overseeing men.

We appreciate the ready response to our appeal for articles, and now urge a *special effort* to increase the circulation. To better admit of this we are seeking to make the booklet suitable for general distribution. Friends will please note that postage must be added for all orders for less than 50. For example, 25 cost 1s. 3½d., not 1s.

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Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. I.

APRIL, 1909.

No. 4.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

BABES, little children, young men, and fathers, are spoken of in the Word of God ; and in these we have presented stages of development in the divine life, as in the natural. This is God's purpose, and is desirable in the one as in the other. Unto this important end of growth spiritually there are, as in natural growth, several essentials which must be attended to. These are—wholesome food, a pure atmosphere, and healthy exercise.

The Apostle's words in another connection fittingly apply here also—"Doth not even Nature itself teach you?" and in this, as in many other things, we may learn from the natural, for the spiritual.

To begin with babyhood ; it must surely be admitted that this stage of life is a very important one. The future healthiness or otherwise will very much depend upon the nursing and attention of this period. It cannot be expected that babes will be able to look after themselves. They need care, nursing and nourishing. Yet it might have been almost better for some babes to have been left to themselves, than in the care of some nurses ; for many babes, in a spiritual sense, have like Mephibosheth* been lamed for life through the carelessness of such, and have thus been rendered unfit for life's walk or work, agreeable to the divine will. In contrast to this was the case of another babe, who with his nurse was hid and preserved in safety† until the opportune time came for him to be brought forth, to be made and proclaimed king.

Other instances might be cited, as the babe Moses, and the babe Jesus, to show the responsibility associated with the care and nursing and rearing of babyhood days, in the light of future

* 2 Samuel iv. 4. † 2 Kings xi. 2.

days and future purposes. One more case is that of Timothy, concerning whom witness is borne, "From a babe thou hast known the Sacred Writings," and that under the tender training and teaching of his grandmother and mother, spoken of in 2 Tim. i. 5, to which, no doubt, was to be attributed to a great degree his future life of active useful service for God.

Some babes, again, are born with natural infirmity, and some babes in Christ seem like these. The man whom they laid at the door of the temple was lame from his mother's womb.† What a sad circumstance! He had life (natural); but that was about all. To all life's purposes there was no response: no strength nor ability either to walk or to work. We do not wish to be uncharitable; but is it not the case that this man presents a view in a spiritual sense of a vast number of the children of God? They have life, spiritual life; we cannot doubt it; but as far as being any joy to God in their walk, or doing any service for God, their life is a blank. They eke out a miserable sort of existence, begging, begging, here and there and everywhere, yet ever seem either to fail to apprehend God's purposes, or to be helplessly unfit to give effect to them.

But perhaps they are not to blame altogether; it may only be the effect of the training—the mixture of law and gospel, or the lack of rightly dividing the word of truth, on the part of those they have trusted as their teachers. Can we not try to reach them and give them a helping hand, and give them of that which we have, telling them of the Person and of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in which there is preciousness and power to strengthen ankle bones, and enable such to stand, walk, and worship God?

To prevent such a calamity on the one hand, and effect such good results, in a spiritual sense, on the other, there is sufficient provision in the Word of God; and wholesome words therefrom are much needed in these sadly degenerating days of impaired taste and spoiled appetite for the spiritual milk which is without guile. This is the proper food for the spiritual babe. If there be not the longing for it, something is seriously wrong. Apart from this longing there cannot be spiritual growth. It is thereby we grow unto salvation.§

† Acts iii. § 1 Peter ii. 2.

The responsibility devolves on spiritual nurses to see that the babes get the milk, and nothing but the milk, of the Word of God, if they would have them become healthy and useful in the service of God. The books that not a few read are only worthy of the fate that befel those of Acts xix. 19. Such apparent loss was and will be a real gain.

DAVID SMITH.

(To be continued.)

“THE LIGHT OF THY COUNTENANCE.”

IN Psalm iv., to the question asked by the many—

“Who will shew us any good?”

the Psalmist replies—

“Jehovah! lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us.”

This is a most important matter, for, if we know not this goodness, it will be impossible for us to fulfil the purpose for which God, in His grace, called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, and called us, further, into the Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. It will be impossible for us to glorify Him who has made us His own through the precious blood of Christ. We shall not be able to bring forth fruit unto God.

That it is so may be established at the mouth of many witnesses, of which we cite a few. “Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee; Jehovah make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; Jehovah lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” “Thus,” said He, “shall ye put My name upon them [Israel], and I will bless them.”* It is here intimated that the light of His countenance, being lifted up upon His people, was that which would lead to further and fuller blessing.

In Psalms xlii., xliii., the Psalmist thrice asks the question—“Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?” And thrice he seeks to inspire himself with hope in that One whose goodness and grace and power he has known in times past: “Hope thou in God.” This he does

* Numbers vi. 22-27.

with assurance like unto that which possesses those who can truthfully sing—

“ Our Father, by Thy mercies past
 We learn on Thee our cares to cast ;
 And since our wants are known to Thee,
 We need not fear, whate’er they be.”

So the Psalmist says—“ I shall yet praise Him.”

The difference between verses 11 of Psalm xlii. and 5 of Psalm xliii. on the one hand, and verse 5 of Psalm xlii. on the other, is instructive. In the latter case it is the Psalmist expressing his confidence in God that his present time of exile and persecution will be brought to an end, and that once again, as of yore, he will be found in God’s house with the light of Jehovah’s countenance shining upon him ; and this he acknowledges as a place of health, for which it was comely that thanks should be rendered unto Jehovah. Have we known His countenance thus?

Such an experience will lead on to what we would suggest is a greater blessing—the greater blessing of which the Lord Jesus Christ Himself spake when He said, “ It is more blessed to give than to receive ” ; the blessedness that God purposed for Abraham of old when He said, “ Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house and be thou a blessing.” †

In Psalm xlii. 11, and Psalm xliii. 5, it is not “ I shall praise Him for the health of His countenance,” but “ I shall praise Him who is the Health of my countenance.”

Here, surely, we are caused to think that in the health-giving and health-sustaining power of the countenance of Jehovah, lifted up upon His own, the countenance of His own partake of the same character as the countenance of Jehovah Himself, and others may find, in the presence of such, that in kind, though not in degree, which His own find in His presence.

It is occupation with the Blesser Himself that will most readily make us a blessing. Even our blessings may become curses to us if they be allowed to unduly engage our attention to the shutting out of Him.

He would have us come into His presence and dwell there, so that our souls may be maintained in a healthy condition, and that we reflect to those around His own light. “ We all, with unveiled face, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit.” ‡

† Gen. xii. 1, 2.

‡ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

We are privileged, as was Moses, to come into His presence with unveiled face. In that presence Moses' face was so illuminated that, when he came forth, and the children of Israel looked upon him, they discovered that his face shone !

“Reflecting as a mirror” suggests, indeed, that the light is not inherently in us. A little mirror may reflect the sun : a piece of dull glass in itself, not particularly attractive, it may be—little use, at anyrate, for giving light—but when the sun's rays strike it, oh ! how brilliantly it shines ! The sun itself may be hidden from men, but its presence and glory are made known through the mirror.

So we think of the Lord Jesus as the Unseen One now at God's right hand, whose presence and glory are unknown to the world, but of which they may learn something through us, as we “reflect the light divine.”

What conceptions do people form of God as they regard us—the people of God ? Are we so living that testimony may be borne of us like unto that borne of Peter and John, who, in the power of God, dared to withstand those in authority who would have closed their mouths from testifying of the Lord Jesus Christ ? It is written that “They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus !” People know not, and see not God, but they see us. Do they learn from us, from our behaviour, that God is holy, that God is righteous, that He is good, and kind, and gracious ?

To know Him as the “Health of our countenance” will lead to behaviour worthy of Himself. This is true prosperity, and none will then be able to wish us better than, as the Apostle John wished Gaius, “That thou mayest prosper, and be in health even as thy soul prospereth.” *

See also Psalm xc.—“Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance” : and Psalm xix.—“Clear Thou me from hidden faults ; keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins ; so shall I be clear from great transgression.”

Secret sins and hidden faults, if not confessed and forsaken, will lead on to presumptuous sin and great transgression. Secret and hidden they may be from every human eye, but, solemn thought—“He has set them in the light of His countenance.” They are not hidden from Him. “All things are

naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

Let us recognise this, and in confession seek to be cleared, and kept clear, from these secret sins, these hidden faults; and thus we shall be saved from the presumptuous sins and the great transgression. Thus we may be perfect, full-grown, properly developed Christians, bringing forth fruit unto God. Be it otherwise, and the hidden fault may lead on until we sin unto death—"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and not a few sleep."—1 Cor. xi.

Oh, beloved! as you value your life—your life not only here upon earth, but your life for God; as you value the blood of Christ by which you have been redeemed; as you would seek to glorify God, and carry with you beyond the judgment seat of Christ something for eternity; then see to it that your secret sins, your hidden faults, are confessed and forsaken.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound;
They walk, O Jehovah! in the light of Thy countenance.
In Thy name do they rejoice all the day,
And in Thy righteousness are they exalted.
For Thou art the glory of their strength."

—Psalm lxxxix. 15-17.

JOHN P. A. TAYLOR.

THE TIMES OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.

(Continued from page 46.)

THE PRINCELY LEADER.

IN previous pages we have seen how an heroic woman rose superior to gloomy circumstances and surroundings; and we traced some of the virtues that should characterize a leader of men as seen in Barak, and noticed of what lengths of heroism and daring a body of men are capable whose spirits are raised by God.

These, having served their day and generation, fell asleep, leaving behind a deathless memory; but their Divine Leader lives on for ever.

Fourteen hundred years pass away, and the Son of the Highest, who had led Barak and the ten thousand to victory, now in

wondrous condescension lays aside His glory and comes forth from His Father's presence. He, the great Ruler of the universe, who had watched mighty world-powers rise and fall and sink into nothingness, now comes to earth while imperial Rome is in its glory. He stoops to take human form—is born of a woman—made like unto His brethren. The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us.

Where did He spend His early life on earth? Not in Jerusalem, the city of the Great King, the centre of the nation's life, where the house of God was; not in Bethlehem, the home of David, His ancestor after the flesh; nor in Judea at all. In the eternal counsels of the Triune God, Nazareth was the place where the Son should be brought up. Ancient prophecies had recorded that He should be called a Nazarene.*

In that little town, amidst the encircling hills of Galilee, He grew up before His God as a tender plant, and as a roset out of a dry ground.

Here He learned the precious Old Testament Scriptures in their beauty and freshness. Untrammelled and unhindered by the tradition of the elders, He saw beauties in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, when others were blind to them.

God had His ear, and so He could say "He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as they that are taught"; † and again "I have treasured up the words of His mouth more than My necessary food"; ‡ "Oh how love I Thy Law! It is My meditation all the day"; ** "Thy Law is within My heart." ††

With no special advantages of education, brought up as the son of a village carpenter, and surrounded by people not much esteemed (for even pious Nathaniel, who lived near and knew the place and people, asked "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"), yet in spite of adverse surroundings "the Child grew, and waxed strong, becoming filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him."

The little synagogue at Nazareth never had a more diligent student in it than He. How richly He appreciated the Sabbath quiet there, where He could hear portions read from the rolls of the Law and the Prophets!

* Matt. ii. 23. † Isaiah l. 4. ‡ Job. xxiii. 12. ** Psalm cxix. 97.

†† Psalm xl. 8.

How he looked forward to the journey to Jerusalem, when He could enter the sacred precincts of His Father's House! What joy filled His heart when they said "Let us go unto the House of Jehovah!"

The marvellous progress He made is clearly seen when as a boy of twelve years He was found in the temple, sitting in the midst of the learned doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions; it is recorded that all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. He had more understanding than all His teachers, for the testimonies of Jehovah were His meditation; He understood more than the aged, because He kept Jehovah's precepts; yet with it all there was a sweet humility and obedience to His parents; for He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He was subject unto them.

Here too the Coming Leader learned that perfect self-control which no circumstance could ruffle; for "he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." And here He learned to use the weapons in the armoury of God, to hurl the spiritual javelin, and to use the comely sling and stone; here He became the Prince of archers, the Chief of those who handle the sword of the Spirit.

At length his training time is over, and He goes to the Jordan to be baptized by John, His forerunner. What is His Father's testimony to those thirty years of patient learning and training in secret? From the opened heavens came the words "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Thence He is led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted by the Devil, where for forty days He was without food and was among the wild beasts. From this terrible ordeal He comes forth unscathed—a mighty Victor.

Time fails us to tell of those brief years of public ministry, so full of service for God and blessing to men, till at last He won, single-handed, the great victory of Golgotha. Our hearts turn to that spot as the needle turns to the pole, for there He proved Himself to be at once the bravest and noblest Warrior this world has ever seen.

EDWIN MATTHEW.

(To be continued.)

FITNESS AND MEASURE.

ALL saints should be servants, and all servants should be saints. All should lay themselves out for God's service as a living sacrifice. All should realize that they are severally members of one another in one Body.

This last fact also should tell us that there is unity in service, for we serve one Lord, Christ. And although the service may differ, yet he that planteth and he that watereth are one. So, whatever our line of service be, the exhortation is fitting, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

It will not be amiss to remind the reader that the Epistle to the Philippians was written largely with a view to the maintenance of fellowship in service.

But if there be unity, not less is there diversity in the work of the Lord. The members have not all the same office; each one receives a gift wherewith he is to serve, and there is a difference of ability which the Lord recognises.

In Rom. xii., 3-6, we have a very helpful word dealing with this subject, for there we learn that not only should everyone have a service, but each one should be exercised before God, both as to the kind of gift conferred upon him and also as to the measure of his faith for the exercise of that gift. If such a word be unheeded, there can only be confusion; men and women will be attempting work for which they have not the needful qualities, and consequently the work will be badly done; men and women of moderate faith will engage in a service which is too large for them, and by so doing will perhaps cripple themselves spiritually and soon give up all service. So the apostle says—"Consider your abilities soberly, not extravagantly; become fully persuaded of your fitness for a particular work, and let your faith compass it round. Do not think because another is successful in a particular line that you should follow him. The gifts differ, and you must discover your gift (for you have one), and use it in humble faith."

Faith is not presumption, and presumption is not faith, though outwardly they oftentimes seem alike and are mistaken the one for the other. So how necessary it is that there should be very genuine exercise of heart before God in this matter! How sad it would be if any should say that to avoid such trouble

and danger they will abstain from doing anything ! Perchance there is greater danger for the one with the one talent to hide it than for the one who has ten to do so. If you have but one talent, for that you must give account.

Having found out your gift and measure, then you are to give yourself to your service. That is the purport of verse 6 and onwards of Rom. xii. No half-heartedness, no insincerity, but, as Paul said to Timothy, " Give thyself wholly to these things."

How many young men and women (and some, it may be, who are older) have undoubted ability for certain lines of service, and not a little time on their hands, and yet are wasting the precious opportunities to their own and others' loss !

Service may be of a public character and towards many people, calling for a special gift and special faith, or it may be more private, such as visitation or the instruction of children. The man who acceptably occupies the service of preaching or teaching may be but little fitted for the very valuable pastoral work of visitation, for that which calls for sympathy and tact, which may often be possessed by women to a greater extent than by men.

Let all, then, see that they are doing something, and that something for which God has fitted them, that which they can carry on in faith, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

A DEACON.

"THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS."

WE cannot be too well established in the truth suggested by these words. Less than the turning of men and women to righteousness should never be before us. The task may be a big one, and the difficulties mountain high, but anything less is unworthy of our best efforts, and in going in for it we have God and the Word of His grace with us and for us.

Such a revelation given to Daniel when he was nearing the end of his course surely indicates that he was one of those destined to shine as the stars for ever and ever, for the day alone will declare how many he has turned to righteousness.

To this hour his influence in turning men to righteousness prevails. He who opened his window toward Jerusalem during those dark days—he who continued to pray there three times each day as heretofore, not once less in order to reduce persecution, nor once more in order to provoke it, but calmly and firmly went on before God, acknowledging God's dwelling-place, and that alone, as the place where the true God could be acceptably worshipped—he who refused to join in admiration of the beautiful art of that graceful image and the delightful music of that entrancing service, although not dead to such beauties, but determined not to enjoy them at such a cost—he, we say, is worthy to shine as a star for ever and ever and to stand in a good lot at the end of the days.

Then let it be ours to go in for turning many to righteousness; let those who will set something less before them; let those who will form evangelical associations, understood or actual, with rules written or unwritten, binding them to suppress part of the righteous ways of God in order to get large numbers saved.

Less than turning men round with their backs to lawlessness and their faces to righteousness never satisfied God, and never will.

W. J. LENNOX.

AT HOME WITH THE LORD.

THE Lord has been graciously pleased to take to be with Himself Mr. Albert Midlane, of Newport, Isle of Wight. The deceased is most widely known by the beautiful hymn, "There's a Friend for little children Above the bright blue sky," which was written just over fifty years ago, and has doubtless been instrumental in widely spreading the knowledge of the great Friend of sinners. There are three other hymns of the departed author which have perhaps equal interest for us, as forming part of the new hymn-book recently compiled, namely, "Himself He could not save," "Amen, one lasting long Amen," and "Soft the voice of Mercy sounded." The spirit that breathes in these compositions shows how closely the spiritual life of their author was in harmony with the divine thought of worship, though he was not delivered during his time on earth from the system in which so many of

God's children are ensnared. How pleasant and happy will be the day when we shall join with him and the innumerable multitude in singing that—

“ lasting loud Amen,
Heaven's blissful accents, sweet and loud,
While every heart around the throne
In holy solemn awe is bowed.”

The present writer desires to take this opportunity of putting on record the courteous and kindly consent that Mr. Midlane gave when asked for permission to insert the three hymns above named in the hymn-book recently compiled.

C. M. L.

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Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. I.

MAY, 1909.

No. 5.

HOW WE KNOW THAT GOD HATH SPOKEN IN THE SCRIPTURES.

(Continued from page 20.)

II.

BECAUSE OF WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS OF SIN AND THE SINNER.

ONE of the most remarkable features of the Bible is the uniformity and the persistent consistency of the testimony concerning the ruin of the Adamic family: scores of witnesses never known to one another speaking at different times in widely divergent places covering a period of many hundred years give their unanimous testimony to the fact that man is a sinner and that the awful thing known in the English language by the word "SIN" has blighted and blasted this otherwise beautiful world.

To simplify the subject we may consider it under the following headings:—

I.—Some general testimonies concerning sin.

II.—Testimonies as to individual sinfulness.

III.—The one and only sinless Man.

I.—As to the first, we find record of this before the Flood in the following words:—"And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."*

Now is it likely that this statement could have been made by man writing for and from himself merely? Notice the words

* Gen. vi. 5.

“And Jehovah said,” albeit written through man, “every imagination,” “evil continually.”

We might naturally enough expect to find an improvement after the destruction of the wicked by the Flood, but what saith the Scriptures? “And Jehovah smelled the sweet savour; and Jehovah said in His heart, ‘I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake, for that the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.’”*

Here we have an intimation of the fact that though man in himself is incapable of pleasing his Creator because of being incurably wicked, “born in sin and shapen in iniquity,” yet God has devised the means whereby He can look upon the creature of His handiwork despite his ruin by the Adamic fall, with a measure of complacency and delight. This is possible because of the satisfaction and delight which God has in the finished work of His beloved Son, a thing which from the beginning God saw as an accomplished fact,—“And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour.”

Here are a few statements, some in the Old Testament and some in the New:—

DAVID:

“Jehovah looked down from heaven upon the children of men,

To see if there were any that did understand,
That did seek after God.

They are all gone aside; they are together become filthy;
There is none that doeth good, no not one.”†

SOLOMON: “. . . the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.”‡

ISAIAH: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way,”§ and again, “For we are all become as one that is unclean, and all our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment, and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind take us away.”**

JEREMIAH: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is desperately sick: who can know it?”††

* Gen. viii. 21.

† Psalm xiv. 1, 2.

‡ Ecclesiastes ix. 3.

§ Isaiah liii. 6.

** Isaiah lxiv. 6.

†† Jeremiah xvii. 9.

JOHN : " If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."*

PAUL : " There is no distinction ; for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God."†

Then we have the words spoken by the Lord Jesus and recorded in Matthew and Mark telling us that " out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings."‡

Then we may consider the biographies or life histories of God's worthy ones. How unlike they are to the biographies of men ! Absolute truth characterises them. Take, for example, the account we have of Moses and David, two of the most prominent typical men of the Old Testament, the one called " The man of God," the other " A man after God's own heart." Yet the sins of both are recorded. Moses was prevented from entering the promised land because of disobedience. David sinned grievously in the matter of Bathsheba. Do we ever find anything like this in the books of men ?

II.—Testimonies as to individual sinfulness.

We will take four of these.

(1) It is generally conceded that Job lived at a very early stage of the world's history.

God dealt with him and when he was brought to an end of himself he exclaimed :

" I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear ;
But now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself,
and repent,
In dust and ashes."**

(2) Isaiah utters somewhat similar words when he beheld the thrice holy God sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. " Then said I, ' Woe is me ! for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips ; for mine eyes have seen the King ; the Lord of hosts.' "††

(3) Peter, in the Divine presence of the Lord Jesus when he saw the miraculous draught of fishes, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, " Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord."‡‡

* 1 John i. 8.

† Romans. iii. 23.

‡ Matt. xv. 19.

** Job xlii. 5, 6.

†† Isaiah vi. 5.

‡‡ Luke v. 8.

(4) John in the Isle of Patmos fell at His feet as one dead * when he saw the One whom he once companied with as "Jesus the Nazarene," "the Man of sorrows," now in the dazzling brightness of His glory. This is the more remarkable when we remember that it was John who reclined in Jesus' bosom at supper time.

It will be noticed that all these cases were brought face to face with the Lord Himself. Is it possible for mere man without the Holy Spirit to have recorded such things about himself? We see nothing like it at the present time. On the contrary man is ever seeking to justify himself, ever endeavouring to minimise the enormity of his sin, to palliate, yea to repudiate, the Divine statement, "There is none righteous, no not one."*

All this goes to prove that God Himself hath spoken in the Scriptures.

III.—The one and only sinless Man.

What a contrast to all this black chapter of man's sin is that holy spotless life of the Lord Jesus! It is like a beautiful portrait upon a very dark background, or like a diamond in a very black setting.

It is important to notice that it is man who is made to give testimony to his own sinfulness, as it is man also who is a witness to the sinlessness of God's beloved Son. With what eagerness would Judas have grasped at a flaw if flaw could have been found in that Spotless One? This is a great witness to the innocence of the Lord Jesus Christ, for instead of furnishing evidence of guilt on His part, he it was who said "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood."† Pilate, Pilate's wife, Herod, the centurion, the thief,—all give similar testimony.

Significant indeed is the fact that the Lord Jesus, Himself the Author of faith, never wrote one word concerning Himself. Men wrote, being moved by the Holy Spirit.‡ "He knew no sin"; "He did no sin"; "Without sin"; are words recorded of Him.

It is of the greatest importance to remember, however, that the beautiful, perfect life of the Lord Jesus upon this earth could never have put an end to the sin-question. It was that wondrous yet awful death which He died unto sin once for all. "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."§ His was no

* Romans iii. 10. † Matt. xxvii. 4. ‡ 2 Peter 1. § Heb. ix. 26.

martyr's death. He laid down His life Himself, no one took it away from Him. His words were :—" I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again. This commandment received I from the Father."* Being holy and spotless in Himself He could meet all the righteous claims of God against sin, for it was God who made Him sin.† Man never did, nor could. He was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

We see in all this what a dreadful thing sin must be in the sight of God and, in the light of the fact that God could meet with the sinner only upon the ground of sin being condemned in the flesh by the sacrifice of His Son upon the Cross, no lesser a Person could have done it than God's sinless, only begotten Son, no lesser a judgment could avail in meeting the requirements of a just God.

The words He ejaculated upon the Cross when suffering the wrath of God were these :—

" My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? "‡

" God is light " =hating sin,

" God is love " =loving the sinner,

are, to some extent, the answer.

J. C. R.

THE TRUTH.

THE will of God our Saviour is, that men should come to a knowledge of the truth, and with a view thereto He saves them.§ Man's guilt and the evil of his fallen nature present a barrier to this purpose of God. He, the Saviour God, justifies by the death of Christ and regenerates by His Holy Spirit. The believer in God is thus set upon his feet and directed on his way to the fulfilling of God's will.

Man in his fall departed from the truth, from the light; the likeness of God in which he was made became defaced and he ceased to be a witness to God's character : instead thereof we find that those who have been born in sin, who are by nature children of wrath, go on in sin until they are described as sons of disobedience and further as being the children of the Devil.

* John x. 18. † 2 Cor. v. 21. ‡ Matt. xxvii. 46. § 1 Timothy ii. 4.

Sin is lawlessness, the transgression of the perfect standard of right and truth. Sin is everything that is out of harmony with the character of the blessed God and of this we see innumerable examples on every hand. Sin is the opposite of that of which Phil. 4. 8, speaks. It is dishonourable, unjust, impure, unlovely, of ill report, without virtue, unworthy of praise. And therefore sin is a false thing; it is a lie, a departure from the light and truth and perfectness of God's character. Its end, with the end of those who are identified with it, is necessarily the Gehenna of fire, the antitheses of Heaven, where God is.

Sin first laid hold of man, the head of God's creation, perverted him, marred his beauty, and through him the plague spread itself over the whole creation, so that Creation itself is not a true witness for God and because of all this the Word plainly promises that the earth shall be destroyed by fire in a future day.

But though this be so, it is not the whole purpose of God, for He has promised a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, to succeed the present. The time is coming when God's work, beginning with man, shall be a true witness to God; when the lie shall be no longer and the truth shall shine forth in its own character.

The One through whom this is to be effected is Christ, the Son of God, and the starting point is His Cross. It was there that He who by virtue of His intrinsic excellence as well as by His assumed humanity was able to do the work—was made Sin for us. It was there that in Him God condemned sin in the flesh. And He who thus died was raised again as Head over all things and through Him the purposes of God are to find and will find their accomplishment.

He begins with man, and so beginning gives a pledge that His work will not cease until all creation is brought within the scope of His blessing. So we read "If any man is in Christ there is a new creation, the old things are passed away, behold, they are become new."* The believer is viewed as associated with Christ in the heavenlies† and as complete in Him.

But while this is secured in Christ and while we are indeed "complete" we learn from the Word that as still in the body we are far from complete, being subject to temptation and

* 2 Cor. v. 17.

† Eph. ii. 6.

failure and even where failure is not contemplated the ideal life of the Christian is ever viewed as one of progress, of attainment, of putting off the old man and putting on the new, of being renewed in the spirit of the mind.

To some who believed in the Lord in the days of His flesh He said, "If ye continue in My word then are ye My disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."* This is very important and interesting. It shows that having believed we need to commence our education in the Will of God. The Word is to operate on us, judging whatever is wrong, false and evil. Our habits are to be measured by the Word, the details of our lives brought into harmony with its principles of truth.

Do we wish to have presented to our gaze a living expression of the truth, not merely of *a* truth, but of *the* truth? Not in the person of an Angel, but in the person of a Man, and One who lived and moved in the same sphere as ourselves? We have it in the Man, Christ Jesus, who could say "I am the Truth." He was a living exposition of God's Will; there was perfect consistency between His knowledge and His ways; there was no conviction of God's Will without the doing of it. Every virtue and excellence were seen in Him in harmonious combination; there was nothing lacking and nothing superfluous; neither too little nor too much. God's Word was in His heart and thence it controlled and ordered all His words and ways, even as He said "The word that I speak I speak not from Myself, but the Father abiding in Me doeth His works."

There have been many lovely lives lived by believers but none so perfect, none so absolutely in accord with God, as was His.

How does this apply to us? In this, that we are to come to a knowledge of the truth, as expressed by Him. What are our lives like? Are they righteous? Are they true? Are they good? Are we approximating to the perfect standard little by little? That which is crooked in us is to be made straight, that which is rough, plain; that which is morally ugly, beautiful. Are our lives truthful; that is, are they an expression of the truth—the Will of God?

It is very sad to consider that the lives of many are a disgrace

* John viii. 31, 32.

to the Name and there is no purpose of heart to remedy the wrong.

The time is soon coming when a further stage in the new creation will be reached, when He will come and when, seeing Him, we shall be like Him, perfectly conformed to His image. But what is the word connected with this hope? "Everyone that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself even as He is pure."*

Let then the reader, if he have known the saving grace of God, appreciate the fact that that is but the threshold, introducing into the way of the truth. Let that truth be sought in its every part, diligently and prayerfully. Let it be stored up in the heart and with honesty applied to the ways and habits and so will he gradually approximate to the true and blessed standard as revealed in Christ.

A DEACON.

THINGS OF WHICH WE SHOULD NOT BE IGNORANT.

(Continued from page 37.)

II.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that when ye were Gentiles ye were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led."† This was in their unregenerate days, when they willingly allowed themselves to be controlled and led in their idolatrous worship by the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. But now, being born again and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, this new power is theirs to manifest itself in controlling and leading in the religious service of God.

Going back to the time when our Lord was upon earth we find Him saying to His disciples before His ascension "Tarry ye in the city (Jerusalem) until ye be clothed with power from on high." This was fulfilled when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, and they spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts ii. Our Lord had foretold of this new dispensation, this indwelling and manifestation of the Holy

* 1 John iii. 3.

† 1 Cor. xii. 1, 2.

Spirit in John vii., when He cried on the last day of the feast "He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, 'Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.'" And in chapter xiv., when speaking of the Father sending the Spirit of truth, He adds the new revelation that He (the Spirit) should not only be with them but in them. He is the divine power for the spiritual manifestations presented before us in 1 Cor. xii. He is not an influence but a Divine Person. And so Paul says, "No man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, 'Jesus is accursed' and no man can say, 'Jesus is Lord' but in the Holy Spirit." It is through the Spirit we learn to have a right appreciation of Him whom God hath made both Lord and Christ, and to say, "Jesus Christ is Lord," to the glory of God the Father.

When our Lord ascended up on high He gave gifts unto men. "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the Body of Christ." Here are seen gifts from the ascended Head which reach out to the entire Body of Christ.

But in 1 Cor. xii. Paul is setting forth the manifestations of the Spirit and the various gifts and ministrations in the churches of God, and the right use of the same to correct evils that had arisen in Corinth. And so he says "There are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal." As in the old creation a wonderful variety has been given by the Triune God, each in its own place and sphere to minister to the comfort and pleasure of man, so here also is a God-given variety which, under the Spirit's control, ministers to the profit and edification of the saints.

In the churches of God, as in the Church, the Body, each one has his gift and place, and it behoves us to know what gift the ascended Christ hath given to us, and seek to use it humbly for His glory. If each one did his own work, and did not seek to do another's, how harmonious would be the working—the teacher giving himself to his teaching; he that exhorteth, to his exhorting; he who helps, to that which lieth nearest his hand to do; and he who is gifted to govern, to rule with diligence!

Upon every heart should be impressed the words, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Those to whom God has not given the gift to preach or teach should not think their gift any less honourable. They also have an important place to fill. It would not do for our body to be all mouth, for if this were so where were the hearing? The Lord hath so placed us as to be of service one to the other, and to be dependent one upon another. The chief point to remember is, that whatever gift we possess it is given by the ascended Lord to be used and developed, and this can only be done to profit as we are under the control of the Holy Spirit. To be Spirit-taught and Spirit-led are the great essentials for profitable ministry.

The teacher may teach words that are according to truth and the preacher may preach ever so clearly, but if the vessel has not sought unto God, and gone forth with the unction of the Holy One, hearts will remain untouched, for the power of the Spirit will be absent. We also do well to remember that whatever gift may be possessed it is valueless if the possessor does not use it clothed with divine love. "For," says Paul by the Spirit, "if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." One has rightly said, "The gifts of chapter xii. should be immersed in the love of chapter xiii. and exercised in the spirit of chapter xiv." Paul also impresses upon those who minister to utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, for he adds, if this is not done, "how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into the air." It should be our aim to use great simplicity of speech. It is better to utter a few words that can be understood, than much matter that cannot be. The poet rightly expresses this when he says,—

"Old bards and thinkers could God's wisdom tell
In words of light which all might understand,
They had great things to say, and said them well,
To far off ages of their listening land.

Be ever like earth's greatest, truest, soundest,
Be like the prophets of the prophet-land;
Be like the Master, simplest when profoundest,
Speak that thy fellow men may understand."

Let us, with what ever gift we may have, exercise it according to our own individuality and not seek to imitate some one else. If we do we shall miserably fail, and God will cease to use us. Young brethren in preaching the gospel often mar what they have to say by imitating the voice and manner of elderly servants of the Lord.

In conclusion we would emphasise and repeat that the Spirit of God is the only power for acceptable service. May we humbly seek to be fitting subjects, led by Him in our worship and ministry, remembering also that He can only lead according to the Word of God.

J. DORRICOIT.

(To be continued.)

A SONG.

SING, O saint, a joyous song !

Blessings bright to thee belong.

Radiant joys around thee throng

Even now.

Let the lovelight, pure and strong,

Wreathe thy brow.

Live the glorious life to-day,

With sweet sunshine holding sway,

Chasing all of gloom away

From thy heart.

Take what God the Lord doth say

As thy part.

Wondrous words of wisdom guide

Safely o'er the rolling tide,

While the moments swiftly glide,

One by one.

With the Saviour by thy side.

Victory's won.

Every precious promise true

Clearly shines, beloved, for you,

Bringing beauties, brightly new,

To thy gaze.

Seek life's lowly deeds to do ;

Walk His ways.

Heeding yet the clarion call
 Sounding loudly over all,
 Reach and rescue those who fall—
 Bring them back.
 Strength divine, encircling wall,
 None need lack.

HARTHILL.

ROBERT SMART.

THE TIMES OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.

(Concluded from page 56.)

THE STINGS OF DEBORAH (THE BEE).

“ONE of the most important and beautifully developed organs of the bee is the sting. Viewed under the microscope it presents one of the most elaborate and exquisitely defined pieces of mechanism to be found in the wondrous workshop of Nature. It consists of two darts protected and encased by one sheath. When wishing to use the sting, the sheath is first protracted and inserted, then the two fine darts follow, and are also inserted. And now the most singular part follows. The long darts are armed with nine or ten barbs at the end, and these prevent the darts from being too quickly withdrawn.”

Here are Deborah's barbed darts.

“By the watercourses of Reuben
 There were great resolves of heart.
 Why satest thou among the sheep folds,
 To hear the pipings for the flocks?
 At the watercourses of Reuben
 There were great searchings of heart.
 Gilead abode beyond Jordan:
 And Dan, why did he remain in ships?
 Asher sat still at the haven of the sea,
 And abode by his creeks.

Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of Jehovah,
 Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof;
 Because they came not to the help of Jehovah,
 To the help of Jehovah against the mighty.”*

* Judges v. 16, 17, and 23.

The tribe of Reuben were a pastoral people; they chose their portion before the other nine and a half tribes were settled in the land.

Comparatively safe beyond Jordan, the dire need of the Northern tribes never brought them from the sheep folds of the South-east. The pipings for the flock were more to their taste than the rude clamours of war.

Fully aware of what was passing—well acquainted with the trend of things—their deliberations came to no practical issue. Their high resolves simmered down to doing nothing. (This tribe is not yet extinct.) They allowed a good purpose to cool; they neglected to strike while the iron was hot; they let the opportunity of their lives pass by, while they frittered away the golden hours in inglorious ease.

And thus separated from their brethren by the Jordan valley, they took less and less interest and part in the stirring events in the West and North, and became more and more like the wandering tribes of the desert.

The record of their inertia, and lack of co-operation with their brethren, when Jehovah was about to give a marvellous deliverance, comes to us across the ages. So does the withering curse that lighted upon the inhabitants of Meroz—a place apparently near the scene of battle. They were without excuse. These things are not mere matters of history; they are written for our admonition, for us upon whom the ends of the ages are come.

Let us now turn from the past to the present. Why burn the virgins' lamps now with such a flickering flame? Why are we no better, no holier, no happier than we are? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He in anger withheld His tender mercies?

No! a thousand times, no! The fault is not with Him; it lies with us. We are not straitened in Him, we are straitened in ourselves.

Are our lives what they should be? Does a carelessness and laxity about life and morals characterize us? Is vital godliness rare?

Time for business, time for pleasure, but no time for God. Half an hour a day over the newspaper, but no time for the scriptures or meditation!

We can rise every day to earn the bread that perishes,

but cannot get to remember the Lord Jesus an hour before midday on the first of the week ! Are we serious about God's claims, or do we think He does not notice ?

Someone has said " There is a good deal of laziness that goes by the name of sickness, especially on Sundays ! " Is there no fear of God before our eyes ? Are we not afraid of His judgments ? If many are weak and sickly and many sleep, because they discern not the body*, what about ourselves ?

A young man, many years ago, said in a prayer-meeting, " Lord, take the humbug out of us ! " Has that prayer been fully answered yet ? How often are we seen at the prayer-meeting and the gospel meeting ? God's claims seem first ignored and then forgotten.

Then there is the Englishman's Sunday dinner. This is a wonderful institution, but should the saint keep his wife at home to cook it ? Are there not ways and means to prevent this, even if it entail a little self-sacrifice ?

If these things be so (and alas ! we fear they are true of some) they are sufficient to prevent God's rich blessing lighting on us ; they are enough to hinder the early and the latter rain.

What is the remedy ? We need both as a Community and as individuals to be down on our faces before God, in deep contrition ; we need to humble ourselves under His mighty hand ; to confess our own and our people's sin.

We need to cry mightily to our God for help ; for He is still the hearer and answerer of prayer ; still the One to give deliverance.

Then through the tears and trials, the failures and defeats of eighteen years, we shall see, (dimly perhaps at first, but clearer later on)—we shall see the path to victory.

The measure of our humbling ourselves will be the measure of our uplifting.

Thirty-three centuries have rolled by since Deborah arose, and the ten thousand girded up their loins for that supreme effort.

Shall the lesson they have taught us be lost ? God forbid ! Rise ! Mothers in Israel, in deep dependence upon God, and train your sons for His service. Rise ! Men of the South-

* 1 Corinth. xi. 30.

East and the West, to deeds of noble daring and self-sacrificing zeal; for the men of the mountains have shown us how to conquer or to die.

“ Shall we be carried to the skies
 On flowery beds of ease ?
 While others fought to win the prize,
 And sailed through stormy seas.”

The opportunity of our lives comes swiftly on. Let us seek to be among those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption.* Let us get our mighty Leader's commission† burnt into our very souls. Let us learn to have personal dealing with God; to realise His infinite resources, and that He is the only Source of strength; for the people that know their God shall be strong and do exploits.‡

Let us learn, in His fear, to use the weapons in the armoury of God and seek to gain the unerring aim and skill which constant exercise and training give; not forgetting that “ the best parry is ever the stroke.”

EDWIN MATTHEW.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

SCOTLAND.—An interest in the prayers of saints in the Community is sought for the Gospel Canvas Tent for the forthcoming season, for guidance as to where it should be pitched, and for help and blessing on the efforts thus made to reach unwrought parts.

Overseeing brethren in Scotland are invited to suggest any part or parts as places of need that they may have an exercise concerning, which might be visited by the Tent, and communicate with Mr. David Smith, “ Rosslyn,” Waterloo Road, Lanark, as to the same, without delay. The co-operation and help of younger approved brethren during part or the whole of their holidays are cordially invited, and Gospel and other literature, without local notices, will be welcomed.

Particulars as to the whereabouts of the Tent will be given later.

Contributions for Tent expenses, which will include neces-

* Rom. ii. 7.

† Matt. xxviii. 19 and 20.

‡ Daniel xi. 32.

sary repairs to the Tent; to be sent as formerly to Mr. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead.

J. C. CHRISTIE; A. MILLAR; J. P. A. TAYLOR.

MARKET HARBOROUGH.—We purpose, if the Lord will, holding the annual meetings of believers—for Prayer and Ministry of the Word—in the Assembly Rooms, Abbey Street, on Whit-Monday, May 31st, commencing at 2 o'clock; tea at 4.30; evening at 6. We heartily invite all who may be able to come, and ask a share in the prayers of fellow-saints that these meetings may be a time of blessing.—A. JEWELL, G. T. REEVE.

ARTICLES for WHOLESOME WORDS should be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead. Intelligence items should bear the signatures of two overseeing brethren, and should reach Mr. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding the issue in which insertion is desired.

Wholesome Words may be obtained from:—

LONDON—Mr. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road.

LIVERPOOL—Mr. W. Gainford, 43 Moss Grove.

NEWCASTLE—Mr. E. Jameson, Wallsend.

LEICESTER—Mr. C. Belton, 5 Linton Street.

HALIFAX—Pioneer Bible and Tract Depot.

CARDIFF—Mr. Gould, 27 Rectory Road.

EDINBURGH—Mr. W. Tueton, 13 East Mayfield.

GLASGOW—Mr. A. Anderson, 27 Wilton Drive.

ABERDEEN—Mr. J. Christie, 123½ Crown Street.

KILMAENOCK—Mr. J. Willock, 3 Paxton Street.

KIRKCALDY—Mr. D. Oswald, 8 Maria Street.

BELFAST—Mr. A. Taylor, 14 Thorndyke Street.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

JUNE, 1909.

No. 6.

THE WATERCOURSES OF REUBEN.

“ BY the watercourses of Reuben
There were great resolves of heart. . . .
At the watercourses of Reuben
There were great searchings of heart.” (Jud. v.)

Searchings, no doubt, as they reviewed the failures of the past, and realized what might have been. Resolves, as they anticipated the future with its yet unknown opportunities and possibilities.

We are not told much about these watercourses, but it is interesting to note that they are here associated with Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, of whom he said, “Thou art my firstborn, my might, and the firstfruits of my strength; the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou shalt not have the excellency.” We are not left without the reason, a reason that had in it the forfeiting of so much, even the losing of his birthright. (1 Chron. v.)

Yet there is not a little in Reuben to commend him, especially, perhaps, in his sympathy with Joseph in the beginning of Joseph's suffering. But speaking after the manner of men, how very much there should have been to commend him, who, to begin with, had both dignity and power attached to him. To adorn such a place, wisdom is required; wisdom to value the possibilities that were his; wisdom to set forth the dignity, and to use the power; wisdom linked with faith to penetrate the future which might have been his. But in Reuben these precious adornments were lacking, and he seems to savour of the “doubleminded man, unstable in all his ways.” (James i. 8.)

However, although so unstable, although so far from ex-

celling perhaps, yet he can plod on ; if he fall, he may rise again. Hence this is his blessing through Moses,—

“ Let Reuben live, and not die ;
Yet let his men be few.”

He will not die, but live, and despite his chequered experience, will appear in the end second to Judah.

When we come to look at Israel in connection with the watercourses of Reuben, rather than review their glorious, yet sin stained history here, we would just refer the reader again to “ The times of Deborah and Barak ” in former issues of WHOLESOME WORDS, where that history is briefly traced from the early moments when “ Israel was holiness unto Jehovah, the firstfruits of His increase,” until we find them with no Divine rallying point, in the days of which it is written : “ There was no king in Israel : every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

This is the time when Deborah’s words had indeed reached beyond the limits of her tribe, even to the watercourses of Reuben. What searchings of heart, as that history was reviewed ; as countless failures presented themselves ! And yet, over them all, they get a glimpse of the never-failing mercy and faithfulness of the Lord. Truly,

“ His mercy endureth for ever,
And His faithfulness unto all generations.”

Now, these very watercourses, in principle, seem to connect themselves with us all. Ofttimes we are brought face to face with our own failures ; and this by God Himself. But, blessed be His hallowed name, He does not leave us there, for ever bemoaning ourselves ; the resolves, as a rule, follow the searchings—resolves to watch and to do better. Thus our one brief life is made up.

How many souls are perishing around us ? How many of God’s children are as sheep, having no shepherd ? And what have we been doing ? These too, are times of peace, when God, in His goodness and mercy, has given us rest and peace. This is the time also when the sword is apt to get rusty. In times of peace we should prepare for war. Or, like a modern Fire Station, we ought to keep things shining and ready for the first alarm.

If the dead past appears gloomy, God is preparing a future, moment by moment, so that while we may profit by our past, we must also take courage, and realize the pressing need of the living present: "for a living dog is better than a dead lion."

If, on the other hand, "the former days seem better than these," let us remember Ecc. vii. 10. How graciously our God has dealt with us, and how very patiently He has borne with us, notwithstanding our inaptitude to walk, even as we ourselves would wish! But He knew us each before ever we were aware of His love or His grace. He knew so well the material He was taking up.

We see this most beautifully in the life of the Lord Jesus and His dealings with those whom He chose to be with Him. From the moment when first they heard His "Follow Me," He laboured to instil into their hearts the words of eternal life and to encourage them to go in for a saved life and a full reward. What opportunities they had to make glad His heart! More particularly perhaps is this noticeable as the Sun of that Life began to set. Slowly and solemnly the hours of His life on earth were passing away, yet few, if any, seemed to realise it.

The moment came when the Temple was entered, and those wondrous eyes looked round about, for the last time, and it too, became of the past: "Your house is left unto you desolate." No more could that Blessed One be seen teaching publicly in the Temple. It was now the seclusion of the guest chamber, where He could give utterance to His never-dying words of Divine cheer and comfort. This was the place, too, on the other hand, where Peter and the rest would manifest how little they really knew of themselves or their capabilities. "Peter saith unto Him, even if I must die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee. Likewise also said all the disciples." "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane."

Surely there is no more solemn scene, save one, in the entire Book than this. Gethsemane is entered for the last time. It was nothing unusual for the Master to enter that garden, as John xviii. 2, makes clear. But their very familiarity with the surroundings may have tended to cause Peter, and James, and John, to lose one of the most wondrous opportunities of their lifetime. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: abide ye here, and watch with Me." The one brief hour that remained ere He would be "led as a lamb to the

slaughter." "Watch with Me!" It was not "Die with Me," but only "Watch with Me." Alas, instead, He findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" One hour!

He would, in fullest sympathy, seek to make allowance for our greatest hindrance—the flesh—which He knows so well. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Not once, but three times He found them sleeping, instead of watching or praying; and while they slept, the precious moments of that one hour were slipping for ever beyond their reach. Now its last moment has come and gone. As to that opportunity, it is "Sleep on now, and take your rest." It is gone for ever. But oh! what a blessed seeming contradiction of terms? As to the dead past; "Sleep on." As to the living present; "Arise, let us be going."

"By the watercourses of Reuben
There were great resolves of heart. . . .
At the watercourses of Reuben
There were great searchings of heart."

And what of us? It is easier to die than to watch. Peter himself, the man who suffered so much through a lack of watchfulness, and who had an understanding of the Devil and his ways, better than the many, urges, as energised by the Holy Spirit, "Be sober, be watchful." Someone has said that "the Devil is never too busy to rock the cradle of a sleeping saint," and Scripture seems to bear out the truth of the statement.

"Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye heard that Antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour." Shall we watch with Him? We are fast nearing the days when, "because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold." In the messages to the churches in the Revelation the opening charge, against Ephesus, is, "Thou didst leave thy first love," and the closing charge, against Laodicea, is "Thou art lukewarm"; a state brought about largely through a spirit of drowsiness. (*See Prov. xxiii. 21.*)

Arise, beloved, and let us bestir ourselves to lay hold upon God and the Word of His grace, which is sufficient for all time. Never was there a better day, for there never was a darker.

Even the little glow-worm shines the better amid the darkness.
So may we.

If the past presents failure, then let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord, realizing that God intended us to live in these very days, for there is a time to every purpose under the Heaven.

He has made ample provision for us. The past would constantly speak of His goodness and His mercy.

Wherefore let us "walk in wisdom toward them that are without, buying up the opportunity." Amen.

NORMAN D. W. MILLER.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS JOIN THE ARMY?

DURING the course of the Christian's life and experience, many questions of great importance as affecting his duty to God and also to man present themselves and demand an answer. It is possible for him to fall back on custom and tradition as obtaining among his fellow believers and so avoid the trouble of facing the difficulty; but such a procedure fails to honour God and His truth, and also deadens one's own soul, as well as encourages a dangerous regard for custom. The appeal in every matter should be "to the law and to the testimony" though at the same time we should value any help which men of knowledge and experience can give in understanding them.

Recently there has passed over this country a wave of excitement and enthusiasm with reference to its military defence. It must be acknowledged that the providential care of God which has saved the country in times past has hardly been referred to, but the arm of flesh in its various activities has been much in evidence. The duty of young men to join the Territorial Army has been urged by many means. The theatre has lent its help and the daily papers have taken up the matter with great zeal. These efforts have produced a great effect and a large increase in the number of recruits has been gained.

We should not feel it necessary to refer to the matter, but for the fact that some of those professedly gathered to the name of the Lord have been affected by the recent movement.

We should none of us be unmindful of the many great

temporal advantages which we enjoy in this wellordered land and we believe that its invasion by an alien army would be an appalling disaster. We can therefore readily understand that its defence is a subject which very properly appeals to all and we can quite believe that many men have joined the Army not merely from the love of novelty but from a sense of duty.

The question for us is however, "What attitude shall we as Christians take up, if we follow the teaching of the Word?"

What then is the calling of the believer? It is not national. God has visited the nations to call out of them a people for His name. The Lord's charge to His servants was to make disciples in subjection to Him to whom all authority in heaven and on earth has been given, for He is the Ruler of His people though His Kingdom has been denied Him by the world. In view of that rejection, He said, in His prayer to the Father, "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" and He prayed "Sanctify them in the truth, Thy Word is truth." (John xvii.) The apostle Paul says "Our citizenship is in heaven from whence also we look for a Deliverer, the Lord Jesus Christ," and again "Your life is hid with Christ in God," and referring to the time when it shall become a public life, he proceeds "When Christ, Who is our life shall be manifested then shall ye also be manifested with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 3, 4.)

The instructed believer knows that he is in the Church, the Body of Christ; in that purpose of God which is now engaging the Divine activities and that meantime the establishment of Christ's government among the nations must wait. His own position is consequently that of a "stranger" in a strange land and a pilgrim going on to his native country.

But there is another side to the Christian's life. His members are on the earth and there are certain positions he must fill and certain obligations he must meet. Without the clear teaching of the Word we should certainly get into great confusion as not knowing on the one hand how to maintain our heavenly calling and on the other, of rightly living in the world. But it is a great blessing that every difficulty relating to the pathway for God's people has been anticipated and light given thereon in the Word.

It will be readily recognised that the Word of God sanctifies the relationships of husband and wife; parents and children;

masters and servants. We take this fact as a matter of course, but a little reflection will convince us that but for the express directions of the Word in reference to these matters we should find it very perplexing to reconcile such relationships with the heavenly calling. It is not by any means surprising that when in the early centuries the Word of God became neglected, devout souls withdrew themselves from the business of life and lived together in separate communities where they hoped the spiritual life could be fostered without being trammelled by those earthly callings which would have been inevitable had they remained in the world. We know they were mistaken in the means they adopted (though not in their motive) and that they overlooked the provision of God to sustain the soul in the midst of earthly things. As one has written

“ Wherever in the world I am
 In whatsoe'er estate
 I have a fellowship with hearts
 To keep and cultivate
 And a work of lowly love to do
 For the Lord on Whom I wait.

So I ask Thee for the daily strength
 To none that ask denied
 And a mind to blend with outward life
 While keeping at Thy side ;
 Content to fill a little space,
 If Thou be glorified.”

So we say that these relationships may be filled consistently with the maintenance of the heavenly calling, but does this exhaust the list? We suggest there is another position also indicated and that it has a very direct bearing on the subject before us. The Scriptures contemplate the Christian as filling a position in reference to earthly government. Romans xiii.; 1 Peter ii. and Titus iii. give help in this matter, and the teaching perfectly accords with the heavenly calling. The Christian is viewed not as having any place in the government. While the rightful King is rejected and is waiting on the Father's throne till His foes be subjugated, it would not be consistent for His follower to rule in the kingdoms of men. Instead of

ruling, he is ruled ; he is subject. In conformity therewith he renders honour to those to whom it is due ; he obeys magistrates ; he pays tribute and is in all things a first class subject, yielding obedience in every matter which rightly lies within the province of a world-ruler to command.

It may be necessary in cases where a government transgresses the limits which belong to it and imposes its will in connexion with our duty to God, to say " We must obey God rather than men," but happily in the day and in the country in which we live we have little, if anything, to complain of on this score.

This brings us to our responsibility in reference to the country's military defence. Happily for us in this land (through God's tender mercy to His Saints) there is no compulsion to military service. Such service, whether for the National Army or for the new Territorial Army, is voluntary and if a Christian gets into the Army it is because he has placed himself there.

It must not be thought that by bearing arms is the only way in which one can serve the country's good. There are many things quite consistent with the path of separation, in which this can be done.

And should a Christian choose such a calling ? Should he desire to be a man of war, skilful in the use of weapons of destruction ? He—whose weapons are not carnal ; whose conflict is not with flesh and blood ; whose feet instead of being swift to shed blood are shod with the readiness of the gospel of peace ; whose spiritual panoply for spiritual foes is so well set out in Eph. vi.—can he choose ? can he volunteer for such a calling ?

There are ways in which the people of God can benefit the country far more than by taking part in its military arrangements. An important one, and one which is with a view to the leading of a quiet and peaceable life (the sort of life which the defence of the country is supposed to secure) is set forth in 1 Tim. ii., where the exhortation is given that " Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men ; for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and gravity." In this way a service of the greatest value can be rendered to men in harmony with the Christian's calling, and men of God, detached

from hatred and animosity can lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting.

If we further consider the associations of the Army we shall find them by no means congenial to the development of Christian character. Scripture contemplates the believer as going into the world and its things only so far as his duty compels. He is to use the world, certainly, but not to the full. Being let go he will go to his own company. His choice, if he may choose, will be to consort with those who love the Lord. "With God" he will abide in the family, in the business, and in that position of subjection to rulers which is enjoined upon him; but beyond these things he will find it his happiness to walk with God in separation.

One fears that we are forgetting that the people shall dwell alone, they shall not be reckoned among the nations.* We don't like to be singular; it is so much easier to go with the current. But evil communications corrupt good manners, and it is not possible to have fellowship with the world without getting defiled. At the best we need the sanctifying power of the Word to keep us clean, but how can one consistently seek its sanctification and at the same time abide in defiling associations?

How far such words as these have particular application the writer cannot say, but he is of opinion that they should be words in season to all.

S. J. HILL.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

(Continued from page 51.)

"THAT our sons shall be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner stones hewn after the fashion of a palace" (Psalm cxliv. 12) is the desirable result that we should expect as the reward of the care already referred to in our previous article, in association with the efficient training of our babes in Christ. That such hope may sometimes be blighted does not prove the failure of such principles, and should not discourage any in this important service.

To effect this spiritual growth we would yet recommend to

* Ex. xxxiii. 16. Num. xxiii. 9. Titus ii. 14.

our sons and daughters further consideration of the important conditions thereof presented in Psalm i. 1-5, as well as of that referred to by the Lord in His words to His disciples, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." (Matt. vi. 28.) Here, "the tree planted by the streams of water," and "the lilies of the field," through deriving moisture from a hidden source by their roots, sending the same up into the leaves, and spreading these out in the light and warmth of the sun, whose action thereon sends sap and nourishment into the plant, effects growth; which thus illustrates the process of spiritual growth.

"His delight is in the law of Jehovah;
And in His law doth he meditate day and night."

Herein is the secret of fruitfulness amidst the spiritual dearth all around, like the evergreen flourishing through winter's snows, as well as summer's sunshine.

Of Samuel it is written that he grew before Jehovah, and again that he grew on, and was in favour both with Jehovah and also with men. (1 Samuel ii. 21, 26.) This is the pure healthy atmosphere wherein spiritual life thrives, in the sunshine of God's presence, and in God's House.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree:
He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
They that are planted in the House of Jehovah
Shall flourish in the courts of our God.
They shall still bring forth fruit in old age;
They shall be full of sap and green."—Psalm xcii. 12-14.

But there are hindrances to such spiritual growth. Psalm i. reveals some.

"Blessed is he that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

These must be avoided, otherwise all hope of spiritual growth is at an end. The atmosphere of such is altogether antagonistic to growth, and sooner or later there will be the withering of any evidence of spiritual life.

There are other hindrances to spiritual growth. "Putting away, therefore, all wickedness, and all guile and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes long for

the spiritual milk . . . that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." (1 Peter ii. 1-2.) Spiritual growth cannot possibly be except as these are put away; instead there will be the sad exhibition of dwarfed life spiritually, with utter inability to fulfil to God's glory His gracious purposes.

The letters by Paul to Timothy, and Timothy himself, give helpful instruction relative to, as well as example of, spiritual growth, of plants planted in the House of God, nourished up in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine, or healthful teaching. This is associated with giving heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. Being diligent in these things and giving oneself wholly to them, thus is there spiritual growth, and a progress in the divine life which is manifest to all. Through "the Sacred Writings, which are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus," the God breathed Scripture, "which is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work," we have such spiritual growth effected as expressed in "a babe," "my true child in the faith," "a good minister (deacon) of Christ Jesus," "thou, O man of God."

To effect this there were not only nourishment and pure air, but exercise also. This latter is referred to in association with, and is illustrated by "bodily exercise" which is said to be "profitable for a little while," but "godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come," hence the exhortation "exercise (train) thyself unto godliness." In these days much attention is given in schools and elsewhere to the healthy development of the minds and muscles of the young; but the importance of training oneself unto godliness does not seem to be clearly grasped. This requires effort, which the indifference and sloth, in a spiritual sense, of many will not allow them to put forth.

It is on record for our learning—

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard,
Consider her ways and be wise."

Wisdom, in this sense, is a defence, it preserveth the life of him that hath it. The members of the body that are not exercised become not only useless, but a danger to the body; and they

who fail or refuse to have their senses and their energies exercised by reason of use become not only useless themselves, but a hindrance to others. Some there are who, when by reason of the time ought to be teachers, yet have need again that some one teach them, and are become such as have need of milk. Babes and weaklings they have become; they are dull of hearing. Spiritual growth has been hindered and stopped through the lack of exercise. By exercise one becomes not only healthy, but strong. "The glory of young men is their strength." (Prov. xx. 29.) This is the special characteristic of such.

These, of old of the sons of Levi, and the sons of Israel, were the workers and warriors. To the one was given the honoured privilege of the service of the sanctuary, and the burden of bearing the holy vessels thereof. To the other, of fighting Jehovah's battles. For these, strength and courage are needed, as well as other qualifications—strength of devotion; strength of purpose; strong to labour; strong to war. It is on record of old, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the Evil One." (1 John ii. 8.)

What can be written of our young men to-day?

Let me give a word to fathers in the spirit of entreaty (see 1 Tim. v. 1). Our young men, like our children, will to a great extent be what we make them. If they are trained properly in the early years of their spiritual history, we may expect to see the reward of such pains in worthy results. But often it is the case in the family that the training of the child is neglected, till he is no longer a child, and when it is too late the parents begin to attempt to train him, with, alas! too often sorrowful and disastrous results. We may begin too late, but we cannot begin too early. How do we treat our young men? What example are we setting before them? What influence are we exerting over them? Is it for good or bad; is it to help or hinder? A spiritual father of old could say, "Thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, sufferings." What an object lesson the young man, Timothy, had, in such an example! May our young men to some extent have a similar one. Amen and Amen.

DAVID SMITH.

REGINALD HEBER.

AN error has crept into the chronological index of authors in "Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs" where Reginald Heber's dates are given as 1723-1826. Dr. Heber was born in 1783. He was 40 years of age when he sailed for Calcutta having been appointed "bishop of Calcutta" in the Anglican system. We are told that he "laboured indefatigably not only for the good of his own diocese but for the spread of Christianity throughout the East. . . . Such devotion to his work in a trying climate told severely on his health. At Trichinopoly he was seized with an apoplectic fit when in his bath and expired on 3d April 1826." Among the most noted of his hymns may be mentioned

"Brightest and best of the Sons of the morning,"

"The Lord of might from Sinai's brow,"

"From Greenland's icy mountains,"

"The Son of God goes forth to war,"

and the one which appears as No. 118 in "P.H.S.S." which was first published in 1827, the year after his death. Heber is believed to have composed the beautiful tune that we have put to J. Gambold's translation of Paul Gerhardt's hymn, which itself was based on an original by Bernard of Clairvaux (No. 16.)

SPECIAL NOTICES.

HYMN BOOK.—The compilers are now in a position to say definitely that the cost of "Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs" has been considerably greater than they had anticipated and that the number of subscriptions of 2s 6d each has been less than they had reckoned on. As they can now definitely state that a payment of 2s 3d per head from all who have ordered copies would scarcely meet the expense and as they need hardly remind friends that some really cannot pay that amount, they feel sure that many assemblies that have sent less than 2s 6d per head will gladly make a further contribution to the cost. If sent promptly this will be thankfully received.

When an assembly has sent as many 2s 6d subscriptions as are possible they can obtain further copies of the book at the following rates:—Edition with music, 18s. per dozen; six

copies for 9s. post free, for less than six copies 1s. 6d. each, with 3d. added for postage of any number. Words only, 9s. per dozen, post free; for less than twelve copies, 9d. each, with 3d. added for postage of any number. The above prices are for the British Isles. Beyond the British Isles, edition with music, 1s. 8d. each, post free; words only, 10d. each, post free. As the words edition is just going to press, early orders will be a convenience. All communications to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead.

MEETINGS [OF REPRESENTATIVE OVERSEERS OF THE BRITISH ISLES, TO BE HELD, GOD PERMITTING, IN GLASGOW IN SEPTEMBER, 1909.—It is requested that proposed subjects for consideration at these meetings be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead, as early in June as possible, so that intimation of these may be made in time to give opportunity for the subjects to be considered locally before the British Isles meetings are held.

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.—The assembly in Douglas, Isle of Man, has removed to the Gospel Hall, St. George's Street, off Athol Street, Douglas.—Thos. B. Horne; W. J. Trainer.

SCOTLAND.—It is purposed, God permitting, to pitch the Gospel Tent in Carluke, where a suitable site has just been secured. The work of preaching will begin on Lord's Day, June 6th, but it is desired that prayer instant and unceasing be made forthwith for the Lord's presence, help and blessing to be then realized to His own glory. Gospel and other literature, without local intimations, sent before June 20th, should be addressed to Mr. David Smith, care of Mr. R. Pearson, Stewart Street, Carluke.

CONFERENCE MEETINGS.

LANARKSHIRE.—The annual Spring meetings for the ministry of the Word were held on Saturday, 17th April, in Dundas Street Hall, Glasgow. There was a good attendance of the saints and a time of refreshing from the Lord's presence was experienced. The Word was ministered by brethren C. M'Kay,

Robert Brown (just returned from New Zealand), J. A. Boswell, and D. Paterson.

The annual conference of those interested in the work amongst the young was held in the same hall on Saturday, 8th May. The meetings were of a cheering helpful character. Written reports were read from Blackburn, Methil, Kilmarnock, Clydebank, and Glasgow, whilst oral reports were given by brethren from Middlesborough, Musselburgh, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Greenock, Bothwell, Bathgate, Blackridge, Paisley, and Airdrie. For the most part these shewed an increased attendance and in several instances there had been definite cases of conversion and of young disciples being baptized and added to the assemblies. Mr. Edwin Matthew, from London, who expressed great pleasure in meeting so many fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, delivered an inspiring address based on the following scriptures:—Isaiah lv. 10-11; 1 Kings xvii. 1, xviii. 15; Rev. i. 10; Matt. xxviii 16-20. Mr. George M'Intyre from Blackburn followed with helpful words on 2 Peter i. 16 and John ii. 5, whilst Mr. E. Foster from Cardiff spoke heart-reaching truth from Haggai i. 1—ii. 9.

EDINBURGH.—We are glad to be able to report an increased interest and attendance at the Spring meetings for ministry, held in College Street Hall on Saturday, 24th April. Sober yet encouraging words were ministered by the Lord's messengers in His message. The following esteemed brethren were present and under God contributed much to the healthful nature of the conference:—Mr. J. A. Boswell, Mr. Henry Elson, Mr. Robert Brown, and others. Pray that the good seed sown may be abundantly fruitful to the Lord's glory.

FIFESHIRE, METHIL.—The meeting place of the assembly is now Gospel Hall, Wellesley Road.—John Paton; D. Oswald.

ARTICLES for WHOLESOME WORDS should be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead. Intelligence items should bear the signatures of two overseeing brethren, and should reach Mr. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding the issue in which insertion is desired.

“NEEDED TRUTH.”

It is still wished by some to bring out if possible a new series of *Needed Truth*. The object would be to circulate outside the Fellowship and furnish real help to children of God and others. There are great difficulties in the way, not the least being the comparative indifference of so many. But as one great difficulty consists in procuring articles suitable for the purpose, it is thought well to announce without further delay the proposed subject and invite those who are able to submit contributions that may be thought likely to help.

It is proposed to have as a subject “The Holy Scriptures,” and the articles should set forth in a concise and cogent manner what the Holy Scriptures reveal as to their own nature, and what evidence they offer of their veracity.

This notice is published to encourage younger writers to make an attempt to help in the evangelistic effort that is proposed. Articles may be sent to Dr. Luxmoore, whose present address is 14 Treyew Road, Truro, Cornwall.

Wholesome Words may be obtained from:—

LONDON—Mr. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road.

LIVERPOOL—Mr. W. Gainford, 43 Moss Grove.

NEWCASTLE—Mr. E. Jameson, Wallsend.

LEICESTER—Mr. C. Belton, 5 Linton Street.

HALIFAX—Pioneer Bible and Tract Depot.

CARDIFF—Mr. Gould, 27 Rectory Road.

EDINBURGH—Mr. W. Teuton, 13 East Mayfield.

GLASGOW—Mr. A. Ford Anderson, 27 Winston St.. Parkhead.

ABERDEEN—Mr. J. Christie, 123½ Crown Street.

KILMARNOCK—Mr. J. Willock, 3 Paxton Street.

KIRKCALDY—Mr. D. Oswald, 8 Maria Street.

BELFAST—Mr. A. Taylor, 14 Thorndyke Street.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

JULY, 1909.

No. 7.

HOW WE KNOW THAT GOD HATH SPOKEN IN THE SCRIPTURES.

(Continued from page 65.)

III.

BECAUSE OF GOD MANIFEST IN FLESH.

“AND without controversy great is the Mystery of godliness ; He who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory.”*

The Scriptures themselves do not conceal the fact that there is something unique and miraculous in the person of the Christ. Believing this, we feel that it is becoming to approach such a subject with reverence and awe, in the attitude of Moses at the burning bush, that which in itself was enshrouded in mystery and could not be peered into, to be investigated in the spirit of mere curiosity, according to the natural mind of man. God called unto Moses out of the midst of the bush, and said, “Moses! Moses!” And he said, “Here am I.” And He said, “Draw not nigh hither ; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”† We are here standing on holy ground ; it is, however, permissible for us to go a certain length, for God would not have us without understanding concerning the things He has revealed ; remembering always that the mind of God can only be known through the teaching of the Holy Spirit.‡ “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God ; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever.”§

* 1 Tim. i. 16. † Exodus iii. 4, 5. ‡ 1 Cor. ii. § Deuteronomy xxix. 29.

We find in the book of Isaiah the wondrous prophecy, so comprehensive in its scope, which reads thus :—“ For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given : and the government shall be upon His shoulder : and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”* The significant order of the words here ought to be noticed—“ A Child born,” “ A Son given.” The reverse would not have been true. The Child suggests the name of Jesus, that name by which He was known as a Man among men—in due time the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. “ A Son given ” suggests the title Christ—the Sent One of God. “ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life.”†

In order that the subject may be simple to all, we propose to consider it in the following order :—

I.—“ A Child born ” = Jesus.

II.—“ A Son given ” = Christ.

III.—“ Wonderful ” = The God-Man.

I.—A CHILD BORN = JESUS.

‡ The keynote of the astounding mystery of the incarnation—unintelligible to the natural intellect—is struck in the opening part of the book of Genesis, immediately after Satan had successfully accomplished his scheme for the ruin of the Adamic family (the words, be it noted, are addressed to the Serpent)—“ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.”

This is the first great prophecy‡ of Scripture, and is like the acorn which grows into the mighty oak, containing, as it does, in itself all other prophecy, developing and expanding until we find its fulfilment, in part, at any rate, in the Babe of Bethlehem and the Victim of Golgotha, and even then only in part fulfilled, for the ultimate doom of Satan still awaits accomplishment.

¶ The words “ Her Seed ” ought to be well noted. This is fully borne out by the genealogy of the Lord Jesus as brought

* Isaiah ix. 6.

† Joh. iii. 16.

‡ Genesis iii. 15.

before us in the Gospel by Matthew, where we read in verse 2 of chapter i., "Abraham begat Isaac," and in each case we have the word "begat" until we arrive at verse 16, where the alteration is remarkable and most instructive. It reads simply, "Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." Why the change? It is because of what we read in Luke i. 34, 35. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God." The whole passage in Luke ought to be read to see the force of the scripture. We have this briefly put in Matthew i.—"That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit," and then we are told that all this came to pass that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord, through the prophet, saying, "Behold the virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son. And they shall call His name 'Immanuel,' which is being interpreted 'God with us.'"*

Only that omnipotent, all wise One, who spoke such words, could have brought to pass such a wonderful event.

The genealogy in Matthew gives us the Kingly line, from David, speaking of the Kingdom and the Throne, and Abraham, suggestive of the Land, and all the promises connected therewith. The genealogy in Luke leads back to Adam—the Throne and the Land are not prominent things. It commences thus:—"And Jesus Himself, when He began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the Son, as was supposed, of Joseph." The words "as was supposed" mean, according to eminent scholars, "as was reckoned by Jewish customs," "to own as a custom or usage."† Doubtless we have here Mary's line, as we have in Matthew, Joseph's; both passing through David and others of the Royal line, meeting again in Joseph and Mary. The Gospel by Matthew presents Jesus as King. This is clear, I think, from the opening chapters, whereas Luke presents Jesus as the Perfect Man.

In keeping with this, Luke tells us more of the virgin birth and brings before us the Dependent Man, the Man of prayer, closing after His resurrection with a Man having flesh and bones, eating a piece of a broiled fish‡ This is peculiar to this book. We do not imply by this that His Divinity is not seen in Luke,

* Matthew i. 22, 23. † Bloomfield; Liddel and Scott. ‡ Luke xxiv. 39-43.

but His Manhood here is more the theme, as His Divinity is in the Gospel by John, each book of Scripture having a special characteristic.

In the opening chapters we have Him spoken of as

“The Babe.”*

“The Child.”†

“The Boy.”‡

What an astounding fact that He who created all things (for “all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that hath been made.”§ “For in Him were all things created,”|| from the mighty orbs of the Heavens, which declare the glory of God¶ to the tiniest insect, undiscernible to the naked eye) became the Babe, lying in the Bethlehem manger, no room being found for Him in the inn.

We ask—“Could man ever have thought of such a thing, much less have given to it actuality?” We answer—“No! a thousand times no!” Is it any wonder then that the natural mind of man cannot grasp it?

II.—A SON GIVEN.

We have been considering “The Child born” more especially from the Gospel by Luke, the beloved physician; we propose now to look at the second part of our subject from the Gospel according to John; the book which emphasises the fact that Jesus is the Son of God; but not alone Son of God, Son of Man besides. These titles are each found about twelve times in this book. Here we have no earthly genealogy as in Matthew and Luke, but the Spirit of God takes eagle flights far beyond the realms of mortal man. The opening words are “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”** In the face of such a scripture (merely one out of many) the denial of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus can only be accounted for by the reason which Scripture itself gives, the incapability of the natural mind to grasp the mind of God, and the inherent tendency of the human heart to pervert the things of God, man being under the delusion of Satan, the god of this age, who blinds the minds of the unbelieving.

* Luke ii. 16.

† Luke ii. 40.

‡ Luke ii. 43.

§ John i. 3.

|| Col. i. 16.

¶ Psalm xix. 1.

** John i. 1.

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”*
 “A body didst Thou prepare for Me.”†

The Word speaks of Him as the One revealing the will of God to man expressed thus: “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.”‡

The mind of a man can only be known as declared by word of mouth; the mind of God would never have been declared to man except as told out by God’s only begotten Son. His ways, His works, and His words all express the will of the Father. “God hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son.”** He is God speaking *in Man, by Man, as Man, for man.*

III.—“WONDERFUL.”

The God-man “Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

Perfect God, and Perfect Man; of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.

Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead and inferior to the Father, as touching His manhood.”

These words doubtless are familiar to most and express the marvellous unique Being which heads the third part of our subject.

In the same place we read “The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible,” but in the Latin language in which the words were first penned it stands thus: “The Father immense, the Son immense, and the Holy Ghost immense.” Dr. Mant in his notes says “When this translation was first made, in our native tongue, the word ‘incomprehensible’ was not confined to the sense it now bears, as ‘inconceivable, or beyond or above our understanding’; but it then meant ‘not comprehended within any limits’ and answered to the original expression and notion of immensity.”

It is this very immensity of the subject, using the original meaning of the word “incomprehensible” which is the strongest evidence that man could never have conceived such an idea

* John i. 14.

† Hebrews x. 5.

‡ John i. 18.

** Hebrews i. 1.

much less have brought such into being. "The Image of the invisible God."* "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."† Pause and consider, "He who was manifested in the flesh." This was thought out by the all wise, powerful, and merciful God in the ages gone by, it was involved in the sentence pronounced on the Serpent in the great germ prophecy of Genesis iii., and was given effect to when the fulness of the time came, for "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law."‡

Little wonder then that we have on all hands to-day men denying the Virgin birth, the divinity of the Lord Jesus and so forth, the result of natural reasonings, education awakening the dormant faculties of the mind and bringing about a reaction from a lifeless superstitious religion, which gives assent—parrot-like—to statements never really believed in the heart. Such mere nominal belief is lamentable in the extreme, such "learned" infidelity is abhorrent.

But to believe in the heart that the "Babe of Bethlehem" (expressive of the most helpless Being on earth); "the Carpenter of Nazareth"; the Man who hath not where to lay His head; "the Man of Sorrows," cruelly mocked, scourged, and spat upon, wearing the crown of thorns; the Victim on the Cross on Golgotha's mount; to believe that He is the Creator of all things, the Son of God, is to be born from above.

The mournful complaint of Job is

"There is no daysman betwixt us,
That might lay his hand upon us both."**

Surely this need not be the complaint of any in this day of grace, for Christ is the blessed Daysman who hath laid His hands upon us both because He is the "one Mediator between God and men Himself Man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom for all."††

He being next of kin having a right to redeem, and having power because not being of Adam's fallen race, perfect Man and perfect God, He met all the just requirements of God, Himself God, at the same time meeting all the deep and dire need of sinful man, Himself Man, sinless and perfect.

"He laid His hands upon us both."

J. C. R.

* Col. i. 15.

† Col. ii. 9.

‡ Galatians iv. 4.

** Job ix. 33.

†† 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

THINGS OF WHICH WE SHOULD NOT BE IGNORANT.

III.

(Concluded from page 71.)

CONCERNING THEM THAT FALL ASLEEP, AND THE LORD'S COMING.

“But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.”* Thus Paul taught and comforted those who had been bereaved of their loved ones in Thessalonica, and for our consolation were these things also written. Those in Christ who fall asleep can be buried in sure hope of a better resurrection. As pertaining to the resurrection of the body it stands written, “It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.”† The resurrection of those in Christ from amongst the dead is assured by the fact of Christ's resurrection. In 1 Thess. iv. Paul bases his argument of the resurrection on the truth of the death and resurrection of the Lord, and also Divine revelation to him concerning such. At the Lord's return the dead in Christ shall be raised, and the living saints will be changed, and together we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be for ever with Himself.

As to the present state of saints of this dispensation who fall asleep, the spirit returns to God, who gave it (Eccles. xii. 7), the soul departs to be with Christ (Phil. i. 23), which, as Paul says, is far better, also spoken of as being “at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. v. 8); and the body which was the abode of the soul falls on sleep and sees corruption. (The soul is the person himself that inhabits the body, and is the same man whether in the body or apart from the body.—2 Cor. xii. 2-3) No such thing is taught in the Word of God as an unconscious state of the soul after leaving the body, or of the soul sleeping, but a conscious enjoyment of the Lord's presence, for, as we have said, the soul is at home with the Lord awaiting the resurrection of the

* 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.

† 1 Cor. xv. 42-44.

body, which resurrection takes place at the coming again of the Lord Jesus.

The Old Testament saints (up till the time of the death of the Lord Jesus), when they were absent from the body, did not depart to be with the Lord, they went down to Sheol (the upper portion), the place of the abode of the departed, not the grave but the under-world. To this place Jacob in his sorrow said he would go—"For I will go down to Sheol to my son mourning" (Gen. xxxvii. 35. R.V. margin and preface to Old Testament, Revised Version). It is obvious that he did not mean the grave here, for Jacob had believed the untrue report of his sons that Joseph's body had been devoured by wild beasts. But he knew that he had a conscious existence in Sheol, and "to my son," said Jacob, "I will go." So also with David in hearing of the death of his child—"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (2 Sam. xii. 23.) It was a place where comfort could be experienced, though these saints did not look forward to their departure from the body with the joy that saints of this dispensation would. When they knew they were shortly to put off this tabernacle, see how they cried to be spared a little longer. (See Psa. cii. 24; Isaiah xxxviii. 10; and read "Sheol" as in margin instead of "the grave," in the latter Scripture.) No praise went up to God from Sheol, no celebration of His holy name.

"For Sheol cannot praise Thee,
Death cannot celebrate Thee."

Our Lord spoke of this under-world in Luke xvi. (which is not a parable but a fact), for He says, "There was a certain rich man," and "there was a beggar," and He gave us the poor man's name. Then He lifts the curtain a little and shows the state of the departed after death. (Of course this is prior to His resurrection.) Here is the Sheol of Old Testament Scripture, the Hades of the New. Plainly described are its two portions, the upper for the righteous, the lower for the wicked, with the great impassable gulf between. Here is seen Lazarus at rest and comforted, also, the rich man troubled and tormented. When the Lord Jesus expired upon the Cross He committed His spirit unto His Father, His soul went to Hades, His body was put into the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and saw no corruption. (Luke xxiii. 46; Acts ii. 25-28.) But His soul was not left in Hades, for, having accomplished redemption's work,

He had the keys of death and Hades, and from this upper portion of Hades it appears He delivered those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. ii. 15.) And, as another scripture says, "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive. . . . Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things." (Eph. iv. 8-9, see margin.) It is also evident from the Scriptures that the bodies of the Old Testament saints will not be raised until some time after the rapture of the saints of this dispensation.

Let us now consider His coming as it affects the living. A sister said to another a little while ago, "How little we hear now of our Lord's return! Would it not be worth while to walk a few miles to hear a soul-stirring address on the Lord's coming!" Can it be true that our souls are so dead to this blessed hope that it is rarely spoken of? Is it true that souls are longing to hear more from ministers of the Word of His coming, whilst it may be that we are in the darkest hour that precedes the Morning Star?

We can only fitly speak of that with which our hearts are occupied, and if our sister has gauged the general situation aright it is a very sad indictment. The place this had with the early Christians, and how it was spoken of, can be seen in the fact that His return is mentioned in every inspired letter with the exception of two. If, then, it had such a place in the early Churches, at the beginning of this dispensation, how much more so should it have its place with us?

In John xiv. we read of the promise of His return, based upon the words, "If I go." We know that He has gone to the Father's right hand and thence He will descend into the air to fulfil this promise. This is the Great Physician's cordial for troubled hearts. For us it is promise, not prophecy. Paul, who received the word of His promise by direct Divine revelation, says "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord. . . . For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever

be with the Lord." In the closing words of the book of Revelation our Lord reminds us of His promise in the thrice-repeated words "I come quickly." May our hearts be ready to respond like John and say "Amen: come, Lord Jesus."

This coming is not a spiritual coming to our hearts as some would teach, neither is it the death of the body, for we have seen in the latter case we go to be with Him, but it is a Personal coming, the return of the Lord who went away.

The purpose of His coming is to receive us unto Himself, and where He is there we shall be. How striking are the words in that memorable prayer, "Father I will that those whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me where I am that they may behold My glory." (John xvii. 24.) The Bridegroom yearns for the bride to be eternally with Him, to behold His God-head glory. His earned glories of the triumph of the Cross we shall share, for He says "The glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them," but His God-head glory we shall never share but adoringly behold. (John xvii. 22.)

The manner of His coming, and of the rapture of the saints is seen from I Cor. xv., where Paul by the Spirit says, "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (This of course only pertains to the bodies of the living and sleeping saints when the Lord comes.) None but the dead and living in Christ shall hear that trump and be caught up to be with Him at this coming, even as none but His own saw and heard Him after His resurrection.

The Spirit has marked very clearly the distinction between His coming for His saints, and the coming with His saints, both by title and by circumstances. As to title, when He comes for His saints it is as "The Lord Himself"; "The Lord Jesus Christ"; "His Son"; "The Lord." But when He comes to the earth with His saints it is spoken of as "The coming of the Son of Man." God the Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment in this very name. (Matt. xxiv., John v. 27-28.)

As to the circumstances which precede His coming for His saints there is nothing marked out in the Scriptures of any

special events. There are no prophecies to be fulfilled ere His coming can take place, for as we have said it is promise for the Church; prophecy pertains to Israel and the nations. At any moment He can come, and saints are exhorted to look, to watch, and to be like unto men who wait for their lord.

Ere He comes as Son of Man to the earth to execute judgment and to set up His righteous glorious reign, certain prophecies will be fulfilled. It will also be preceded by the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, the return of the Jews to Palestine, the re-building of the Temple, the rise of the Anti-Christ, and the great tribulation, such as never has been or will be. There will be great disturbance in the heavens, the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Concerning this appearing it is written "Behold He cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him and they that pierced Him and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him." (Rev. i., Matt. xxiv.)

We have remarked that when He comes for His saints they only will hear the call and see Him, but here when He comes as Son of Man every eye shall see Him. Joy and rejoicing accompany the former, sorrow and mourning of the tribes accompany the latter. He comes from His Father's throne to the air for His saints, but when He appears with His saints He comes to the earth, and His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives. Let us take heed to the exhortation "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless." May this truth sanctify our lives so that we may be not ashamed before Him at His coming.

"A little while, 'twill not be long,
 Let us the precious hours redeem.
 Our only grief to give Him pain,
 Our joy to serve and follow Him.
 Watching and ready may we be,
 As those who long their Lord to see."

J. DORRICOFF.

DEACONS

THE term "deacon" is an untranslated word, denoting one who serves. There are different grades of service in the things of God, just as in a household all servants have not the same work to do.

One description of deacon service is *giving of one's substance to the Lord, ministering to the necessities of the saints, and showing hospitality. All may share in this service—the babe, the young man, the father. It is one of the highest privileges granted to any creature that he is permitted to minister to the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.*

Due heed must be given to the motive that prompts the service. God's glory should be the object. Otherwise it cannot have a full reward. Proverbs iii. 9 should guide and stimulate all who would serve thus.

A different form of service is taking care of the meeting-room, keeping floor and windows clean, and suchlike needful things. Of Phœbe we are told she was a deaconess of the church in Cenchreæ. There is room for such sisters to-day. Here is a way to secure commendation. "I commend Phœbe." (Rom. xvi. 1.)

Other descriptions of deacon service, having greater responsibilities connected with them, necessitate the possession of special qualifications on the part of those who would engage therein. Thus, when some are required to serve tables for the multitude of disciples in Jerusalem, anyone was not considered suitable. Men of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom, were required. (Acts vi. 1-6.) Again, when messengers were needed to carry the gifts of the churches in Macedonia and Achaia to the poor saints in Judæa, this was done by qualified, approved, and chosen servants. (2 Cor. viii. 19.)

Another service for which all are not fitted is preaching. It is possible that the degeneration of gospel preaching may be due to lack of scrutiny of those who would thus serve. Much has been done in the name of gospel preaching that is unworthy of the name. All this adds to the call for true gospel preachers. The fields are white unto harvest. This is true whether we think of sinners in their sins or of saints ensnared in sectarianism.

Oh ! for faithful ministers of the Word, who shall speak as the oracles of God. Patient perseverance in seeking a fuller knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is necessary to fit any for this good work.

Let us lay well to heart that we can only attain to more responsible service as we prove ourselves faithful in less responsible. A man's gift exercised in the grace of God in his own place will make room for him. The Lord Jesus has also said, "He that serveth Me, him will the Father honour."

A. F. A.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ENGLAND.

NORTH-EAST DISTRICT.—The liberality of the saints has abounded in response to the appeal made. We are deeply thankful to God and to His people for their practical fellowship in this, our time of need. The depression in trade still continues, but prospects are a little brighter. We trust that these may be realised, and (whilst returning grateful thanks for the help already given) would solicit continued remembrance in the prayers of the Community to this end.—W. FISK; W. STUBBS; W. HEARN; A. H. CHAMBERS; J. QUICK; J. RUDDICK.

SOUTH-EAST DISTRICT.—Mr. S. J. Hill's address is now 6 Rye Hill Park, Peckham Rye, London, S.E.

QUORN, LOUGHBOROUGH.—The Midlands Gospel Tent has this year been pitched here. Preaching began on Lord's Day, June 6th, and whilst the meetings have not been large yet they have been interesting and hopeful. They are being conducted by Mr. H. Elson, Mr. J. C. Radcliffe, and others. Remembrance in the prayers will be appreciated.

LEICESTER.—It is purposed (God willing) to hold our usual Annual Meetings on August 2nd, in the Oak Street Rooms (off Humberstone Road), Leicester, for which we ask the prayers of all, and the presence of as many as possible. The proposed

order of meetings is as follows :—11 to 12.30 a.m.—Thanksgiving and Prayer ; 2 to 4.30—Ministry on proposed subject “ Sanctification ” ; 6 to 8—Ministry of the Word. Intervals for luncheon and tea. Communications to Mr. H. G. Butlin, 6 Wood Hill, Leicester.

BUXTON.—The assembly now meets at the house of Mr. William Dunn, 36 Cromwell Terrace, Fairfield Road, Buxton. Time of meeting for the Remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ is 11 a.m.

SCOTLAND.

EDINBURGH.—The assembly in Edinburgh now meets in Buccleuch Parish Halls, Buccleuch Street, Edinburgh.

CARLUKE.—The tent meetings here have been encouraging. Prayer for continued help and blessing is besought.

INNERLEITHEN.—The annual special meetings for the ministry of the Word will be held, God permitting, in the hall, 80 High Street, Innerleithen, on Saturday, August 14th, from 3 p.m. till 8 p.m., with interval from 5 p.m. till 6 p.m. Fellow-saints will be joyfully welcomed. Ministers of the Word are specially invited, and will also be received with joy. Prayer for blessing is besought.—JOHN PATE ; JOHN BRODIE.

IRELAND.

It is our happy privilege to invite fellow-saints, and also those given entirely to the work of ministering, to our annual conferences at Armagh and Belfast. Armagh on Monday, July 12th, in the Hall, Newry Road, commencing at 11.30, with intervals for refreshments ; and in Shiloh Hall, 79 Victoria Street, Belfast, on Tuesday, 13th July, at 2 o'clock. Refreshments at 4.30. Prov. xxiii. 15-26. Friends from a distance most welcome.—W. J. LENNOX ; SAMUEL MILLER.

MR. E. COYNE is again preaching the Word in the tent in Ireland. Meetings began on the 9th May. There has been good attendance on Lord's Day evenings, but not so good during the week. Some believers are attending and appear to enjoy the ministry. The tent is pitched five miles from Armagh.

which makes it somewhat difficult for brethren there to render frequent help by their presence. Prayer is therefore besought that Mr. Coyne's need may be fully met, and that the Word spoken through him may be abundantly blessed. Any approved co-worker's company and help would be highly prized.

OTHER LANDS.

TORONTO (CANADA).—The assembly has commenced to hold Gospel meetings in the open air at Earls court, where many families from the British Isles reside in houses built and owned by themselves. The form of godliness is much in evidence in this district, but, alas ! spiritual death prevails. The harvest is plenteous, the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore.

Kindly note that Mr. H. W. Waters' present address is 1203 Dufferin Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

BRANTFORD (CANADA).—The assembly now meets at 40½ Dalhousie Street. Mr. Robert Murray's address is 15 Jubilee Avenue, Brantford, Ontario, Canada.

ARTICLES FOR WHOLESOME WORDS should be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead. Intelligence items should bear the signatures of two overseeing brethren, and should reach Mr. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding the issue in which insertion is desired.

“NEEDED TRUTH.”

It is still wished by some to bring out if possible a new series of *Needed Truth*. The object would be to circulate outside the Fellowship and furnish real help to children of God and others. There are great difficulties in the way, not the least being the comparative indifference of so many. But as one great difficulty consists in procuring articles suitable for the purpose, it is thought well to announce without further delay the proposed subject and invite those who are able to submit contributions that may be thought likely to help.

It is proposed to have as a subject “The Holy Scriptures,” and the articles should set forth in a concise and cogent manner

what the Holy Scriptures reveal as to their own nature, and what evidence they offer of their veracity.

This notice is published to encourage younger writers to make an attempt to help in the evangelistic effort that is proposed. Articles may be sent to Dr. Luxmoore, whose present address is 14 Treyew Road, Truro, Cornwall.

Wholesome Words may be obtained from:—

- LONDON—Mr. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road.
 LIVERPOOL—Mr. W. Gainford, 43 Moss Grove.
 NEWCASTLE—Mr. E. Jameson, Wallsend.
 LEICESTER—Mr. C. Belton, 5 Linton Street.
 HALIFAX—Pioneer Bible and Tract Depot.
 CARDIFF—Mr. Gould, 27 Rectory Road.
 EDINBURGH—Mr. W. Teuton, 13 East Mayfield.
 GLASGOW—Mr. A. Ford Anderson, 77 Winston Street.
 ABERDEEN—Mr. J. Christie, 123½ Crown Street.
 KILMARNOCK—Mr. J. Willock, 3 Paxton Street.
 KIRKCALDY—Mr. D. Oswald, 8 Maria Street.
 BELFAST—Mr. A. Taylor, 14 Thorndyke Street.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

AUGUST, 1909.

No. 8.

TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR.

THERE is no doubt that the age in which we live is characterised to a large extent by hurry and impatience. This is not wholly or universally the case. But too often while dilatoriness and the like may obtain where diligence and speed are called for; there are haste and inattention where there is a call for patience and considerate hearing. This may perhaps be aptly illustrated by the flagrant misquotation so often heard and read "He who runs may read." The authentic saying* thus grossly misquoted conveys the very opposite meaning. Doubtless in the dealings of God with men the thunder that all must hear has its place; and there are things printed in large enough letters to catch the eye of the inattentive. But the man or woman who really wishes to walk with God will rather learn with Elijah and hear what may be spoken in a still small voice. †

It is therefore important to learn to listen, and perhaps nothing needs learning more than this. Many a man cannot learn because he has never learnt to learn. Sometimes one is asked a question and would gladly do what one could to furnish an answer, but not all questions can be answered in half a dozen words, yet a questioner will at times be impatient if he cannot get his answer in a word, and perhaps will not wait to hear even

* Habakkuk ii. 2. † 1 Kings xix. 12.

that. If it is so when we ask questions one of another, how is it when we seek enlightenment from God ?

Again, some things really are A. B. C. and some are not. That is to say there are many things that can only be known after other things have been learnt, whilst these again are dependent on previous learning. Hence it follows that system is needed in teaching ; that the order in which things are learnt is not indifferent. And it is the teacher who knows who must determine the order and the learner who is ignorant must patiently listen and learn the first things if he would attain to a knowledge of the further things.

It is thus with human knowledge and human teaching and in large measure it is so with the knowledge and the teaching that are divine. We cannot always learn what we would because of our ignorance of what goes before. To use another and perhaps a better illustration we lack the training needed ; be it training of eye or of ear or of hand or the training of brain or of heart.

To the young these words are chiefly written because for the young they are most useful. Elder ones have already learnt and acquired habits, perhaps bad habits, impatience in listening, hastiness in drawing conclusions and so forth. These errors can be avoided in the young if the contrary virtues are inculcated and fostered.

Learn therefore how to hear, to listen carefully and patiently, seek to learn and understand what may appear to have no present value.

In the brute world around are many instructive examples of the listening ears : the lion listens for his food ; the deer for his enemy ; the dog for his master ; the dam for the cry of her young ; for God hath made everything beautiful in its time, and He hath set the world in their heart.

WAYFARER.

HOW WE KNOW THAT GOD HATH SPOKEN IN THE SCRIPTURES.

(Continued from page 98.)

IV.

BECAUSE OF GOD JUSTIFYING THE UNGODLY.

PART I.

“How then can man be just with God ?

Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman ? ”*

is a question asked by one, many thousands of years ago. We propose to endeavour to answer this enquiry from the New Testament Scriptures ; more especially from the letter to the Romans, where we find this great theme fully dealt with and the above question answered exhaustively and conclusively by the Holy Spirit.

We may consider the subject under the following headings :—

- I.—The Author of Justification.
- II.—The subjects of Justification.
- III.—The Divine scheme of Justification.

I.—THE AUTHOR OF JUSTIFICATION.

“God . . . that He might Himself be just and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.” †

“God is one, and He shall justify the circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith.” ‡

The word “justification” means “to make just,” the original word in the New Test. means “to render (that is to shew or regard as) just.”

To justify the wicked, we read in the book of Proverbs, is an abomination to the Lord, § but the remarkable thing is that God has devised means whereby He can Himself be just, not lowering His holy claims one iota, and yet at the same time justify those who are unholy. This is what man could never do.

* Job xxv. 4-6.

† Rom. iii. 26.

‡ Rom. iii. 30.

§ Proverbs xvii.

“None of them can by any means redeem his brother,
Nor give to God a ransom for him.”*

Man could never have risen to the thought of not only forgiving but declaring his fellow creatures to be just who had done him an injury or a wrong. “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some would even dare to die.” “But God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”† “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.”‡ How different from man’s are the thoughts and ways of God as expressed in the following words:—“‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,’ saith the Lord, ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.’”§

Justification according to God, as found in the Scriptures, has been buried in the rubbish of superstitious beliefs for many centuries, and even now encrusted in the minds of many with the false theology of well nigh two thousand years. The fact is, the thought is too great and sublime for the natural mind of man to grasp, it can only be learnt by operation of the Spirit of God, and can only be retained as communion with the Spirit of God is unbroken; otherwise the mind and thought of man are allowed to take the place of those thoughts inborn of the Spirit. We find therefore from what has been said that God and God only could be the Author of justification.

“’Tis God that justifies!
Who shall recall His pardon or His grace?
Or who the broken chain of guilt replace?
’Tis God that justifies!”

II.—THE SUBJECTS OF JUSTIFICATION.

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness.”||

From this scripture we see who are the subjects of justification, “the ungodly.” Not those who have tried to make

* Psalm xlix. 7.

† Rom. v. 7, 8.

‡ John xv. 13.

§ Isaiah Iv. 8, 9.

|| Rom. iv. 5.

themselves better by religion, education, moral improvement, or anything else. "He came where he was"* are the words spoken of the Samaritan who befriended a certain man going down to Jericho who fell among robbers, which both stripped him and beat him, and departed leaving him half dead. "He came where he was"; straight down to where sinners were, in all their deep and dire need, the Only Saviour of sinners came—down to "the horrible pit and miry clay"—not to help those who were helping themselves out, or imagining they were doing so—not to give a helping hand, but to get right down underneath sinners in order to lift them out, those who had no strength to do anything, not even to scramble up a little bit. "For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly." The ground on which God can righteously justify the ungodly is here stated; because "Christ died for the UNGODLY" He can justify the UNGODLY. Truly "God is light" and "God is love."

"Weak" or "Without strength," "Ungodly," "Sinners," "Enemies," are the subjects of justification.

III.—THE DIVINE SCHEME OF JUSTIFICATION.

Justification in itself does not alter the one who is the subject of it, but rather places him in a legally different position toward God; it is not an infusion of righteousness into an ungodly sinner.

"Reckoned" is the word used by the Holy Spirit. Four English words are used in the Authorised Version to translate the original word, but the Revised translates it uniformly by the word "Reckoned." The frequent repetition of the word in Romans iv. ought to be noted. "Him who knew no sin He made to be Sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."† He, the sinless perfect One was made Sin, so the sinful vile ones can be made righteous,—an imputation in both cases. The Lord Jesus did not partake of sinful flesh, no more than the justified one partakes of sinless flesh. "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of

* Luke x. 33.

† 2 Cor. v. 21

sinful flesh and as a Sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" that the ordinance or requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us.*

From all this how plain it is that a patching up or improvement of the old sinful nature can never satisfy or be pleasing to God. The rather we read, "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a *new* creature."† "His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus"‡; nothing less than this suffices.

Those who are believers on the Lord Jesus are reckoned to have died with Christ when He died upon the Cross, and those who have died are justified from sin.§

The law of the country has no jurisdiction over a dead man; the law of God has no claims upon the believer on the Lord Jesus. "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth."¶

Justification is humiliating in the extreme to the natural man; it implies, and more than implies, that not a hair's breadth of standing he has before a just and holy God, no creature merit, not a spark of inherent goodness. All the honour must be God's and His alone. "Let God be true and every man a liar."

Men prefer that which ministers to their pride and self-conceit, evidenced by the fact that there is nothing approaching God's way of justification in the religions of the world, either in Heathendom or in the Apostate so-called Christian religion. In these it is a sort of moral gradual development into a fit condition for the presence of God, either down on this earth, or else in a future state of punishment, and so-called purification by fire of God's judgment, or perhaps a mixture of both. These or such like hazy superstitious beliefs take the place of the great, grand and sublime truth of justification by faith apart from works. Moreover, all these man-made schemes detract from the glory of Christ. Two of the most popular errors of the present time are—

1. Denial of Eternal Life as a present reality.
2. Denial of Eternal Punishment.

* Rom. viii. 3, 4. † 2 Cor. v. 17. ‡ Ephesians ii. 10.
 § Romans vi. 7. ¶ Romans x. 4.

Both detract from the excellency of the person of Christ and the value of His atoning work—the first by adding creature merit thereto, the second by detracting from the value of the atonement by lessening the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

We are here reminded of a fact, by many forgotten or unknown, that not even that holy sinless perfect life of the Lord Jesus could have given satisfaction to God for sin. How much less the life, moral or respectable as may be, of a sinful mortal being of Adam's fallen race, of whom it is written, "All our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment" !*

The Scripture is unmistakably clear on this point. "If righteousness is through the law then Christ died for nought." †
 "Through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men unto justification of life." "Through the obedience of one (that one act of obedience on the Cross—"He became obedient unto death, yea the death of the Cross" ‡) shall the many be made righteous." It is that, which is done *for* us not *by* us.

The crowning fact to all this is the resurrection—which attests God's perfect satisfaction and delight in the work of His Son upon the Cross. "Who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification." §

"He was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." ¶

This fact closes the mouths of all.

"It is God that justifieth,

Who is he that shall condemn ?" **

Because the claims of God have been fully and completely met through the Cross work of His beloved Son, God can now make to stand in His most holy presence the ungodly sinner, as if he never had committed a sin ; even whosoever rests satisfied in that One in whom God has found perfect satisfaction and delight.

"Because the sinless Saviour died,
 My sinful soul is counted free ;
 For God the Just is satisfied
 To look on Him and perfect me."

J. C. R.

* Isaiah lxiv. 6.

§ Rom. iv. 25.

† Gal. ii.

¶ Rom. i. 4.

‡ Philippians ii. 8.

** Rom. viii.

“ FOR EVER WITH THE LORD.”

JOHN XI. AND XII.

JESUS loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Nevertheless He left them for a little while and during His absence the enemy Death entered that happy household of faith, and the brother beloved was taken away.

Did they not pray for him? Who can tell the intensity of their hearts' desire expressed in the simple touching words sent to their absent Lord—"Behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick"! Were not their hearts lightened and their hopes revived as they prayed? But the weary hours passed and the Lord tarried, and the loved one sickened and died. Then indeed they sorrowed as having no hope.

He came at length (in spirit He had never been absent) and with voice of power He made the dead to live again, and the saint who had died and the saints who had never died were re-united in the presence of their Lord.

Behold now the assembly of the saints! The Lord and His own are together in mutual joy—their joy in Him and His in them—and He is the Centre of all. View their varied occupations and thereby learn what saints will do in Heaven. There is Martha serving. She stands in the presence of the Lord, not cumbered now with much serving. How privileged her place!—and so "His servants shall serve Him"; this will be a part of their eternal occupation. But see! Lazarus reclines at table with Him. This is beyond service; this is fellowship. They commune as friend with friend. Lazarus is at perfect rest in the companionship of the Lord who once had said so graciously "Our friend Lazarus." And shall not such sweet intercourse be the portion of the saints? Will they not at times leave the standing posture and recline with Him? Who shall tell of the loving intercourse they will then have?

Will this suffice? Will it be enough to stand or to recline? Will this satisfy the longing of a grateful overflowing heart? Nay! to stand or to recline will not suffice, but at His feet His redeemed will desire to fall to pour out their hearts' devotion. So we gaze on Mary, with casket of very precious ointment (a fitting symbol of her loving heart) breaking it upon His sacred feet, and bowing low, she wipes His feet with her hair, witnessing to the homage of her entire being to Him whom she gladly

owns as her Lord. How thoroughly did the Lord appreciate this good work upon Him ! It touched Him as little else could. And while it satisfied Him, it gave an outlet to her full heart.

Would Heaven be Heaven to us if we were only always receiving of the riches of His grace, with no opportunity of giving back to Him our grateful homage ? Nay ! His gifts would then become burdensome and would only oppress the heart : but an outlet will be provided as at His feet we fall, and casting down our crowns say “Thou art worthy.”

Thus shall we stand and serve ; recline and commune ; and best of all, lowly at His feet we shall render to Him the loving tribute of our hearts.

And in the measure that these things characterize us here and now will Heaven be begun by us on earth to His and our mutual joy.

ANON.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

CONFERENCE OF OVERSEERS IN THE ASSEMBLIES IN THE BRITISH ISLES.—In accordance with the arrangement made when representative overseers of the assemblies in the British Isles were together in London in September last, another similar conference will be held, if God permit, in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on Friday and Saturday, September 10th and 11th. Communications for consideration should be sent as soon as possible to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead. Our friends in Glasgow are making needful arrangements, and it is desirable to communicate as soon as possible how many from each district will be present, to Mr. James Hinshelwood, 12 Kerr Street, N.W., Glasgow. Permit us again to urge on our fellow-workers the need for exercise of heart that these meetings may be profitable in the highest and best sense. We hope that a real effort will be made that the overseeing men in each district may be adequately represented. The prayers of the assemblies are lovingly besought.—We are, on behalf of those convening the meeting, yours in the Lord’s service, C. M. LUXMOORE, HENRY ELSON.

England and Wales.

SOUTH-EASTERN DISTRICT.—The address of the meeting-room at Sutton, Surrey, has again been altered. It is now at

the house of Mr. Bond, "Hope," Langley Park Road, Sutton, Surrey.—S. J. HILL, A. C. LEAMY.

LANCASHIRE—WIGAN.—It is with much sorrow we intimate the home-going of our beloved brother Thomas Catlow, which took place at his home on Tuesday, 29th June, at the early age of fifty-two years. His body was laid to rest on Saturday, 2nd July, at Wigan, where he had lived and laboured for about fifteen years. In all there were some hundred and thirty persons at the grave side, among whom were representatives of firms for which our brother had done business. Saints came from far and near, assemblies as far apart as Douglas (Isle of Man) and Halifax being represented. Brethren William Savigar and G. R. Geddes ministered the word at the grave. Our brother was saved some twenty-eight years ago in circumstances which enhance the glory of God's grace. Since that time he has been remarkable for his zeal for the Lord, and he had come to be highly esteemed in love for his work's sake. His hospitality was well known, also his willingness and success in helping many to find employment, and in this particular many are his debtors. And the many letters of condolence that his widow has received from his employers and others with whom he had business connection show that he had an excellent testimony from those who are without. We have no sorrow for him; on the contrary, considering his sufferings of late, we can but feel glad that they are for ever ended; but we mourn for his loss, for he was a true helper. He has entered into rest, but the Fellowship will be the poorer for his departure. His place will be hard to fill, but we trust that the knowledge of his removal from our midst will come as an appeal to younger brethren to step into the gap that has been made. Our brother leaves a widow and two daughters, Mrs. Catlow and her elder daughter being in the assembly at Wigan. Prayer is requested for these sorrowing ones that they may be sustained of God in this trial. As our brother's decease has come as a surprise to many, the following particulars of his illness will be read with interest by those who knew him personally. Those who had been in close touch with him had observed for some time past with increasing alarm what they now know was a gradual breaking down in health. About the latter end of April more serious symptoms appeared, and he went to the Isle of Man for a week in the hope of recouping his failing

strength. From this visit he appeared to derive some benefit, but it was soon seen that it was only temporary, for he became gradually worse. The crisis came on 28th June, when the doctors saw that the only hope of saving his life was an operation. This was performed the same evening at 9.30, but the poor body could not stand it; he sank to rest the next day at 4.30 in the afternoon, a little ease of pain being the only gain. He was conscious almost to the last moment. — WILLIAM SAVIGAR, THOMAS B. HORNE.

BLACKBURN.—It is with sadness and yet with joy that we intimate that our esteemed sister in the Lord, Miss Law, departed to be with Christ early on Lord's Day, June 6th, after a long and painful illness. Whilst passing through much suffering, her trust in God remained steadfast, and before passing away her testimony for Christ was very definite. Our sister was one of few who continue faithful to the end. Amidst one circumstance and another, whether of prosperity or adversity, and in many years of assembly life, consistency and steadfastness were conscientiously maintained. We feel it only proper to say that in the home of her earthly master, where she served for the greater part of her life, our sister was highly esteemed, and had a manner of life worthy of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the graveside the Word of God was ministered with much power by our esteemed brother Mr. J. C. Radcliffe, apt reference being made to the home-going as like passing from one room to another. In recording these lines we seek the sympathy of the Community in the deep loss sustained by our brother and sister Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Andrews and family, of Liverpool, to whom Miss Law was related. We further desire that saints will pray that the words and works of the departed may yet be found to the praise and glory of God. To the sisters in the Lord we say, a Mother in Israel has gone, do not miss your opportunity.— T. HARKNESS, J. M'INTYRE.

Scotland.

LANARKSHIRE AND DUMBARTONSHIRE—AIRDRIE.—We purpose, God permitting, having our annual special meetings for ministry of the Word on Saturday, 28th August, in M'Lelland's Hall, 86 Stirling Street, Airdrie, from 3 p.m. till 8 p.m., with interval for tea from 5.15 till 6 p.m.; also in Glasgow, in the

Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, on Saturday, 18th September, from 3 p.m. till 8 p.m., with interval for tea from 5 till 6 p.m. A kind invitation to these meetings is given to fellow-saints and also to those given to ministry. Remembrance in prayer specially requested.—J. HINSELWOOD, C. M'KAY, D. WHITTET.

Ireland.

ARMAGH.—Mr. Norman Miller has now joined Mr. Coyne in the Tent work here. The people are turning out well to the meetings. Remembrance in the prayers still besought.

GOSPEL LEAFLETS.—In response to numerous enquiries and desires of workers from various parts a series of cheap 4 p.p. tracts has been prepared. There are eight kinds in the series, and, being of various topics, printed on toned paper, in clear, readable type, they are good, always presentable, and acceptable. These will be known as the "Pioneer" series. Specimens may be had on application. The 4 p.p. tract "The Great Assassin"—which, by reason of recent troubles in the East, is again seasonable—can be included with the above series, and at the same price—namely, 5d per 100 and 3s per 1000, carriage paid. Send orders to the Pioneer Bible and Tract Depot, Halifax.

ARTICLES FOR WHOLESOME WORDS should be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead. Intelligence items should bear the signatures of two overseeing brethren, and should reach Mr. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding the issue in which insertion is desired.

Wholesome Words may be obtained from:—

LONDON—Mr. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road.

LIVERPOOL—Mr. W. Gainford, 43 Moss Grove.

NEWCASTLE—Mr. E. Jameson, Wallsend.

LEICESTER—Mr. C. Belton, 5 Linton Street.

HALIFAX—Pioneer Bible and Tract Depot.

CARDIFF—Mr. Gould, 27 Rectory Road.

EDINBURGH—Mr. W. Teuton, 13 East Mayfield.

GLASGOW—Mr. A. Ford Anderson, 77 Winston Street.

ABERDEEN—Mr. J. Christie, 123½ Crown Street.

KILMARNOCK—Mr. J. Willock, 3 Paxton Street.

KIRKCALDY—Mr. D. Oswald, 8 Maria Street.

BELFAST—Mr. A. Taylor, 14 Thorndyke Street.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

SEPTEMBER, 1909.

No. 9.

THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN ASH.

I.

WE climbed a hill that dominated the surrounding country, and found on its summit a group of gritstone rocks of strange and fantastic shapes, worn so by the ages. In the centre was one of almost circular form, towering high above the rest, and on the very top of this grew a vigorous little Mountain Ash.

We wondered how it could maintain itself erect in such a spot as this, exposed at times to furious storms ; and found that its stem had actually *encircled* the mighty rock and its roots had gone deep into the soil beneath it.

Thus the little Mountain Ash could lift its beauteous head in the free mountain air, amidst the glad sunshine and refreshing showers, and thus it could brave the storms that sometimes swept the hill.

It laid hold of the Rock. Thus Jacob by the ford of Jabbok laid hold of the One Who could so greatly enrich him, saying, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Shall we not also lay hold of the Divine Lord Jesus Christ with an intensity of purpose which He will delight to honour? Let us with purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord. He is able to enrich us above our utmost thought.

Thus David in his dire need strengthened himself in Jehovah his God ; his spiritual fibres laid hold of the Eternal Strength. Let us be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus ; and realize with Isaiah " My God shall be my Strength."

The Rowan-tree sent its roots deep into the soil beneath the rock. Thus the child of God may flourish even amidst barren surroundings. His soul may be like a watered garden. He draws his nourishment from a hidden spring. He feeds on the fulness of God's word. His delight is in Jehovah's law and in it he meditates day and night. Therefore he brings forth seasonable fruit, bears unwithering leaves, and prospers in all he does.

This hardy little tree also teaches us that there are possibilities of expansion *upwards*. In this age of competition, where there are so many blanks and so few prizes, it is intensely important to realize that there are illimitable possibilities of growth in an upward direction. Possibilities for invalids, and for those who lead a busy life; possibilities for young believers, and for those of riper years; for God is able to make all grace abound unto us.

Amidst the struggle for existence it is ours to rise above the things of time and sense, and to breathe the bracing mountain air of communion with God, many thousand feet above the level of this sordid world.

“ Oh ! this is life ! Oh ! this is joy !
 O God, to find Thee so ;
 Thy face to see, Thy voice to hear,
 And all Thy love to know.”

Thus may we increase in the knowledge of God

“ Until upon the mountain height,
 We stand, O God, with Thee alone,
 Bathed in the fullest, clearest light,
 The glory that surrounds the throne.”

EDWIN MATTHEW.

(*To be continued.*)

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE UNSEEN.

WHEN all that is human avails not, there is still the Great Companion by the way; and blessed indeed is the fellowship of the Unseen but Living Christ.

He knew when here below what it was to be lonely, and can now cheer every lonely one that seeks Him.

He was often alone among the mountains, alone because His soul soared on high, and His motives were so pure. Misunderstood, however, and despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Isaiah liii. 3.

In all his sufferings, too, none stood by Him. He said to His disciples: "Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." John xvi. 32. In the unseen companionship of the Living God, His heart found rest and comfort. Being misunderstood and forsaken by all, He sought the refreshing companionship of the Unseen. Alone among men, He walked with God both calm and strong.

It is He who has said to the lonely souls that long for a friend, "Come unto Me." Matt. xi. 28. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Heb. xiii. 5. Earthly friends may fail and leave us, but this friend, *never*. He cares too much to forsake. He is faithful, and the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Heb. xiii. 8. And so He walks with man to-day, as in days of old, when the disciples were sad. Luke xxiv. And He still speaks of things high and holy until our hearts burn within us, and we know that it is the Lord Jesus, the Unseen Companion of lonely ones, the heart's delightful Guest, whose companionship makes the loneliest way short, and the heaviest burden light.

A. C.

HOW WE KNOW THAT GOD HATH SPOKEN IN THE SCRIPTURES.

(Continued from page 115.)

IV.

BECAUSE OF GOD JUSTIFYING THE UNGODLY.

PART II.

III.—THE DIVINE SCHEME OF JUSTIFICATION.

- 1.—The source—Grace.
- 2.—The ground—The Blood of Christ.
- 3.—The receptive means—Faith.
- 4.—The result manward—Works.

"For there is no distinction, for all have sinned and fall

short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”*

Grace is that which is conferred freely, with no expectation of return and finding its only motive in the freeheartedness of the giver. Grace is the very opposite to works as seen from the following scripture—“ But if it is of grace it is no more of works : otherwise grace is no more grace.”†

Whatever is of grace is unearned, unmerited and undeserved.

The word “ freely ” in Romans iii. 24 is the same word as “ without a cause ” of John xv. 25. How suggestive this is ! There was no more reason for the one than for the other. They hated Him (the Lord Jesus) without a cause. God loved the sinner without a cause. The measure of God’s grace and love is in proportion to the hatred of man to God and to His Son. We see this at the Cross fully expressed—man’s intolerable hatred to God, but God’s matchless love to man, to meet it and defeat it.

Believers can truly sing.

“ ’Twas grace that wrote my name
In life’s eternal Book.

’Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb
Who all my sorrows took.”

2.—THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION—THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, THAT IS HIS ATONING DEATH.

“ Much more then, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through Him.”‡

In connexion with the prohibition as to eating blood in Leviticus we read “ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls : for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.”§ From this we learn that the Blood speaks of life taken, for not apart from the death of Christ could God justify the ungodly. He is a just God—hating sin, consequently sin must be righteously dealt with and put away. We read “ He poured out His soul unto death.”¶ The Blood of Christ, that is His death is the ground or foundation of

* Rom. iii. 23-24.

† Rom. xi. 6.

‡ Rom. v. 9.

§ Leviticus xiii. 11.

¶ Isaiah liii. 12.

justification. Those who believe in the Lord Jesus are said to be made nigh in the blood of Christ* for such have been identified with Him in His death in the sight of God.

“Died with Christ”† are words used by the Holy Spirit. Not only is the Cross an end of one’s sins, but an end of one’s sinful self.

Justification is a present reality to those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; not a thing to be hoped for, or worked for. The words are “being now justified by His blood,” as also expressed in the next scripture we are about to consider.

3.—THE RECEPTIVE MEANS—FAITH.

“Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”‡

This implies a once for all accomplished thing, a rounded off point. Faith is the very opposite to works; it is simply giving God credit for what He says, making God as good as His word. God says,—“All have sinned” “none righteous, no not one,”—that includes me. I believe it. God says that He sent His Son to die for sinners. I believe it. Just as Abraham thousands of years ago believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. He did no works for it, for we read “For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory but not toward God.” “By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” The moment the sinner takes God at His word he is accounted righteous. “Christ Jesus, made unto us . . . righteousness.”§ The life of an aged child of God let it be ever so long and ever so pleasing to God, according to the Scriptures, cannot add one iota to this standing before God, neither can the disobedience of a child of God detract therefrom.

4.—THE RESULT MANWARD—WORKS.

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar?”¶

This has been found with some a difficult scripture in the light of what we have already said, but when more closely examined all difficulty vanishes.

When did Abraham offer up Isaac his son upon the altar?

* Eph. ii. 13.

† Rom. vi. 8.

‡ Rom. v. 1.

§ 1 Cor. i. 30.

¶ James ii. 21.

There are certain statements made about the age of Abraham at different periods which enable us to ascertain the age of Isaac, at least within a few years.

Abraham was 75 years old when he departed from Haran.* He was ten years in the Land when he took Hagar the Egyptian to wife† and 86 years of age when Ishmael was born.‡ This was after "he believed in the Lord and He counted it to him for righteousness,"§ leaving at least 15 years before Isaac was born, which took place when Abraham was 100 years old.¶ Now the question arises, how old was Isaac when Abraham offered his son upon the altar in obedience to the command of God? It is clear that he was more than a mere child from the account we have in Genesis xxii. He is called "a lad"; he is able to carry the wood which must have been of no light weight, sufficient to consume a sacrifice for a burnt offering; he conversed freely and intelligently with his father. If we allow that he was 15 years old (this is a very low estimate of his age) it makes it 30 years in all after Abraham believed in God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. In other words it makes the interval of time between the 15th chapter of Genesis and the 22nd chapter—30 years.

Abraham is called the "friend of God" for all this period; certainly not before he was justified by God.

James states exactly what is also stated by the Spirit through Paul,—“And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, ‘And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness’; and he was called the friend of God.” James does not bring in a new principle but confirms the Divine principle of Justification as found in Gen. xv. and Romans iv.

“What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham was justified by works he hath whereof to glory, but not toward God.”** “For what saith the Scripture? ‘And Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.’”‡ Nothing could be plainer that before God Abraham was *not* justified by works.

We find from our consideration of what has been written that the offering up of Isaac upon the altar was the manifesta-

* Genesis xii. 4. † Genesis xvi. 3. ‡ Genesis xvi. 16.

§ Genesis xv. 6. ¶ Genesis xxi. 5. ** James ii. 23. || Rom. iv 1-3.

tion or result of that faith which he had toward God and a fulfilment of the scripture ; the fruit not the root ; the root we find in Genesis xv.

How important it is to be clear about this great and glorious truth in a day when creature merit, culture, morality, religion or such like things would counterfeit the Divine work of God. The kindred truth of the second birth is almost forgotten to-day. This is we believe one of Satan's masterpieces—and yet nothing is plainer from the precious scriptures of God's truth that the flesh or natural man cannot please God, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh,"* "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be : and they that are in the flesh cannot please God."† Remember the words "Ye must be born anew"‡ were not spoken to the immoral or profane, but to "the teacher of Israel," Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

J. C. R.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

CONFERENCE OF OVERSEERS IN THE ASSEMBLIES IN THE BRITISH ISLES.

Since issuing the circular convening the meetings for Sept. 10th and 11th, it has been arranged that the meeting on Saturday evening the 11th, from 6 to 9 p.m., shall be open to all overseers and not to representative overseers only. Probably the following subject will be suggested for consideration—"Responsibility in reference to the public ministry of the Word of God on Lord's Day Evenings and at other times in places where there is, and in places where there is not an assembly of God."

ENGLAND.

BLACKBURN.—It is purposed to hold our annual Conference of those engaged and others interested in the Work of the Lord amongst the Young on Saturday, October 23rd, in the Oxford Hall, Oxford Street, Blackburn, commencing at 3-0 p.m. The subject proposed for consideration is, "How best to impress the scholars to remember their lessons." We shall be glad to receive reports of this important work either by letter or representative and desire that early intimation of any coming to the Conference should be addressed to Mr. T. Hark-

* John iii. 6.

† Rom. viii. 7-8.

‡ John iii. 7.

ness, 23 London Road, Blackburn. A box will be placed for written questions to be considered at the Conference. Praying that God may kindly bless this endeavour to strengthen our hands in His service. THOS. HARKNESS; JOHN M'INTYRE.

SUNDERLAND.—The address of the meeting room of the assembly is now 26 Hedley St., Millfield, Sunderland.

SCOTLAND.

EDINBURGH.—God permitting, our September Conference will be held on Sept. 25th in Buccleuch Parish Halls, Buccleuch St., commencing at 2-30 p.m., continuing till 7-30, with interval for tea from 4-45 to 5-30. Fellow saints and ministers of the Word heartily invited.—For the Assemblies in Edinburghshire. WILLIAM TEUTON; JAMES AITKEN; ROBERT GILFILLAN.

GLASGOW.—If God permit, Dr. C. M. Luxmoore will address Christians in the Christian Institute (Large Hall) on Lord's Day—Sept. 5th, from 2-30 till 4 p.m. Subject—"How God made the first man; unimpeachable confirmation of the story in Genesis." In same hall, on Sept. 12th, from 2-30 till 4 p.m., Mr. W. J. Lennox, Armagh, will, God permitting, deliver an address entitled "God's Holy Mountain." In the hall, 35 Dundas Street (near Queen Street Station) Mr. Joshua Hawkins, Halifax, will (D.V.) address Christians at 7 p.m. on Lord's Day—Sept. 12th. Subject, "The Holy Spirit, the Comforter." Prayer is earnestly besought that these special meetings may be abundantly fruitful to God's glory.

HAMILTON.—All correspondence for the church should now be addressed to Mr. Jas. C. Cunningham, 172 Eddlewood, Hamilton.

Wholesome Words may be obtained from:—

LONDON—Mr. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road.

LIVERPOOL—Mr. W. Gainford, 43 Moss Grove.

NEWCASTLE—Mr. E. Jameson, Wallsend.

LEICESTER—Mr. C. Belton, 5 Linton Street.

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ABERDEEN—Mr. J. Christie, 123½ Crown Street.

KILMARNOCK—Mr. J. Willock, 3 Paxton Street.

KIRKCALDY—Mr. D. Oswald, 8 Maria Street.

BELFAST—Mr. A. Taylor, 14 Thorndyke Street.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

OCTOBER, 1909.

No. 10.

THE NEW BIRTH AND AFTERWARDS.

FOR the sake particularly of younger ones we ask attention to a few verses in 1 Peter i. and ii. which set forth in order the will of God for those who are the subjects of His grace. The portion we refer to is chapter i. v. 22 to chapter ii. v. 10. Here we have presented

1st—The New Birth.

2nd—Obedience to the Truth.

3rd—Fellowship.

4th—A Spiritual House.

5th—Shewing forth His Excellencies.

It will be observed that although *obedience* comes first, as in v. 22, yet it is in view of "having been begotten again."

The new birth is necessarily *first*. It must precede discipleship. The Lord in John iii. speaking to Nicodemus says plainly that in order to see the Kingdom (the rule) of God a man must be born again. It is well to be clear on this point. Matt. xxviii. says "make disciples," but before a disciple can be made there must be the inward working of the Spirit in granting new life.

The question of HOW the new birth is effected doubtless arises in the mind of many, and while there is much that we do not know, yet a careful perusal of the closing words of ch. i. will help us not a little in the matter. It is "by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God": by that which proceedeth out of the mouth of God being received into the heart of man.

It is not so much the subject matter of the communication as the fact that reception is given to God's word because it is God's word. That word is "the word of the good tidings" preached. The Word is preached; falling upon the ear, it is received by faith, for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word (or saying) of God," and the being begotten again is simultaneous with the reception of that word. This work is a secret one and is effected according to the sovereign will of God, though later it becomes manifest to men.

Obedience: Having been begotten again, then there should follow the purifying of ourselves by obedience to the truth.

This work has a definite commencement, but should also be continued all the life long. The commencement is set forth in the *baptism* of the disciple. This is a great figure of purification; in it the baptized one shows his repudiation of his past sins, yea indeed of his old standing in Adam. Saul of Tarsus, faultless in the estimation of men, yet is called upon to "arise and be baptized washing away thy sins." Solemn indeed is the confession of one who goes down into the water; entering into that which is a figure of the death of Christ he sets forth that he has died with Him and voluntarily renounces all that he is as in the old man. The water of baptism is a counterp. rt to the "laver of regeneration" (Tit. iii. 5) which all must go into who are to be born again.

But it is only the beginning of obedience, and should be followed by constant subjection to the Word of God. We know that there is not only the laver of regeneration but also the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and a consideration of Rom. xii. 2, Col. iii. 10, will make clear that this renewing is to be the experience of the believer. How, then, can this renewing be effected? It is to be by knowledge, the knowledge of God's will as seen in Christ. We shall always need the cleansing of the Word as set forth in figure in the basin of water with which the Lord cleansed the disciples' feet, and concerning which He said: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part WITH Me."

But the cleansing, though it be by the Word of God, is only really operative—can only do the work—as that Word is Obeyed. "Obedience to the truth." A man may be acquainted with the Word from beginning to end, but apart from obedience his ways may be entirely opposed thereto: "If

ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them." "A man's life," it has been said, "is a bundle of habits." It becomes imperative, therefore, that all those habits should be honestly subjected to the test of the Will of God as found in His Word.

Fellowship: The "being begotten" followed by "Obedience to the truth" is "unto unfeigned love of the brethren." The Will of God is that the individual having been discipled and baptized should be "ADDED" (Acts ii. 41). He is to find himself among the brethren, in an Assembly of God, there to receive and to show fervent love. There are many purposes to be fulfilled in an Assembly of God, but it may be safely asserted that none of those can be fulfilled unless the brethren are not only together, but are united by *love* which is the bond of perfectness.

This truth, together with the preceding one of purification by obedience to the truth, is further dwelt upon at length in v. 1 of ch. ii., for it is impossible to go on practically to the truth of the Spiritual House that follows if v. 1 is not obeyed. So we read: "putting away therefore all wickedness and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings." How important this word and sad to say, how needed! Is it not a lamentable fact that what might otherwise be a promising work of God, has often been utterly spoiled by these evil things obtaining? Often, indeed, "the truth" is blamed for this, as though such exhibitions of the flesh were inevitable in contending for the truth, whereas the truth has nothing to do with it but mere personal feeling which discovers itself by such wickedness as is here set out, including that worst of things even "*envy*." Let us be careful to keep our hearts, for out of it such evil proceeds. The judging and cleansing word is needed in such a case.

A Spiritual House. This will depend on a right apprehension of the Lord Jesus. He is indeed the Stone set at naught of the builders, but God has raised Him from the dead and He is thus the living Stone, elect, precious. He is the Foundation and the Corner Stone of the Spiritual House and the Centre of all God's operations. Thus we must view Him—the Lord, and having tasted of His goodness we also as living stones come to *Him*. We appreciate and thoroughly endorse God's choice of Him and we refuse *Man's* estimation. He is the

rejected of men but the chosen of God and also our choice. Thus coming to Him in such a character, we like-minded toward Him are built up a Spiritual House. This is more than subscribing to a creed however true and full. It is the acknowledgment of a person and He the Man of God's choice and purpose. Doubtless the thought of the Spiritual House carries us beyond the present time for its full and perfect manifestation, but in the fact of the born again, disciplined and baptized, one being gathered with such like ones in that which is an Assembly of God, we have an expression within reach of us of that which is the Spiritual House.

The Spiritual House suggests both a "temple" and "a dwelling place" and such the Assembly of God should be. What a holy calling indeed! "I will dwell in them and walk in them."—2 Cor. vi. 16-18.

Then consider the purpose of the Spiritual House! It is for a holy priesthood. This holy priesthood is composed of the holy brethren, partakers of a Heavenly calling (Heb. iii.), and it is these who have liberty to enter into the holies by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living Way. That is our place, and there the functions of the holy priesthood are to be exercised under His controlling hand who is the Great Priest. "By Him let us offer up the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of lips confessing His name."

Our thoughts naturally and rightly turn in this connexion to the time when the Assembly is gathered together to break bread. Then, indeed, is it our exalted privilege, not only to know what Christ has done for us and what He is to us, but to present Him in His perfections, in His obedience, in His sacrifice to God, and this will be done by the lips giving expression to the emotions of the heart.

Then to this inner thing there is the counterpart as set out in ch. ii. v. 9, which words apply not to our place in the holies, but to our public character. Being a chosen or elect generation we are to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession that we may show forth the excellence of Him who redeemed us. A "royal priesthood" would speak of the dignity of the calling, a "holy nation" of its separate character: "the people shall dwell alone," and "a people for God's own possession," that we belong exclusively to God

and we are to be for God. And it can only be in the realization of these things that we shall be able to shew forth His excellencies. May it be our aim increasingly to enter into *what we are* in His purpose, and also into the purpose of God in making us what we are; so that in the appreciation of God's Will we may worthily respond to His desires.

Thus have we traced briefly certain steps in the will of God concerning the "elect generation." Starting with the being begotten, there is to follow self-purifying by subjection to the truth; then fellowship with fellow saints in love; and all with a view to our being for God a habitation for His worship and service, and a testimony outwardly to His character. May these purposes be increasingly fulfilled.

A DEACON.

THAT THORN !

"CONCERNING this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me."

If it were not that we are often brought into distresses and difficulties, how seldom would we ever think of speaking to our God. And again, if it were not that God allows certain things to happen us, how seldom would He have any chance of speaking to us. Yes, there are times when the soul comes into contact with God. Times when God comes very near and He speaks to a man. And the man listens; he is compelled to listen; for he recognises that this is no ordinary speaking. It is a word to himself from his God. How seldom, alas, does this occur, yet it is thus that difficulties are overcome, and God encourages by strengthening the soul. Such was the occasion we desire to very briefly consider. Who is that standing and consenting to the death of Stephen? "A young man named Saul." And what old man is that who lifts his well worn pen. "Being such a one as Paul the aged" he writes to Philemon. What a wondrous stretch of life lies between these points. As the vivacious and zealous Saul he knew nothing of that awful thorn, nor did he know aught of God by experience. But from that moment when, through grace, Saul was called, and it pleased God to reveal His Son in him, the Lord began the glorious work of winning a soul for

Himself, and the more He unfolded the glories and the unsearchable riches of His Christ, the more eager did the young man become to know and to follow, till at length, as a tried and trusted veteran, he is being poured out as a drink offering, having fought the good fight, having finished the course, having kept the faith. Of all that this great man learned: of all the truth made known to him; was there anything so sweet and so precious as the gracious whispering, the gentle and still small voice of the Lord, just at the very moment in his life when he was being so severely buffeted by that trying thorn. Isn't it a nuisance! a continual worry! And a positive hindrance besides! If I could only get rid of it, how very much stronger I would be to fight the good fight: how much freer to speed on the course; how much more able to keep my grip of the faith. Thus he might have argued, and been excused for so arguing; for it did seem as if the thorn would hinder his usefulness. Hence the apostle's eagerness to be rid of it. "I besought the Lord thrice." This bespeaks earnestness, and probably he was guided in his thrice repeated cry by the example of the Holy One Himself in Gethsemane. "Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He hath said unto me." "Unto me." Let there be millions of other people in the world, this is no concern of theirs. "He hath said unto me." And what did He say? "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My power is made perfect in weakness." And these words since have comforted thousands. How much we should covet to get a word from God; each one to and for himself. Are there not still "thorns in the flesh" to buffet and trouble? Has this been put into the hands of some sorely tried saint? Are you lying, perhaps, dear sister, dear brother, racked with pain, with seemingly no relief, and apparently of so little use? Would you like to be up and actively engaged in some duty or another, instead of lying as you are suffering and helpless? "My grace," sufficient for Paul, "is sufficient for thee." No matter how you are placed: overwhelmed betimes through circumstances over which you seem to have no control: "My grace is sufficient for thee." It is sufficient to enable you to suffer, and to bear up under suffering. You are there for a quickly ripening purpose, and those, if there are such who pass

from this scene without trouble, have never known what it is to have a God Who is a very present help.

“ His purposes will ripen fast,
 Unfolding every hour ;
 The bud may have a bitter taste,
 But sweet will be the flower.”

“ He hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee.” Ah, it was the Master Himself Who had drawn near and with eyes full of Divine compassion and tenderness, He looked into the distracted and careworn face of the apostle ; assuring him He had heard that thrice repeated cry for deliverance, and He breathed into his ear those benign words, “ My grace is sufficient for thee : for My power is made perfect in weakness.” All right Lord ! That covers everything. “ Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses.” Thus, this honoured servant was enabled to press on, amid weaknesses, injuries, necessities, persecutions and distresses, and to take pleasure in them for Christ’s sake, because, “ He hath said unto me : My grace is sufficient for thee.” The Lord’s words recall to my mind an illustration used by a celebrated preacher when speaking of the sufficiency of grace. Picture a little fish swimming in the Thames in great fear, ever dreading, and tormented, lest, by continued use, it should dry up the Thames. But to allay its fears the great river is heard one day saying, “ Fear not little fish, my waters are *sufficient* for thee.” And such reader, is the sufficiency of “ My grace.”

NORMAN D. W. MILLER.

SPECIAL NOTICES .

Meetings of Representative Overseers of the Assemblies in the British Isles.—These were duly held on Sept. 10th and 11th as arranged. A helpful time was experienced. Representatives were present from all the different districts excepting one. A more extensive report may be published later, but meanwhile it is desirable to intimate that the desire and purpose of our young and esteemed brother in the Lord, Mr. John Miller (West End, Blackridge, West Lothian), to give himself wholly to prayer and ministry of the Word, having been considered and approved by his co-workers in Blackridge and in Linlithgow-

shire, the matter was further gone into by Representative Overseers present in Glasgow. This has eventuated in brethren being assured, so far as this may be, that God has called Mr. Miller to the work, and they now desire to heartily commend him to the assemblies. The special exercise of our brother is to preach the gospel in parts we have not yet reached. For some months hence he is purposed to continue at his daily calling using up the evenings and week-ends in ministering as opportunities present themselves. Prayer is sought that his service may be abundantly owned of God to the turning of many from darkness to light and in leading Christians unto increased subjection to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ.—J. A. BOSWELL; W. J. LENNOX; A. CAMERON; GEORGE BROWN; ALLAN MILLER.

NEW HYMN BOOK.—All further orders for hymn books must be addressed to Mr. E. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road, London; or Mr. A. Ford Anderson, 77 Winston St., Glasgow. Such orders must of necessity be accompanied by remittance. Prices are—Edition with music 18/- per dozen; six copies for 9/- post free. Less than six copies 1/6 each with 3d. added for postage of any number. Words only, 9/- per dozen post free. Less than twelve copies 9d. each with 3d. added for postage of any number. 2d. extra for Music edition and 1d. extra for Words edition if to be posted beyond the British Isles.

ENGLAND.

Brighton.—The assembly now meets at 54 Church Road, Portslade-by-Sea, near Brighton.—R. D. COLE; H. JONES.

SCOTLAND.

Partick.—It is with deep sorrow, we make known to the Community the sad death and homegoing of our young sister Kate Macdonald, beloved daughter of our brother John Macdonald of Partick.

She left this country some four months ago, going out to Toronto. Our sister was in service and went with her mistress to Gananogue, a place some 190 miles from Toronto on the River St. Lawrence, where they were staying for the months of July and August.

On the morning of 7th August, she went as was her wont to bathe in the river; a gentleman crossing in a boat observed her swimming about, but on landing and pulling his boat ashore he heard her scream.

He immediately, with a companion, rushed to her assistance, but they had to dive twice to get her.

Everything was done to resuscitate her but she was beyond human aid.

She lies buried in the little cemetery, in a plot gratuitously provided for her by a society called the "Sons of Scotland."

Our beloved sister whose tragic and untimely death we mourn, was a devoted Christian and an earnest worker amongst the young.

As her mistress says of her "She was a good girl, so high principled, bright, and happy."

Prayer is earnestly sought on behalf of our Brother Macdonald, his beloved wife and family, that they may be cheered and comforted at this trying time.

"WHOLESOME WORDS," Volume I.—If a sufficient number of these are ordered, we will have them bound and supply at 1/1. each. Orders must reach Mr. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead, not later than 30th November.

Wholesome Words may be obtained from:—

LONDON—Mr. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road.

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KILMARNOCK—Mr. J. Willock, 3 Paxton Street.

KIRKCALDY—Mr. D. Oswald, 8 Maria Street.

BELFAST—Mr. A. Taylor, 14 Thorndyke Street.

A BLANK PAGE: WHY ?

Written on the blank page of October "Wholesome Words."

How is it that the page is blank ?
I asked the question, and it sank
 Into my inmost heart.
I looked on it in very shame.
Some, one or more must be to blame,
 And I must take *my* part.

The page might not have been a blank
Had I the living waters drank
 That flow for those who thirst.
For then refreshing thus bestowed
In living waters would have flowed
 That I had drunk of first.

The page might not have been a blank
If those who stand in the front rank
 The gift in them had stirred.
If stewards of the truth they hold
Had brought forth treasures new and old
 And ministered God's word.

The page might not have been a blank
If younger brethren had not shrank
 From writing simple truth.
Only a single page—not much.
And surely there is need of such
 To help and guide the youth.

How is it that the page is blank ?
A WHOLESOME question ; then be frank
 And let it do its work.
Dear sister, brother, take thy share
And help us by believing prayer,
 Let none their duty shirk.

Then we the Lord for this may thank
NEVER AGAIN a page left blank
 To advertise our need.
For then there would be as there ought
No pages blank—no pages short—
 A full supply indeed.

A. F.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

NOVEMBER, 1909.

No. 11.

HOW THE FIR TREE FELL.

II.

WE had come to a sudden turn in a lovely valley, opposite a bold limestone crag, when we saw the prostrate trunk of a tall young fir tree lying in front of its fellows.

We wondered what was the cause of its downfall, and found that a thick stem of ivy had grown to the entire length of the tree—not encircling the trunk, but growing along one side, until it had a stem as large as a man's arm.

There had been a time when the ivy was a tiny plant, and (unable to maintain itself erect) had crept along the ground to the stalwart fir tree. Little by little it grew up beside the tree, holding on by its delicate fibres, until it reached the top-most branch, and became a deadweight on one side of the fir.

There came a furious storm sweeping down the vale; it caught that ivy-mantled tree in a death-grip, and the fir, encumbered with the weight of the ivy, fell to the earth with a crash that echoed along the valley. Sad picture of disaster!

Let us now gaze upon another scene, in the valley of Sorek. A man of powerful frame is sleeping upon a woman's knees, and as he slumbers, another is deftly shaving off those masses of luxuriant hair—the tokens of his Nazirite-ship. It is Samson (unmindful of his high calling and God-given powers), who is departing from Jehovah and spending his days in self-gratification. His fall and ruin are approaching fast. His Nazirite vow is broken, and upon the floor lie the seven glorious locks.

Jehovah has departed from him, and his mighty strength is gone. The voice of the cruel traitress, Delilah, rings through the chamber, "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson"! He thinks he is as strong as ever and knows not that his God has left him. Now comes the death-like struggle when the mighty man is overpowered and borne down by his foes.

Behold the Lion of Dan, the judge of Israel brought low by a woman's wiles and led away a captive to Gaza! Note how the once firm and vigorous tread has given place to an uncertain and stumbling step, for he is *newly-blind*, and has not yet learned to walk in darkness! See him in the prison-house, bound in fetters of brass, and doing a menial's work—grinding at the mill.

How is the mighty fallen! How different from that day at Lehi, when the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him, and in the power of that Divine strength he slew a thousand Philistines.

As we gaze upon the dark shadows of his fall and ruin we are reminded of the words "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"; and the cry of our hearts should be "Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe."

Once a young believer stood so bravely and unfalteringly for God; but there came a time when danger threatened that godly young soul. So harmless and innocent the temptation looked; perhaps it was a fair face or beauteous form or worldly pleasure; perhaps a Delilah sought to sever those locks of separation. Gradually and almost unconsciously to him something grew up beside that young child of God which hindered his growth and expansion. The voice that once ministered grace to the hearers was silent. A lack of interest in the things of God became more and more pronounced. He ceased to watch and to be sober. And then suddenly and without warning came the crash. A life of promise was suddenly blighted, and the enemies of God were caused to blaspheme.

It is not only the young and inexperienced, but the wisest who may fall from grace. Thus fell Solomon the wisest of men. The dark-eyed daughters of the East turned away his heart after other gods when he was old; and the man who was David's son and successor on the throne, and who had been permitted to build Jehovah's temple in his youth, in his later years builds high places for the gods of the nations around.

Let us watch the beginnings of things, for a fall is generally preceded by a gradual decline—a departing from the Living God. Let us take care lest in later life we build again the things that once we destroyed.

“Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness.”

EDWIN MATTHEW.

(To be continued.)

WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?

JEHOVAH had been speaking to Moses and had given him His commission to go to Pharaoh to seek the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, when Moses hesitated to go, doubting as to the reception of his message. The emancipation of a nation from the power of Pharaoh was truly a mighty work and Moses might well have asked “Who is sufficient for these things”?

He said, “But, behold they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice, for they will say, ‘Jehovah hath not appeared unto thee.’” This surely was lack of faith on Moses’ part. His failure here lay in measuring the success of his errand by himself and his own power instead of by the power of the Omnipotent God who was sending him, and who Himself was going to do the work. So Jehovah asks him, “What is that in thine hand”? * “And he said, A rod. And He said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground and it became a serpent.” This was only a dry stick, but when the power of God was behind it what wonders it wrought.

Through Moses’ hesitation Aaron takes his place as the mouth-piece from God to Pharaoh. Moses limited the power of God, and the power which would have been given him was given to another. God can easily get another to render the service which we should render. Here is a lesson for our souls, in whatsoever we are assured God desires us to do in the path of service for Himself let us go forward in it, knowing that He who gives the call will give the power also. God does not accomplish His work by human sufficiency, but if we are in the path of His will then we can rely upon Divine sufficiency.

God would teach Moses that He could take up a stick and exhibit His mighty power through it, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Let us ask ourselves, What have we in our hands? What is there that we can humbly place at the disposal of God, through which He may exhibit His omnipotent power by the Holy Spirit? We answer, "Ourselves." "They first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God."* And when we have given ourselves we only give what is His own.

But ah! who amongst us is ready to give himself to the Lord? Does it cause us any exercise when we sing such words as

" Lord we are Thine : Thy claims we own ;
 Ourselves to Thee we humbly give ;
 Reign Thou within our hearts alone,
 And make us to Thy glory live. ? "

How well-pleasing unto God it is when we can truly say these words! We need not give up our business, or our work in factory or warehouse or in whatsoever sphere we work to be devoted to Him. Let us do it in whatever honourable calling we may find ourselves. We shall feel our own insufficiency and nothingness, and well we might, for that is all we are in ourselves. Yet let us but place ourselves and what we have at God's disposal and He will take up nothings and through them bring to nought the things that are.

If we be poor and can only afford a few pence, why not lay it out in the purchase of gospel tracts and after as one has said "saturating them with prayer" give them away to callers and those we come in contact with. Who can tell how God may use these? One said to the writer some little time ago, Does it not seem that in some quarters tract distributing is dead? We answered that those who should be distributing them are dead.

The elder brethren and sisters should set the younger an example, it does not require gift for this, but grace and tact. Have we not been looking and waiting for some great things to do and neglecting what is in our hand? Why not begin at once and speak the gospel to some individual? He who says "Stretch forth thine hand" will give you power to use it.

* 2 Cor. viii. 5.

With others there may be gospel literature lying unused at home, or at the meeting room, why not begin at once and use that which lieth near your hand?

Others may find it in their hand to preach the gospel, to such we would say, "Do not aim to be eloquent, do not aim to spin out a fine gospel address in the orthodox hour, but aim simply by the power of the Holy Spirit to reach the heart with the gospel and stop when your message is finished if it only takes half the allotted time. Preach having faith in God, expecting results; and draw up the net after casting it."

J. DORRICOFF.

(To be continued.)

MILLENNIAL GLORY.

THAT period of the world's history spoken of as the Millennium excites great interest and provokes much controversy, for though accepted by some professed Christians, it is, on the other hand, denied by not a few; the vain talkings of men being allowed to usurp the place and authority of the Holy Scriptures.

And yet the fact remains that it is the promises of millennial blessings in the Old Testament that fan the courage and stimulate the faith of the Jews to this very day.

We know that well nigh the last words of Moses to the children of Israel were that if they obeyed the voice of Jehovah, and kept His commandments, then they would be the head of the nations; but if they rebelled and disobeyed then they would be the tail and not the head.

How terribly was this fulfilled, though God bore patiently with them in all their perverse and rebellious ways; yet at last He heaped tribulation upon them, destroying them with the anger of His indignation, and wasting them with bitter destruction, causing them to wander upon the face of the earth, without king, without prince, without sacrifice, without pillar.

But they will not always be a rejected nation, wanderers upon the earth, for in God's good time they will return to the land of their fathers, a remnant will be caused to pass through that fearful period called the Great Tribulation, to be purified and refined; for Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness.

“A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the Mighty God.”* “For though thy people be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return, a consumption is determined overflowing with righteousness.”† “Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek Jehovah their God and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah, and to His goodness in the latter days.”‡ They will mourn and weep, when they look on Him whom they pierced; they will mourn for Him as one who mourneth for an only son.

The repentant condition of Israel, at this time, is beautifully typified for us in the repentant and humble condition of Joseph's brethren, when they discovered that the one upon the Throne was none other than the one whom they had betrayed.

Not only will the nation be purged but the city and the land will be cleansed and purified; every unclean abomination will be swept away; for Jehovah will wash away the filth of the daughter of Zion and purge the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof.

John the baptizer testified of Christ—“He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire.”**

This testing and cleansing process will begin with Israel, but will reach out to the nations, for when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory all nations will be gathered before Him; He will separate the sheep from the goats, the chaff from the wheat, and thus will the nations be purified, none will be left but such as will yield loyal allegiance to Him.

“He shall judge the world in righteousness,

He shall minister judgment to the peoples in uprightness.”††

Jerusalem will be the centre from whence His rule and government will be known. For out of Zion will go forth the law and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; Jerusalem, for of all the spots on the face of the earth none is so dear to God as this sacred city.

“Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion

More than all the dwellings of Jacob.”‡‡

* Isa. x. 21.

† Isa. x. 22.

‡ Hos. iii. 5.

** Matt. iii. 12.

†† Psa. ix. 8.

‡‡ Psa. lxxxvii. 3.

Jerusalem ! the Mount Zion which He loved ; Jerusalem ! the down-trodden and crushed, the city of unspeakable tragedies, will yet become the city of truth, the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, the holy mountain.

“ For Zion’s sake,” saith Jehovah, “ will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake will I not rest until her righteousness go forth as brightness.”*

At that time Israel will be able to say, “ Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities ; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there Jehovah will be with us in majesty. For Jehovah is our Judge, Jehovah is our Lawgiver, Jehovah is our King.”†

For Zion will be comforted and her wilderness made to blossom like Eden, the garden of Jehovah wherein shall be found joy and gladness, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Then will the cry be heard, “ Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion ; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city ; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee, the uncircumcised and the unclean.”‡

“ For Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty One who will save ; He will rejoice over thee with joy, He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing.”**

Let us imagine to ourselves the scene thus portrayed—Jerusalem the city of the great King, Zion the dwelling-place of Jehovah, with the twelve tribes of Israel gathered as one nation, under one Shepherd and the sanctuary in the midst.

Jerusalem, a city of peace and happiness wherein will be found old men and women with staff in their hand for very age, and streets full of happy children.

A city wherein shall be neither sorrow nor tears, nor hunger nor thirst, for Jehovah shall be their Shepherd, yea, a Wall of fire round about them and the Glory in the midst of them.

Israel will then be the head of the nations and not the tail ; they will be among the nations as the kingly lion amongst the beasts of the field.

Jerusalem will then become the centre of the earth, for the

* Isa. lxii. 1.

† Isa. lii. 1.

† Isa. xxxiii. 20, 22.

** Zeph. iii. 17.

Root of Jesse standeth for an ensign to the peoples ; unto Him shall the nations seek, and His resting-place shall be glorious.

“ A throne shall be established in mercy, and One shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David, judging and seeking judgment, and swift to do righteousness.”* He will claim the nations as His inheritance and the uttermost part of the earth for His possession. He will speak peace to the nations, and His dominion shall be from the river to the ends of the earth. But that nation that will not yield obedience shall be utterly destroyed. For He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He hath set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law.

Peace and security being established, sin and lawlessness being caused to hide their guilty heads, commerce and all the arts of peace will flourish, and the nations will bring their wealth and glory to Jerusalem. They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah, to beautify His sanctuary and make the place of His feet glorious.

From year to year shall the nations come to worship at the footstool of Jehovah, saying, “ Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah to the House of the God of Jacob ; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.”†

Then and not till then will Psalm c. have its complete and perfect fulfilment.

“ Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, all ye lands.

Serve Jehovah with gladness ;

Come before His presence with singing.

Know ye that Jehovah He is God.

It is He that hath made us, and we are His ;

We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,

And into His courts with praise ;

Give thanks unto Him, and bless His name.

For Jehovah is good ; His mercy endureth for ever ;

And His faithfulness unto all generations.”

Then and not till then will a groaning creation lift its weary head.

Then will the earth and the sea, the mountains and valleys, the wilderness and the desert places, the beasts of the field,

* Isa. xvi. 5.

† Isa. ii. 3.

the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air rejoice and be glad as never before, since sin wrecked a fair creation.

“ Then the heavens, the earth, and the sea shall rejoice
The fields and the forest shall lift the glad voice
The sands of the desert shall flourish in green
And Lebanon’s glory be shed o’er the scene.

“ Her bridal attire and her festal array
All nature shall wear on that glorious day
For her King cometh down with His people to reign,
And His presence shall bless her with Eden again.”

It is, of course, difficult for us to imagine the present constitution of government and society swept away for ever, but a complete change must and will come.

Of the present position in Europe a writer recently said :—

“ Europe gropes in the dark to find a path of safety, and often discovers at the eleventh hour that she is on the verge of a chasm.

“ Statesmen are flies upon the wheels of time, not the motive nor even always the directing force.”

No ! indeed ; for there is but one Hand guiding and controlling everything according to His own good pleasure and eternal counsels.

And Emperors, Kings, and Nations need to know and learn that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men.

Every promise that He hath made will be fulfilled. The word has gone forth from His mouth and shall not return void.

“ The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform it.”

A. F. A.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS.

IF Christian parents were alive to their responsibilities they would seek to nurture their own children in the things of God. But in many cases this is not done and many children are brought into Sunday Schools whose parents have no interest in divine realities, so that we who are Sunday School Teachers are as it were foster-parents who undertake, in the fear of God, that which is lacking on the part of the parents. This should

not be lost sight of, for while many scholars come to us and seem to have been no time with us when circumstances cause them to disappear, yet many attend regularly and earnestly, and the measure of our success with these, in training them up in the ways which be in Christ, is the measure of our success as foster-parents.

This naturally leads us to enquire, Who can teach in a Sunday School? and we are bound to conclude that, while belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first requisite in one who would teach others, some standard of growth and experience is also necessary.

Unfortunate, indeed, is the case of young children committed to the care of those who themselves are but babes in Christ, in need of teaching. Yes, let us impress this. The Sunday School is not a happy hunting ground for young believers. Indeed it is not for the teachers at all but for the children. Yet who, engaging in such work, has not received refreshment himself?

On the other hand great experience is not demanded, only so much as shall have fixed the character. Else how shall the teachers mould the characters of others aright? Above all, the teachers require to look well to themselves and their ways, lest they put a stumbling-block in the way of the little ones. Be a model teacher as far as you can. It is easy to get hundreds of eager scholars but difficult to get a dozen good teachers.

The scholars should be treated kindly but firmly. While too harsh correction will tend to raise a barrier between teacher and child, too lax discipline will undo all the home-training they may receive.

It is easy to correct a child when it does wrong, and the stronger will can govern the weaker, but it should be done so that the child sees the wrong, for it is no credit to a teacher to be seen always correcting. The object in view ought to be, to produce a self-governing child, one who, as it advances, refrains from annoying out of respect for the teacher.

The work of the school requires careful consideration. Quantity is of little account but valuable work is that which has a permanent effect in guiding the mind of the child. Thus it follows that indiscriminate dipping into the Scriptures here and there, Sunday after Sunday is not so good as a fixed course

diligently gone through. Neither must utility give way to interest-exciting stories, else the taste will be spoiled and such would be always expected.

Wisdom is needed also to distinguish between lessons suitable for the younger and those suitable for the elder scholars. If we could grasp the meaning of an ideal graduation, growth in knowledge of the principles of God, that naturally begins with broad and general principles and gradually comes to include the doctrines of the House of God, we might afterwards rejoice to see some, whom we had taught, at the height of their service perhaps teaching others the glorious truths revealed. Thus Timothy nurtured in the Holy Scriptures from a babe, after passing through years of training was ultimately used, as he stood fast and was given the charge to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching at a time when sound doctrine was not endured. How little faith we have!

This would necessitate an extension of the Sunday School into Bible classes where higher subjects could be taught. It is a matter of everyday experience that on reaching the ages of 13 and 14 children do not care, as a rule, to be classed with younger ones in a school. Here an opportunity occurs for teachers in the church to form a separate class at a different time.

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
And he that is wise winneth souls.”*

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

A FEW days ago the writer heard of a young believer in fellowship, who is serving the Lord by giving away tracts at a football field before and after the match. Here lies a good field for service during this coming winter. (If the Lord will). Our beloved brother Mr. A. Foster of 18 Osmaston Road Derby has some tracts especially suitable for this service entitled, “A Footballer’s Experience,” which he can supply at a low rate for free distribution. They should be stamped with the address of the meeting room, so that any exercised ones may find their way to it.

Do not be hindered by the Tempter’s voice saying such a thing would be out of season. The exhortation to “preach

* Proverbs xi. iii.

the Word" and to be "instant in season and out of season" covers all seasons.

Do not thrust them into the hands of passers-by as if they were handbills, but give them away with a courteous remark, such as, "Will you kindly accept this?" This will often be met by the taking of a tract with a thank you, even from the roughest.

Do not be afraid of a sneer or of jesting remarks made against you, the world's smile of approval is more to be feared than its scorn.

In the distribution of them make it a matter of prayer both before and after, and who can tell what blessing may result?

J. D.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ENGLAND.

Midlands.—Birmingham. Communications for the Assembly to Mr. Bancroft, 96 St. Paul's Rd., Balsall Heath, Birmingham (Deacon of the Assembly).—A. FOSTER; J. C. RADCLIFFE; H. ELSON.

SCOTLAND.

Linlithgowshire.—Our beloved brother Charles Brown, and wife and six children; also Robert Brown and his wife; and George Richardson (whose wife and family remain at home), all from Broxburn Assembly, sailed on Saturday 16th October for Canada. They wish special remembrance in the prayers and supplications of the Saints. Their Canadian address is—MERRITT, Nicola Valley, British Columbia. For overseers of County—ALEX. W. CAMERON; GEORGE BROWN.

Renfrewshire.—Special addresses for Christians will be delivered (God permitting) in the Middle Parish Church Hall, Churchill, off High Street, Paisley, on Saturday, Dec. 18th, beginning at 3 p.m. and continuing till 8 p.m. (Interval 5 till 6 p.m.) Mr. J. A. Boswell, Mr. David Smith, Mr. Norman Miller, and Mr. John Miller are expected. Subject of ministry, "The way of God for His children." The prayers of the assemblies are desired.

"WHOLESOME WORDS," Volume I.—If a sufficient number of these are ordered, we will have them bound and supply at 1/1 each. Orders must reach Mr. Taylor, 1 Kerr Street, Barrhead, not later than 30th November.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. 1.

DECEMBER, 1909.

No. 12.

HOW WE KNOW THAT GOD HATH SPOKEN IN THE SCRIPTURES.

V.—BECAUSE OF SATAN AND SUFFERING.

WE find in the Scriptures comparatively little said about this awful being—perhaps for the reason that God would have us occupied with the One of whom the Scriptures speak, the Christ of God, for “in all things He must have the pre-eminence.”* We have enough written about Satan however to shew to us that he is mighty and crafty, yet also beautiful.

Our first introduction to him is in Genesis iii., where he appears to our first parents in the form of a serpent. We must not for a moment suppose that this animal form was originally the loathsome reptile that we now know it to be. Scripture is plain on this point. “And the Lord God said unto the serpent, ‘Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.’”† If the serpent was originally in its present form this scripture would have little meaning. It implies that the serpent was far from being the crawling reptile we know it to be, and this is borne out by what is said in connexion with the yet future glorious Millennial blessedness for this earth, “And dust shall be the serpent’s meat.”‡ Surely this statement in such a connexion is more than a mere casual remark. Why is not the curse removed from off this animal?

* Col. i. 18.

† Gen. iii. 14.

‡ Isaiah lxxv. 25

It might be asked, Why should Satan choose the serpent form? The answer to this seems to be that he chose the most beautiful form he could find in all God's animal creation, having made a careful investigation of the same for the purpose of finding out the form best suiting his requirements to bring about the ruin of the Adamic family.

Again it might be asked, Why should Satan be so careful to bring about the ruin of the Adamic family?

Here again we fall into a serious error if we for a moment conclude that there was no Satan until he appeared to Eve in the Garden of Eden. True, this is his first appearance to man, or man has been but recently created.

We suggest that Genesis i. 1 and 2 throw light on this question.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" is a statement without qualification. We have no hint as to the space of time elapsing before the chaos and darkness of the second verse came about, nor yet the interval of time before God commenced the renovation of the earth. That God did not originally create the earth as we find it in verse 2 seems clear. "For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens; He is God; that formed the earth and made it; He established it, He created it not a waste, He formed it to be inhabited."* The word "waste" here is the same word as "waste" in Genesis i. 2.

In connexion with this most interesting point Ezekiel xxviii. 11-19 appears to draw the curtain aside and to give us a little view of Satan's history long before he appeared on the scene in Genesis iii. The words could hardly be spoken in the fullest sense of any earthly monarch.

Let us notice a few expressions. "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created till unrighteousness was found in thee." "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness."

We have in these verses one brought before us who was originally
perfect,

* Isaiah xlv. 18.

beautiful,
 wise,
 but who became through his fall
 unrighteous,
 proud because of his beauty,
 crafty, because of wisdom corrupted.

2 Cor. xi. 3 is a side light on this latter point and 1 Tim. iii. 6 gives light in connection with his pride.

Albeit so mighty, he is not almighty however, for he is a created being—the creature being inferior to the Creator.

This earth seems to have been at all times the theatre of Satan's operations: his titles in the New Testament would indicate this. For example:—

“The prince of this world.”* (Three times in John.)

“The god of this world.” †

“The prince of the power of the air.” ‡

Probably Satan, long before Adam's time, was the head of a Principality whose sphere was this earth; through his fall he and those under him fell, eventually as in Genesis i. 2 bringing disorder and chaos upon the scene. Out of this we find God in Genesis i. renovating the earth and making it fit for the habitation of man whom He was about to create.

It is instructive to note that in Genesis i. it is renovation, not creation. We find the word “created” only three times, in verses 1, 21, 27.

We are now in a position after this consideration to come to a fair conclusion as to the reason prompting Satan to bring about the fall of the Adamic family. He, being dislodged from his position of power and pre-eminence upon the earth by God creating Adam and placing him at the head of the new creation, as might be expected, plans the fall of the one he looks upon as his rival, and with the fall brings all Adam's family, and the kingdoms of the earth resulting therefrom, under his authority.

That the fall included all this is clear from more than one scripture. The last temptation as brought before us in Matt. iv. is significant. “Again the Devil taketh Him unto an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them” and he said unto Him “All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship

* John xiv. 30.

† 2 Cor. iv.

‡ Ephesians ii. 2.

me." * It may be doubted whether anything can be built upon the silence of the Lord Jesus as to Satan's right to these kingdoms, but it is hardly likely that the Tempter, crafty as he is, would have left himself open to question on this point. Moreover, this is confirmed by a reference to Psalm ii. Jehovah speaks to the Son :—

“ Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance

And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” †

Satan appears to have borne in mind this scripture, knowing that by the redemption work all would become the Lord's, hence his continual effort to ensnare and bring about the ruin of even the Lord Jesus Himself, but where the first man, Adam, ignominiously failed the last Adam gloriously triumphed. Not only are the kingdoms of the earth His by the right of redemption, but by this same glorious work He brought to nought him that had the power of death—the Devil—and eventually the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord (Jehovah) and of His Christ and He shall reign for ever and ever. ‡

The picture that man has drawn of the Devil as a very hideous monster is most deceptive, obliterating from the minds of the many a true conception of what he is according to the Scriptures. This is as Satan would have it. If his true character is once known it is to be forewarned and to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

That Satan can and does quote the Scriptures for his own purpose is clear from Matt. iv. and Luke iv., and that he appears in a religious form is incontrovertible from 2 Cor. xi. 14. Speaking of false apostles, the Holy Spirit says by Paul, “ And no marvel, for even Satan fashioneth himself as an angel of light, it is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness.” How unlike the ideas of men is all this ! Little wonder then that man is thoroughly deceived. While it is true that Satan at times when it suits him manifests himself as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour,** far oftener as being more efficacious to his designs, is he as an angel of light. Can we conceive of anything more

* Matt. iv. 8.

† Psalm ii. 8.

‡ Rev. xi. 15.

** 1 Peter v. 8.

beautiful? Thus he seeks to counterfeit the work of God, as did Jannes and Jambres, by imitations and shams.* In accordance with this, Satan's greatest counterfeit yet awaits realization, unto the bringing about of which man, more especially the so-called Christian world, is being prepared and led on blindly to its doom.

We have seen that Satan at the beginning was manifest in animal, yet withal beautiful, flesh, the day is still to come when there shall be a travesty of the Incarnation (Satan is always one behind God and never original), Satan manifest in human flesh, he whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.† It is remarkable that similar words are used in connection with God's Man, the God-Man, "A Man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you."‡ In connexion with Satan's man it is "lying wonders." How contrary to all this is the idea which generally prevails, that those given to immorality and profanity are specially in the Devil's snare, while anything with the name of Christianity attached to it, no matter how abominable and sometimes blasphemous the doctrine may be, is to be looked upon with a measure greater or lesser as the case may be of satisfaction, as pleasing to God. Nothing could be further from the truth and is proved by the fact that a kind of pseudo-moral improvement is going on apace, yet man is getting no nearer to God. "But evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived,"** and again, "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables."††

The Scribes and Pharisees in the days of the Lord's earthly sojourn were religious to the last extreme, yet how far they were away from the mind of God is proven by the Lord's terrible denunciations and "woes" of Matt. xxiii. and by the fact that they rejected and crucified the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the higher part of man that is at fault—which can never be made right by moral improvement, education or the like. How is it that the religion of man has ever been at fault; with

* 2 Tim. iii. 8.

† 2 Thess. ii. 9.

‡ Acts ii. 22.

** 2 Tim. iii. 12.

†† 2 Tim. iv. 3-4.

the exception of a mere handful, now and again, here and there, whose hearts the Lord has touched? We know full well that man in a moral sense can be improved and perhaps is being improved in these lands to-day. We suggest that the Satan of the Scriptures, not the Satan of man's conception, is the answer to this enigma.

The delineation of Satan as given in the Scriptures could never have originated in the mind of man. Neither can man to-day comprehend it except as taught by the Holy Spirit, even that same Holy Spirit through whom the delineation was at first given.

In conclusion and in close connexion with the foregoing is the great mystery of human suffering. We believe that the Bible gives the plain and unmistakable answer to things which otherwise would remain profound mysteries. If we believe in the fall of man, the utter ruin and depravity of the human race accomplished through him who is ever the pledged enemy of God, no myth or no mere evil principle in man, but a real active mighty being, all is plain. Satan has again as in Genesis ii. brought about chaos darkness and confusion and every evil thing, out of which God in His infinite wisdom through the sending, death and resurrection of His Son is slowly but surely bringing about order, light and every good and beautiful thing, "Working all things after the counsel of His will."

"God who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

J. C. R.

HOW THE LARCH WAS UPHELD.

III.

"The Lord is of (margin, with) them that uphold my soul."—Ps. lv. 4.

As we followed the course of the stream a little further down the valley, we came to a cluster of larches in the marshy ground.

One of the larches had fallen—but not to the ground, for its swift descent had been arrested by the branches of its fellow larches, and though bending greatly it was still green and flourishing, sustained by its companions.

* 2 Cor. iv. 6.

The floods of winter and a little perennial spring which ran through the plantation, had loosened or washed away some of the soil; then came the storm (perhaps the same that brought down the fir tree), and the larch would have perished too, had not the strong branches of its brethren upheld it.

Those supporting branches remind us of Jonathan's timely visit to David in the Wood of Ziph. Well had he realised the sorrows that swept David's soul; and nothing would suffice but to leave his home in royal Gibeah and pay a hurried visit to his afflicted friend. In that time of peril and anxiety, when the floods of ungodliness made David afraid, when Saul was again about to seek his life, then Jonathan* "*strengthened his hand in God*" (Elohim). He had experienced the saving strength of Jehovah's right hand at Michmash, and so he could well point his well-beloved friend to God, the only Source of strength. His words raised David's drooping spirits, and caused him to lay hold with firmer grasp of the Eternal God. He strengthened his hand in Elohim.

How can we, who are so conscious of our limitations, be used to sustain our brother? How can we attain to this gracious ministry? Isaiah gives the answer, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should know how to sustain with words him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as they that are taught."† It is only by listening to the voice of God, by getting His message in our heart and on our lips, that we can truly strengthen our brethren. The Apostle Paul writes "That we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."‡ The measure in which we have experienced His help and comfort, will be the measure of our helpfulness to others.

We are exhorted to look carefully, lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God. Let us not look askance at such and seek other company, but try to help him. Let us not leave him severely alone to stand or fall as he may, but with loving heart and strong arm, endeavour to strengthen his hand in God. May we be swift to succour. A word spoken in season may arrest a fall. Let us exhort one another day by day to be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus.

* 1 Samuel xxiii. 16.

† Isaiah l. 4. R.V.

‡ 2 Corinth. i. 4.

There is yet another way in which our help may be of inestimable value to others. By our earnest prayers on their behalf. Do we remember those eminent among us for gifts and knowledge of the word of God? We should make special mention of these in our prayers. They need and value them. Do we remember those in dreary isolation? Let us bear them up at the Throne of Grace. Let us cultivate such ministry. Let us learn afresh from our blessed Lord, who said to Peter "I have prayed (made supplication) for thee that thy faith fail not."

"It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?"

EDWIN MATTHEW.

HOW MANY LOAVES HAVE YE? GO AND SEE.

THE day was far spent, and the multitude were now in a desert place having followed the Lord from afar. He was moved with compassion towards them, for they were as sheep having no shepherd. The disciples say unto Him "Send them away for they have nothing to eat." The Lord answered "Give ye them to eat."* Here before them were five thousand men besides women and children, faint and hungry. How were they to meet that great need? The disciples being in great straits measured the need by themselves and their own provision instead of by the power of their Divine Lord Who was with them. They were like the ten spies who brought back an evil report to Moses, having measured the walled cities and the people by themselves, and their own power. But Joshua and Caleb measured the men and their cities by the power and might of Jehovah, and the voice of faith is "We are able."†

The disciples' thoughts rose no higher than the baker's shop. "Shall we go and buy?" said they. But the Lord said unto them, "How many loaves have ye? Go and see."‡ They go and find a lad who had just a day's provisions for himself, five barley loaves and two small fishes, and unbelief asks "What are these amongst so many?" The need and their own insufficiency occupied their whole attention and

* Mark vi. 36-37.

† Numbers xiii. 30.

‡ Mark vi. 38.

blinded them to the power of their Lord. When He said "Give ye them to eat" He knew Himself what He was about to do but this He said to prove them. He proved them and found them wanting. But he will not allow the disciples' failure to hinder the flow of pity and love from His own heart. His grace triumphs over their failure and He uses them to convey the blessing to the multitude.

The barley loaves and the fishes are brought to Him, and He gives God thanks and from His own Omnipotent hands He passes them to the disciples, and they to the multitude until all are fed and all are satisfied. There is something also for each disciple, a basket full. Whilst the Lord gives abundantly He will allow no waste, for said He "Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost."

In this lesson, rightly learnt, lies the secret of power and successful ministry, whether amongst saints or sinners. Truly before us to-day are the perishing multitude, and our day of service is far spent. The night cometh when no man can work. Shall we be lacking in love and compassion and say in our hearts "Send them away" whilst He is waiting to be gracious, waiting to bless, waiting to reveal the glory of His name to the lost in being a just God and a Saviour. The great need may overpower us, our insufficiency may make us fearful, but let us seek grace to rise above this and measure the need by the resources and power of the living God. Let each one place their barley loaves and their fishes in His hands and blessing will flow through us to the multitude.

Some may say, "I have no gift to speak to individuals about the gospel." How strange! Yet such can speak fluently about earthly things. Why not be honest and say "I lack the constraining love of Christ?"

Others complain and say they have no money to place at the Lord's disposal for His service. Yet many such find money for finery and trinkets and gaudy apparel and have no conscience about it. It is deplorable to know how much Christians spend in following the fashions of this world, and how little they place at the Lord's disposal. Do they never think of the possible straits into which the Lord's servants may be brought through such neglect? We need not be surprised if He does not raise up and send out more labourers into the harvest field if we do not rightly maintain those that are out. It is the Lord's

prerogative to prove their faith, not ours. "How many loaves have ye? Go and see."

In conclusion we would say even to the weakest and youngest saint and to the most timid, go and see what you can place in the hands of Divine Omnipotence to be used by Him for His glory whether it be gift, money, or whatever it may be, if only a prophet's chamber where a weary servant of the Lord may rest. Who can tell what blessing would follow in the Churches of God if each one arose and did what they could? May the Lord awaken each one of us to go and see what we can place into His hands to be used for the glory of His great name. Amen.

J. DORRICOTT.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WILL "A Deacon" explain more clearly what he means by saying: "The water of baptism is a counterpart to the laver of regeneration, (Titus iii. 5) which all must go into who are to be born again."?

Reply: "The laver of regeneration" is but a figure of the new birth. The word of God, elsewhere spoken of as "Seed incorruptible" in reference to divine life, is here spoken of as "water" in reference to its cleansing power. The laver may be likened to the big bath into which all must go who are to be regenerated, not a partial cleansing but a subjection of the entire person to the judging and cleansing power of the word. Afterwards the basin may suffice to cleanse the feet etc. This truth is clearly expressed in John xiii., where the Lord shows that the washing of the feet is necessary for fellowship with Him, but that when a man has been into the big bath (the laver of regeneration) he does not need to be bathed all over a second time; that is, having been born from above *once*, it cannot be repeated. The same is expressed in Eph. v. in reference to the Church, "That He might sanctify it having cleansed it by the washing (laver) of water by the word." Here we have the original washing all over (the laver) and the subsequent sanctification. Coming back to the question we do not understand that baptism is "the laver of regeneration" but only a figure of it. That touches the *inner* man, but the water of baptism itself only touches the skin. It is important to see that baptism (as to the form) is external and affords no guarantee of any inward

change, though it is a profession of an inward change, and this is what is meant when we say that the water of baptism is a counterpart to the laver of regeneration, which (that is, the laver of regeneration) all must go into who are to be born again.

A DEACON.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

Lancashire and Cheshire.—It is purposed to hold, if the Lord will, the annual meetings for the Assemblies in these parts on 1st January, 1910, in the Orange Hall, King Street, Wigan, as follows:—Prayer, praise, and addresses from 2 p.m. till 8.30 p.m. with an interval for tea. Brethren, ministering the Word, please note.—WILLIAM SAVIGAR; THOS. B. HORNE.

South Wales District.—As the annual “Easter-holiday” meetings are held at Barry and the “August Bank-holiday” meetings at Cardiff, it has been decided, if the Lord will, to hold the “Christmas-holiday” meetings at Mountain Ash instead of at Cardiff as formerly. Proposed meetings:—Monday, December 27th, in the Allen Street Meeting Room, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.—Meeting of Overseeing Men. 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m., 6 p.m. to 7.45 p.m.—Ministry of the Word. The prayers of the Assemblies are desired.—ED. FOSTER; W. EDGAR.

SCOTLAND.

Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire.—Glasgow. The usual special meetings on New Year’s Day will be held, God permitting, in the City Halls, North Saloon, No. 98 Candleriggs. From 10 till 11—Praise and Prayer; from 11 till 1—Ministry; from 1 till 2—Interval; from 2 till 3—Answering of written questions; from 3 till 4—Ministry; from 4 till 5—Interval; from 5 till 7—Ministry. Also in Motherwell on Tuesday, January 4th, 1910, in the Masonic Hall, Hope Street, from 2 till 8, with interval for tea. A kind invitation is given to fellow saints and also to brethren given to ministry of the Word. Remembrance in prayer for these meetings is desired.—J. HIN-SHELWOOD; C. M’KAY; D. WHITTET.

Aberdeen.—Thistle Hall, 11 Belmont Street. Annual special meetings will (D.V.) be held in above hall, on 1st January, 1910, commencing at 10 a.m. Also on 2nd January, at 2.30 p.m.

Brethren given to ministry of the Word of God please remember us in the North. The prayers of all are sought that we may have a real time of blessing when together.—J. CHRISTIE; W. THOMSON.

Renfrewshire.—The usual New Year special meetings for the ministry of the Word will be held, God permitting, in Bank Street Meeting Room, Greenock, on Saturday, 8th January, 1910, from 2.30 till 7.30 p.m., with interval from 5 till 5.45 p.m. Approved ministers of the Word will be welcomed. The prayers of the saints are besought as also the presence of such as are able to come.

Special addresses will be given, God permitting, in the Middle Parish Church Hall, Church-hill, off High Street, Paisley, on Saturday, December 18th, beginning at 3 p.m. and continuing till 8 p.m., with interval from 5 till 6 p.m.

Edinburgh.—The usual New Year meetings for ministry will be held, if God permit, on New Year's Day, in Buccleuch Parish Halls, Buccleuch Street, beginning at 1.30 p.m., interval from 4 to 5 p.m., and continuing till 7.30 p.m. Ministers of the Word as well as saints generally are heartily invited. Prayer also besought.

Linlithgowshire.—Special Meetings for Christians will be held (God permitting) on Monday, 3rd January, 1910, in the Institute, Mid Street, Bathgate, from 11 a.m. to 7.30 p.m., with intervals from 12.30 to 1.30 for refreshments and 4.30 to 5.30 for tea, 6d. of charge for each. Prayer is earnestly besought that helpful ministry may be forthcoming, as well as grace and wisdom to speak and hear unto a using aright the precious things of God for His Glory and the honour of His Son, and the wellbeing and doing of His people. Those addicting themselves to ministering to the Saints might kindly Communicate with County Correspondent as early as possible, if they intend being present.—A. W. CAMERON; GEORGE BROWN; ALLAN MILLER.

CANADA.

Meetings for Christians will, God permitting, be held in Toronto on Xmas Day as follows:—11.30 a.m. till 1 p.m., Thanksgiving Confession and prayer; 1 p.m. till 3 p.m., Refreshments; 3 p.m. till 5 p.m., Ministry; 5 p.m. till 7 p.m., Refreshments; 7 p.m. till 9 p.m., Ministry. Also on New Year's Day, similar meetings will be held in Brantford.