

NEEDED TRUTH

EDITED BY

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IN CONSULTATION WITH

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

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SOMETIME.

SOMETIME for thee, O weary heart,
The pearly gates shall stand apart;
And thou to rest shall enter in,
So free from sadness, strife and sin.

SOMETIME shall end the desert drear,
In cloudless sunrise, grand and clear;
And darkness merge in rapturous day
Whose splendours never pass away.

SOMETIME. O joy beyond compare,
Redemption's richest crown to wear
Thou shalt to God Himself ascend,
Where grace and glory brightly blend.

SOMETIME, O weary one, thy soul
No fierce temptation shall control;
But every earthly bond shall break,
When you in that glad morning wake.

SOMETIME, 'tis bliss untold to know
In robes unsullied, white as snow,
A royal conqueror thou shalt stand,
Enthroned among the ransomed band.

SOMETIME! how soon they shall appear,
Eternal glories bright and clear
Shall burst in all their bright array,
Each shade of gloom to chase away.

SOMETIME. O never be downcast!
All clouds and darkness overpast,
In endless glory thou shalt reign,
And heaven's unbounded wealth obtain.

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NEEDED TRUTH.

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THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

THE Holy Scriptures contain the only authentic account of Who and What Christ is. To gather some of the rays of light from this lamp of truth concerning Him is our present purpose. This lamp sheds its Divine light for our guidance amidst the spiritual darkness that surrounds us. By it we must be guided, lest becoming deceived by some of the many foolish fires kindled by the Father of lies to allure men to destruction, we sink into the quagmires of error and become defiled, and some one make spoil of us through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, and not after Christ.

It is unnecessary to mention that this article is not intended to be exhaustive. To exhaust such a theme lies not within the power of a finite scribe. It were as well to try to make a sheaf of the sunbeams as to try to tell all about the Christ of God, so great, indeed, is the Mystery of Godliness. When we begin to ponder upon the subject we begin to understand the truth and force of John's words: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written." What have been written contain such heights and depths that many of them have to be left by us unscanned and unsounded, from want of time and understanding. But we shall have more leisure by and by, and a better understanding too. We shall have eternity in which to learn all about them. Again there are some things, even among those that have been written, connected with the Mystery of Godliness for which we must wait to know

till the veil of our present surrounding and condition is removed. But there are things concerning the Christ of God that it not only becomes us to know, but which we must know, in order to have saving and sanctifying knowledge of Him, Whom to know is life eternal.

We will begin then with—

HIS HUMANITY.

The writer of the Epistle to Hebrews tells us that “It behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren.” That is to say, everything which truly belongs to the nature and essence of a man exists in Christ. Born of a woman, He grew up from childhood to manhood in the ordinary way, mind and body developing simultaneously. He fasted and hungered, ate and drank, slept and awoke, joyed and sorrowed, and finally suffered and died. He spoke of His body, His soul and His spirit. His appearance was that of a man, a Jew, very unlike, we trow, the “*Ecce Homo*” representations of art. Fellow citizens of Nazareth knew Him as the Son of Mary, the Brother of James, and Jose, and Judas, and Simon.

He spoke of Himself as a Man: “Man shall not live by bread alone.” And in another place: “Now ye seek to kill Me, a Man that hath told you the truth.”

His apostles had the same impression. Thus Peter, “Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved unto you”; and Paul, “Himself Man, Christ Jesus.”

Thus on the testimony of the Scriptures we must ascribe to Him a real humanity. He was a real Man, Who really lived as a man among men, and not a mystical, imaginary, spiritual something that could not suffer and die.

But there is a difference as well as a resemblance in the humanity of Christ and the rest of mankind. His was unsullied by sin, ours is defiled by it. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, hath been tempted in all points as we are, Yet Without Sin. Friends and foes, and even

demons unite to bear testimony to this fact. Peter calls Him "the Righteous One," "the Lamb of God without blemish and without spot," and adds, "He did no sin." Paul: "He knew no sin." And to make a threefold cord of apostolic testimony, John: "Jesus Christ the Righteous," and affirms: "In Him was no sin." Then strangers and foes corroborate what His friends affirm. Herod, Pilate, Pilate's wife, the thief on the right hand, the centurion at the foot of the Cross, attest His blamelessness.

Of this class of witnesses, the testimony of Judas the Traitor is the most weighty of all. For Judas spoke as one who had had access into the circle of the Lord's nearest friends. He had seen Him in private as well as in all His conflict with His foes. Had there been so much as one sin or failure in the life of Christ, Judas would have seized upon it as an excuse for His betrayal. It would have been as the balm of life to his accusing conscience, and have saved him from the black despair of eternal doom, which was urging him to the fearful plunge into the abyss. But he could find none, because there was none. Hence the words of Judas recorded in Matthew 27. 4 become one of the brightest testimonies to the sinless walk of Christ among men.

Again, many passages show the Lord's own consciousness of having done the will of the Father at all times, which we do not even refer to now. But we remind our readers of that word of challenge to His foes: "Which among you convinceth Me of sin?" The force of this question lies in the fact that the Lord knew that many were present who had known Him from His youth up. Whatever their prejudice might incline them to say that was untrue, He knew that not one of them could so wield the weapons of truth against Him as to be able to bring sin home to His conscience. His conscience was pure.

It is not superfluous to mention the crowning testimony of all to the unsullied purity of Christ: The Father's. This is threefold. At His baptism, sealing the previous thirty

years of His private life as Boy and Man at Nazareth. "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." At the Transfiguration, sealing His official life, and by the Resurrection, sealing His obedience unto death for sinners.

This purity of heart and life in Christ was not merely childish innocence, or ceremonial purity. It was the perfect purity of One Who had a view of sin very close at hand, but had unceasingly resisted, and had been at every point victorious. What we have presented to us in the life of Christ is one harmonious continuity of the moral and spiritual life of a perfect Man. For this must be counted as an attribute of His manhood as distinct from His Divinity, for "God cannot be tempted of evil." Again, when He speaks of doing the Father's Will, it was not out of a spirit of self-righteousness or spiritual pride. And when He challenged His enemies it was not the product of a heart which was sinful, but did not know it, but the outcome of a consciousness of always having done that which was pleasing in God's sight.

We have now to consider

HIS DIVINITY.

This perfect Man is infinitely more than man. He is not only partaker of true and unsullied human nature, He is God as well as Man. He had personal pre-existence and deity, and was known before He became flesh as "The Word," "the Wisdom," and "the Son of God." "God," "the Lord," "the Most High," "the Ancient of Days," "Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." Afterwards as "Immanuel," to Whom belongs the image, the likeness, the form, the effulgence, the glory and the nature of the Father, and in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; Whom the apostles acknowledged as God, and Lord, and King, the only Ruler, and themselves His slaves.

Without referring to the Gospel by John, we gather from the other gospels that He calls Himself Lord; claims a

higher love than that given to father and mother, and affirms that all things had been delivered into His hands of the Father. His word, He said, will remain for ever ; He commands forgiveness of sins to be preached in His name ; and puts Himself on the same platform of authority and being as the Father and the Holy Spirit. All which, and much more of the same kind, shows that the Lord Jesus knew Himself to be, and wished others to recognize Him as something infinitely more than man, or merely the most excellent of men, however high his office as prophet, priest or King might be. For, indeed, for any mere man to assume such attributes would be blasphemous.

W. SAVIGAR.

(To be continued.)

THE PRESENT NEED.

“ My God shall fulfil every need of yours, according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus,” were the words of the Spirit of Truth through the inspired apostle of old to the saints, with the overseers and the deacons, of the church of God in Philippi (Phil. 4. 19). This is the matter that ever concerns the heart and hand of God toward His loved and His own, their need ; and in the comforting assurance that He knoweth our need, spiritually and temporarily, and has pledged His word to supply the same, we may rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.

The Lord’s messenger speaking in the Lord’s message, was one means whereby the need of God’s people was supplied in the past ; albeit, oftentimes, these neither wanted the messenger nor the message. Still it was not what they wanted, but what they needed, that God considered and supplied. Manifestly there never was a greater need of the truth of God, and the ministry of the same, by the Lord’s messenger speaking in the Lord’s message, than at the present time. And yet there never perhaps

were indications so manifest and clear that the truth is not wanted by the great majority, for these turn away their ears from the truth ; thus evidencing that the time, concerning which the Spirit through the apostle spake, has come upon us. Apostasy from the truth of God characterizes the present time.

Of a similar time in the past dispensation, the Book of Malachi presents a clear and a full view ; and in order to learn from the past for the present we desire to consider some matters relative thereto.

Those were times and circumstances in which the honour which was due to Jehovah, whether as a Father, or a Master, was little acknowledged or heeded. Hence, the words of Jehovah, through His messenger speaking in His message : " A son honoureth his father, and a servant a master : if then I be a Father, where is Mine honour ? and if I be a Master, where is My fear ? saith Jehovah of Hosts unto you, O priests, that despise My name " (Malachi 1. 6). What an appeal ! Where is Mine honour, as a Father ; where is My fear, as a Master ?

" When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt," said Jehovah elsewhere (Hosea 11. 1). For purposes and expectations He had, He wrought for them and with them, and brought them unto Himself, into the wilderness, and into the land ; it seems all to end in thwarted purposes and blighted hopes, as far as receiving from them as a nation the portion which was His due. A son honoureth his father ; but, as far as Israel as a son, to Jehovah as a Father, was concerned, He seems to plead in vain, " Where is Mine honour ? "

But of One, another Son, even the Son of God, from the bosom of the Father, it was otherwise. Over Him the Father's heart rejoiced ; concerning Him the Father could speak His appreciation and approval, " This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased," for He it was Who could say, " I honour My Father," by Whom His will was done

on the earth, in Whom every purpose of God had its fulfilment, and every hope of God had its realization. He it is Who is now in the Father's presence, crowned with glory and honour, for in His experience it hath been fulfilled, "them that honour Me, I will honour." What an example for us to consider, to learn from, and to imitate!

The Lord's message to Israel through Malachi in a past day reveals the things wherewith His honour was associated, as He speaks, namely, "Mine Altar," chapter 1. verse 7; "Mine Ordinances," chapter 3. verse 7; "Mine House," chapter 3. verse 10. A right and proper attitude toward these, and a due regard to these was the manner in which they might honour Jehovah of old; while, on the other hand, the neglect of these, and failure in the fulfilment of their responsibilities toward these, were to His dishonour, as well as His displeasure.

"Mine Altar." This was ever the answering response, when Jehovah's claims were acknowledged. From the sacrifices offered thereon according to His appointment, He smelled a sweet savour of rest, and found pleasure therein, as pointing forward to the great Antitype and Answer to all such, even His beloved Son, "Who gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell." Alas! the condition of heart of this people, as attested in offering the blind and lame and sick, shewed how far they were from appreciating either the coming One or what was due to the character of Jehovah, the great King, Whose name was great; but in so doing they profaned it.

What are the Altar claims to His redeemed to-day? What are they to each of us? We hear the exhortation, in God's message through His messenger, "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. And be not fashioned according to this world" (Rom. 12. 1). Have such claims been acknow-

ledged? Do we present our bodies a living sacrifice, in the recognition of Whose we are and Whom we serve? Does God get that proportion of our time and attention, our service and means, that is His due? Is it not lamentably true that it is the blind and lame and sick that are offered to Him to-day? Well may He plead, *Where is Mine honour?* as His Altar claims are so sadly disregarded.

Then again, "Mine Ordinances." A certain manner of response to these is expressed in those words, "Ye have turned aside from Mine ordinances, and have not kept them"; and again, "Ye have said, It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and walked mournfully before Jehovah of hosts," chapter 3. verse 14. Thus it seems to be a question of present profit that is considered. It does not seem to pay. Can it be that the day of reckoning and reward is so lost sight of, and present advantage only considered, that we turn aside from His ordinances? Is this the value that is set upon His ordinances? the measure of our appreciation of His honour that is associated with steadfast continuance in the same?

But is this the root cause? No, there is another and a deeper, although perhaps we know it not, or at best are unwilling to own it. His word, "Return unto Me," reveals it. The turning aside from His ordinances only evidences the greater evil of departure from the Living God Who gave them. Is there in any of us such an evil heart of unbelief? If so, will not His gracious pleading have weight and effect, "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you"? His honour is involved and affected by return to His ordinances, and although it may mean and entail loss here, it will assuredly yield profit at the judgment-seat of Christ.

Last, but not least, we find the privilege and opportunity of honouring Jehovah associated with His House. The day of such blessed opportunity is not past, even although it is the day of small things; and in answering response thereto, and in the recognition of the respon-

sibilities thereof, Jehovah may find the portion and pleasure which He seeks.

He pleads, "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine House, and prove Me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts," chapter 3. verse 10. Have we thus proved Him, and has He proved faithless? Is the blessing of Jehovah lacking? Instead of His blessing, is there barrenness, dearth and death? If so, is there not a cause, and may it not be found here: "Because of His House that lieth waste," and because of the withholding of our substance? Are not His words as true to-day as ever:

"Honour Jehovah with thy substance,
 And with the first fruits of thine increase:
 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty,
 And thy vats shall overflow with new wine" (Prov. 3. 9)?

These are matters of vital and practical importance, in association with good and becoming behaviour in the House of God, and they demand our earnest attention in the light of Jehovah's plea and claim, "Where is Mine honour!" The times we here review, as presented in the book of Malachi, while sad and sorrowful, and dark and difficult, yet afford very precious and abundant opportunities of serving and honouring Jehovah

TO ALL WHO FEAR HIM,

and of such we now speak.

"Then they that feared Jehovah spake one with another, and Jehovah hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared Jehovah and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith Jehovah of hosts, in the day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure," chapter 3. verses 16, 17. "They that feared Jehovah" are surely those who served Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; to them the matters of His Altar, His Ordinances, and His House, are of vital im-

portance ; in maintaining a due regard for these and fulfilment of them for the honour of Jehovah they win His approval, and a promise of honourable mention and reward in a day yet to come, on the Divine principle, "Them that honour Me, I will honour." To such was likewise given the cheer of the speedy realization of the hope of their hearts, in those words, "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings," chapter 4. 2, in the light of which they were taught to serve and wait.

These things should surely have a special voice to us, upon whom the ends of the ages are come ; around whom the darkness of this apostate night is deepening, wherein are characteristics so similar to those of the past, of indifference to the Lord's honour and claims. Are we of such, or are we of those to whom His honour is of the highest importance, and of first consideration ? Then the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, will be valued and held dear to our hearts, and regarded as precious opportunities of serving and honouring Him.

Thus may we win His appreciation as expressed in those words, "I know Thy works. . . and thou holdest fast My Name, and didst not deny My Faith," and in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ prove the truth and fulfilment of the word, "Them that honour Me, I will honour." "I come quickly : hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown" (Rev. 3. 11).

DAVID SMITH.

For Youngest Believers.

WHOLE-HEARTEDNESS.

“ THERE is therefore now

NO CONDEMNATION

to them that are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8. 1.)

“ Neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8. 38, 39.) Amidst all our failures how comforting it is to know that having through faith in Christ Jesus become children of God, we each shall “ Now a child for ever be,” that from Him Who loved us and loves us still we shall know

NO SEPARATION !

These eternal blessings that have become ours, not because of any work of righteousness which we ourselves did but because of His mercy, can only be rightly enjoyed when they lead us to respond to the Lord’s desire concerning us as revealed in Romans 12. 1 :—“ 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.” This is whole-heartedness for God. A living sacrifice. Not like Ananias and Sapphira who, whilst pretending to have

NO RESERVATION,

were yet keeping back part of the price, which brought down upon them quick judgment from God. “ Whom also I serve,” are the words that God would ever have us able to add to the confession “ Whose I am.” See Acts 27. 23. How it rejoiced the heart of God to look down upon Caleb, who followed Him fully, unlike the many of Israel around,

who were as smoke in His eyes! (Num. 14. Pro. 10, 26.) But again we exhort our readers to look off unto Jesus, for in Him we see the greatest example, even a perfect example, of whole-heartedness to God.

“ Faithful amidst unfaithfulness,
Midst darkness only light,
Thou didst Thy Father’s name confess,
And in His will delight.”

May we seek to be more like Him in this.

SAVIOUR.

A STUDY OF THE USE OF THE WORD.

THE word Saviour in the New Testament is sometimes applied to God the Father and elsewhere to the Lord Jesus Christ. The following are the occurrences:—

1. GOD THE FATHER AS THE SAVIOUR.

Luke 1. 47. My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

1 Tim. 1. 1. Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Saviour and Christ Jesus our hope.

1 Tim. 2. 3. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.

1 Tim. 4. 10. We have our hope set on the Living God Who is the Saviour of all men.

Titus 1. 3. The message wherewith I was intrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour.

Titus 2. 10. Showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Titus 3. 4. The kindness of God our Saviour and His love toward man appeared.

Jude 25. The only God, our Saviour.

2. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOUR.

For Israel and the World.

Luke 2. 11. There is born to you this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.

Acts 5. 31. Him did God exalt with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.

Acts 13. 23. God, according to promise, brought unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.

John 4. 42. This is indeed the Saviour of the World.

1 John 4. 14. The Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

For His People.

Phil. 3. 20. We wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Tim. 1. 10. The appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus.

Titus 1. 4. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour.

Titus 2. 13. Our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Titus 3. 6. The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

2 Peter 1. 1. The righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Pet. 1. 11. The entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Pet. 2. 20. The knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Pet. 3. 2. The commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles.

2 Pet. 3. 18. Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

For the Church, the Body.

Eph. 5. 23. Christ . . . Himself the Saviour of the Body.

The Woman in Her Sphere.

A WOMAN THAT FEARETH JEHOVAH SHE SHALL BE PRAISED.

“AND now, Israel, what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, and to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deut. 10. 12). No half-hearted service here, but with all the heart and with all the soul. If God required this of His chosen people Israel doth He require less of us to-day? of us whom He hath called out of darkness into His marvellous light, redeemed not with corruptible things, with silver and gold, but with precious blood, even the blood of Christ? To such it is written, “Be thou in the fear of Jehovah all the day long.”

Sisters, may our homes and all pertaining thereto be so clean and orderly that those around may know that we fear Jehovah, not with a slavish fear which would keep us from approaching Him, but a filial fear as a child fears to grieve a parent, fear lest we grieve Him by walking in anywise contrary to His Holy mind and will, a fear which will bring us into close communion with Himself.

May the prayer of our hearts be, “Shew me Thy way, O Jehovah; teach me Thy path. Guide me in Thy truth and teach me” (Ps. 25. 4, 5); and knowing His ways may we walk therein to the glory of His name, worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing.

“The fear of Jehovah is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death” (Prov. 14. 27). Let us seek grace from our God to depart from the snares of death and to walk in the path of life, difficult though the path may be; to esteem all His precepts concerning all things to be right and to hate every false way. Jehovah taketh pleasure in them that fear Him.

We have a very precious proof of this (Mal. 3. 16): “Then they that feared Jehovah spake one with another.” Undoubtedly they spake of Him, “for Jehovah hearkened and

heard." (Is our conversation such as we would care for the Lord to hear?). "And a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared Jehovah, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith Jehovah of hosts, in the day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure." "Oh fear Jehovah, ye His saints: there is no want to them that fear Him" (Ps. 34. 9). No want! satisfied with self? ah no! never, but looking away from self unto Him Who is at the right hand of God we shall be satisfied in Him, apart from Whom there is no real satisfaction.

"The fear of Jehovah tendeth to life, and he that hath it shall abide satisfied." Let us therefore make it our aim to be well-pleasing unto Him, proving what is well-pleasing unto Him and having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

To fear the Lord, to walk in all His ways—no room for self-will; and to love Him and to serve Him with all the heart and with all the soul; growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; may these be our desires; yea that whatsoever we do, may be done to the glory of God. The Lord Jesus said "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to accomplish His work," and at His journey's end He could say "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do."

NOTE.

The contributors to "The Woman in Her Sphere," as well as all others, are earnestly requested not to forget (as they very often do) to send with each communication full name and address, and only to write on one side of the paper. Many letters are put aside because these matters are not attended to.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 20. Acts 15. 36-39.

THE SEPARATION OF PAUL AND BARNABAS.

From GLASGOW. Wherever we have a unity that is of God it will be the endeavour of the adversary to destroy the Divine link.

And here, though the cause was apparently trifling, yet at least to Barnabas the results were far-reaching in their effects.

For, like a Moses, he lost the privilege of taking a foremost place and leading on the people of God in the ways which be in Christ. He does not appear to have turned out of the way altogether, though very little is said as to his activities and usefulness (see 1 Cor. 9. 6).

An indiscretion on the part of a youth like John Mark could be overlooked, after due repentance and sorrow; but not so on that of a man of experience like Barnabas.

How true the proverb that "As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place" (Prov. 27. 8).

From BELFAST. The decrees had been delivered, still Paul and Barnabas continued for some time in Antioch, teaching and preaching.

Then Paul suggests to Barnabas that a return visit should be made through all the cities wherein they had proclaimed the Word of the Lord. To this Barnabas was quite agreeable, but he desired to take with him his cousin John Mark. Now, on a former occasion, when at Perga, John had deserted and gone home, so when Barnabas made his desire known, Paul instantly objected to the taking of John, and rightly too, because it is a very serious matter indeed to turn back after once putting the hand to the plough.

One looking back is not fit for the kingdom of God, let alone one going back being fit for a position of service in the kingdom.

Yet how beautifully the characteristic of the dispensation is displayed by the messages relating to John from Paul's pen many years later (see Col. 4. 10, and 2 Tim. 4. 11). Truly, John Mark recovered himself, and it was for this end that Paul used severity.

Well, so sharp was the contention between Paul and Barnabas, that they severed their yoke as co-workers, and Barnabas, taking Mark, sailed for Cyprus, probably his native country.

Their work there has not been recorded for us by God. 'Tis the voice of silence! Who hears?

From BRIGHTON. Sincere care in the heart of Paul manifests itself in the proposal to visit the brethren in every city where he and Barnabas had preached, and whilst it is sad that a contention so sharp as to cause a parting arose, it seems only fitting that Paul should not care to have Mark with them, in view of his turning back before (Acts 13. 13). On the other hand, the relationship between Barnabas and Mark would no doubt influence Barnabas. However that may be we have the sad record that they were parted asunder who had been separated unto the work. Barnabas sailed away home to Cyprus taking with him Mark, but Paul chose Silas and went forth. It is evident that the separation of Barnabas from Paul was not of a lasting character, for 1 Corinthians 9. 6 shows Paul linking himself with Barnabas as a joint worker, and again in Colossians 4. 10, Paul speaks of Mark as being a fellow worker unto the kingdom of God and as one of a few who had been a comfort unto him. When others had forsaken him Mark remained, as see 2 Timothy 4. 11 (compare Philemon 2. 4).

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 19.

From BLACKBURN. In considering this Psalm we have

looked at it in two sections, believing that there is a distinct division at verse 6.

The work of God as Creator seems to be the subject of the first part. How the Psalmist thought of this seems to be fully borne out in the eighth Psalm, wherein admiration is behind the words, "When I consider." We have thought that David might have written this nineteenth Psalm when musing upon the handiwork of the Creator during the loneliness of the long nights when looking after the sheep, and seeing the sun during the day he would realize what verse 3 says; but from the second part we think that the language thereof is connected with a later date in his own life than that prior to his leaving the sheep in the wilderness, so we conclude it was written subsequent to his shepherd-boy days.

Now as to the second part. Quite different is the subject matter of this part, and yet very close is the connexion, though apparently in contrast. Spirituality is dealt with here, the Spiritual Life of the inner man resident in a tent of clay. There is much activity, but it is hidden (though not from God). The scene of operation is in a sphere beyond the point where human vision penetrates. Ill-health at times becomes characteristic of the inner man (we do not say from what source) and restoration is really needed, and such is found in Jehovah's law; so we understand the seventh verse of this Psalm. Psalm 119. contains much help unto the understanding of verses 7, 8 and 9. Verse 10 contains the estimation of David of Jehovah's judgments, and, may we not also say, of "the fear," "the commandment," "the precepts," "the testimony" and that which is "the law." To taste of the Lord (see Psa. 34. 8) was to him to enjoy something far greater in sweetness than honey or honey dropped from the honeycomb (see R.V. margin) which would soon pass, but not so these eternal verities upon which his soul fed. The effect of this would be his being acceptable unto Jehovah. Reviewing his own

condition (verses 12 and 13) he sees the susceptibility prevalent unto his coming under a mighty retarding influence ; this touches his heart and he speaks and prays that he may be found perfect by Jehovah. What a lesson ! What an example ! Words of mouth are one thing but heart meditation is quite another : sometimes they are found in agreement and sometimes it is otherwise. It has been said that words are vehicles to convey thought. The burden of the last verse is that Jehovah might be pleased with the words and meditation of His servant. " O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer " are words very full of beautiful meaning and a fitting conclusion of the Psalm which one at one of our Corner Meetings referred to as " a little gem."

In part one the work of a Creator's hand declares His glory and in the second part we see that there should be a declaration of God's glory by the Spiritual man in regard to the things enumerated in verses 7, 8 and 9 ; but the words (in the first part) " no speech nor language, their voice cannot be heard," may become true of us as men in the second part of this Psalm in a way not to be desired, for we may fail to give Him the glory due unto His Name (see Psalm 29.)

A Question.—Please see verse 12. Who is the " discerner ? " Is he the same one as the one with the hidden faults ?

From BLACKRIDGE. In verse 1 we see that which is incessantly declaring the glory and handiwork of God, and in verse 2, day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge.

Surely there is no place on the inhabited earth where these are not, and where they are, they forget not to bear testimony unto men of the God Who created them.

In the second day God made a firmament and divided the waters above from the waters below, and therein (on the fourth day) He set the sun, the moon, and the stars also.

The Psalm we are looking at says, "In them (the heavens) He hath made a tabernacle for the sun."

Because of these which He set in the firmament we have day unto day speaking, night unto night showing knowledge, without either voice or language.

For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity, and so on (Rom. 1. 20-23).

Thus they speak with a purpose in view, that fallen man might seek after God if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us (Acts 17. 27).

Alas, however, their speakings have but little audience from man, and instead of being led to the God of the heavens and so on, some are so much taken up with finding the nature, motion, distance of the heavenly bodies and many more things in this line, that the God Who made them is entirely forgotten, and the words of the created things have little or no effect upon them. Such, however, is Satan's blinding way.

Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun (Eccles. 11. 7).

We who are Christ's and thus God's should rejoice in all His glorious works such as these.

If then by these His works He speaks to all and sundry, He has unto His own unfolded Himself in a much more marked degree and spoken more fully, that we might honour Him not as the Creator only but as the covenant-keeping Jehovah Who as such gave a Law to be kept. By His Law then He hath spoken also.

Space forbids making any further comment, but God has shown the result these will have on those who treasure them more than fine gold, and to whose taste they are sweeter than the droppings of the honeycomb.

Nothing more pleasant to the taste than the droppings of

the honeycomb, and nothing we could loathe more if we were getting too much, but God will see that too much of the aforementioned we do not get, but just sufficient to whet our appetite for more.

There is warning therein and reward if kept. May we at no time go against their light and sin presumptuously, but rather see to it that the words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart are always acceptable in His sight Who is our Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.

Psalm 119.

THE STATUTES.

From GREENOCK, The Statutes of Jehovah as presented to us in Psalm 119. show a beautiful word picture. The number of occurrences is twenty-two. These divide themselves into three sets. The first set ends at verse 71. The second set ends at verse 171. The third set is interwoven with the first and second.

The first ends with the expression, "That I might learn Thy statutes."

The second ends with—"Thou *teachest* me Thy statutes." What a wonderful teacher! What a testing school to learn in, but withal how good!

The third set is all alike; "Teach me Thy statutes," except verse 33, adding, "*the way of Thy statutes.*"

Like the precepts and judgments, the statutes show a degree of progress as we go through the psalm.

SET I.

VERSE.

ALEPH.

5. Oh, that my ways were established.
To observe Thy statutes.
8. I will observe Thy statutes.

SET III.

BETH.

12. Teach me Thy statutes.
16. I will delight myself in Thy statutes.

GIMEL.

23. Thy servant did meditate in Thy statutes.

DALETH.

26. Teach me Thy statutes.

- VERSE. HE. Teach me, O Jehovah,
the way of Thy statutes.
33. VAU.
48. And I will meditate in Thy statutes.
- ZAIN.
54. Thy statutes have been my songs.
- CHETH. Teach me Thy statutes.
- TETH. Teach me Thy statutes.
68. Teach me Thy statutes.
71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted ;
That I might learn Thy statutes.*
- SET II.
- JOD.
80. Let my heart be perfect in Thy statutes.
- KAPH.
83. Yet do I not forget Thy statutes.
- NUN.
112. I have inclined mine heart to perform Thy statutes,
For ever, even unto the end.
- SAMECH.
117. Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe,
And shall have respect unto Thy statutes continually.
118. Thou hast set at nought all them that err from Thy statutes.
- AIN.
124. And teach me Thy statutes.
- PE.
135. And teach me Thy statutes.
- QOPH.
145. I will keep Thy statutes.
- RESH.
155. Salvation is far from the wicked ;
For they seek not Thy statutes.
- TAU.
171. Let my lips utter praise ;
For Thou teachest me Thy statutes.

Thus we see a principle upon which God works, clearly exemplified in this second set ; getting the *heart* perfect results in praise from it through the *lips*. God works from the inside, man works from the outside. Man would whitewash but God washes white.

From MANNHEIM. In Deuteronomy 6. 17 is written :
 “Ye shall diligently keep the Commandments of Jehovah
 your God, and His Testimonies and His Statutes, which He
 hath commanded thee.”

Then after being reminded of how they had been brought
 out of Egypt with the Lord's mighty arm and brought in to
 enjoy the promised land and to be a holy people and a
 peculiar people unto God, they are admonished to keep
 the Commandments, Statutes and Judgments.

These things stand out prominently in Psalm 119., showing
 that the psalmist did indeed love His Law, and thus it was
 his meditation all the day (ver. 97) and that it is well for
 them who walk in the Law of the Lord (ver. 1).

This love for Jehovah's Law and exercise therein give
 him that stedfastness which is noticeable in the Psalm.

Look at his behaviour under the chastening of the Lord :
 “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth” and “All
 chastening for the present seemeth to be not joyous but
 grievous, but afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of
 righteousness to them that have been exercised thereby”
 (Heb. 12. 6-11). And how this scripture is fulfilled in him
 we see from Teth.

Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant
 O Jehovah, according unto Thy Word,
 Teach me good judgment and knowledge,
 For I have believed in Thy commandments.
 Before I was afflicted (humbled) I went astray
 But now I observe Thy Word.
 Thou art good and doest good,
 Teach me Thy statutes.
 The proud have forged a lie against me ;
 With my whole heart will I keep Thy precepts.
 Their heart is as fat as grease,
 But I delight in Thy Law.
 It is good for me that I have been afflicted (humbled)
 That I might learn Thy statutes.
 The Law of Thy mouth is better unto me
 Than thousands of gold and silver.

This is abundant fruit,

This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous (1 John 5. 3).

How do the words of the Psalmist agree with this ?

Then shall I not be ashamed

When I look alone on Thy commandments (ver. 6).

With my whole heart have I sought Thee,

O let me not wander from Thy commandments (ver. 10).

I will run the way of Thy commandments

When Thou shalt enlarge my heart (ver. 32).

Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments,

For therein do I delight (ver. 35).

I will delight myself in Thy commandments

Which I have loved (ver. 47).

Therefore I love Thy commandments,

Above gold, yea, above fine gold (ver. 127).

I opened my mouth and panted,

For I longed for Thy commandments (ver. 131).

Thus we find all his affections bent on the keeping of Jehovah's commandments. The result is that he is found to be meditating in His precepts.

The Precepts seem to be a more particular unfolding of God's will.

Compare verses 10, 32, 35, 166, 176,

O let me not wander from Thy commandments.

I will run the way of Thy commandments.

Make me to go in the way of Thy commandments.

I have done Thy commandments.

For I do not forget Thy commandments,

showing necessity,

with verses 15, 27, 40, 45, 63, 83, 104, 134, 173, which show rather an attainment.

I will meditate in Thy precepts

And have respect unto Thy ways.

Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts.

Behold I have longed for Thy precepts.

I have sought Thy precepts.

I am a companion of them that observe Thy precepts.

I will never forget Thy precepts.

Through Thy precepts I get understanding,

Therefore I hate every false way.

Redeem me from the oppression of man.

So will I observe Thy precepts.

I have chosen Thy precepts.

THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE FLOCK.

AMID the strife of tongues to-day,
 'Tis well to hear what God would say
 Concerning His redeemed ;
 The way in which He'd have them go,
 While pilgrims here on earth below,
 From sinful pleasures weaned.

His precious word to us explains,
 How He in mercy burst the chains
 Of Pharaoh's galling yoke ;
 Thus setting free the chosen seed,
 In that their hour of deepest need,
 The tyrant's power He broke.

The Red Sea waters now divide,
 And soon upon the other side,
 Jehovah's praise they sing ;
 What shouts of victory ascend
 To Him, Who did assistance lend,
 And free salvation bring.

The will of God is now made known,
 That He desireth from His Own
 A place wherein to dwell ;
 A House wherein He might be praised,
 By His Divine direction raised,
 His glories forth to tell.

With willing hearts the people brought
 The offerings Jehovah sought,
 The blessings He had given ;
 Thus they obeyed the Lord's command,
 In off'ring with a willing hand
 The gifts bestowed by Heaven.

NEEDED TRUTH.

The work of building they begin,
According to the pattern
 Designed by Heaven's Lord.
By skilful hands 'tis carried through,
And now complete 'tis brought to view,
 According to His word.

The Tabernacle now upreared,
Jehovah's presence then appeared
 Upon His dwelling-place ;
His wish and will have been obeyed,
And now His presence is displayed,
 In condescending grace.

Worship and praise ascend to Him,
And sacrifices for their sin,
 His character demands ;
His portion finds He, in His Own,
A portion found in them alone,
 Not found in other lands.

The Holy Spirit thus portrays
The House of God in early days,
 In no uncertain way ;
His witness to the nations round,
That He amongst His own had found
 A place wherein to stay.

In later times we'd seek to learn,
And in God's Holy Word discern
 His will for us to-day ;
His will, not ours, we'd seek to know,
While pilgrims here on earth below,
 Lest we should go astray.

The day of Pentecost had come,
When, gathered in the upper room,
 We find the faithful few ;

A loyal-hearted little band,
Obedient to the Lord's command,
 With heart and purpose true.

In living power the Spirit came,
And from their hearts burst forth a flame
 No power on earth could stay ;
The populace were sore amazed,
And through the city soon there blazed
 The tidings of the day.

The voice of Peter then was heard,
Explaining with convicting word,
 This miracle of heaven ;
Repent ! and be baptized, he cried,
Ye who the Son of God denied,
 Whose life for you was given.

Pricked in their hearts, they now believe,
Three thousand souls at once receive
 Remission of their guilt ;
Although they had the Lord denied,
And on the Cross Him crucified,
 His blood for them was spilt.

Now note the order to us given,
For order is the law of Heaven,
 None can this truth deny ;
'Tis unimportant, some may say,
And for themselves devise a way
 Their wills to gratify.

The Word of God is first believed,
And having thus the Christ received,
 His will they now obey ;
Baptized in water, in His Name,
His lordship, power, they thus proclaim,
 In God's appointed way.

Linked up with God's assembly next,
'Tis clearly seen their minds were fixed,
The will of God to do.
Their hearts with gratitude were filled,
Their lives, the Grace of God had thrilled,
And brought their faith to view.

The Apostles' teaching they receive,
And stedfastly in it believe,
With singleness of heart ;
The Fellowship, the Feast divine,
Together with the Prayers combine
To exercise their heart.

The Fellowship soon spread abroad,
And thus a Dwelling Place for God
Is formed amongst His Own ;
A House prepared, and built of God,
Composed of those who own the Lord,
His word, and will alone.

God's will remains unchanged to-day,
And nothing we can do or say
Can alter His design ;
Yea, heaven and earth may pass away,
But God declares His word will stay,
Enduring for all time.

Let us who claim this honoured place,
Seek from our God the needed grace
To keep us in His ways ;
Thus shall we glorify His name,
His faithfulness indeed proclaim,
In these our pilgrim days.

OBEDIENCE.

EXODUS 19. deals with a subject second to none in importance, namely "obedience," as it is expressed in 1 Peter 1., where allusion is evidently made to this very matter, "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Ere God inculcates the necessity of obedience He sends Moses to Israel with a message reminding them of what He had done for them (*v.* 4), "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself." Thus are they reminded how that God distinguished them from the Egyptians; dealing with them in blessing while dealing with those in judgment and thereby making them His own as 1 Peter 1. expresses it: "Ye are a chosen (or elect) generation," which word casts us back upon verse 2 of chapter 1. of the same epistle, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Thus in absolute grace God had acted toward them and for them, separating them from the Egyptians, and then bringing them to Himself. So far the actions are His, the fruit of His own purpose. But we are led to see that this was but introductory to a condition where responsibility was laid upon the people themselves and where certain blessings were made dependent upon their obedience. So we note with care the wording of verse 5, "Now therefore if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be," and so forth. Can words be more explicit, more easily understood than these? Is it not most evident that whatever follows is dependent upon their response to the revealed will of God?

It is a far too common practice to quote scriptures referring to the blessings of believers without taking in the whole scope of the context, which would probably show that such blessings were set forth as conditional on something to be found in the believers themselves. Certainly, there are blessings secured to us in Christ, just as in the scripture

before us this people were an "elect generation" by God's own act, but in those things relating to the earth and our standing here it will be observed that certain conditions are always attached to the promises.

All such are really summed up and fulfilled in the word "*Obedience.*" What a word is this indeed! It suggests that the all-wise God has been pleased to make known to man His perfect will; and what then can man do? Can he revise or modify what God has said? Is man omniscient that he should instruct God? Nay! Man is not called upon to legislate, it is not for him to lay down the law, but it is for him to receive God's word in meekness and do it. How sad to consider that man has not been content with this, but has altered and revised God's revealed will even from the beginning when in the garden the suggestion of the tempter was entertained. But while the world has turned aside and is going its own way, God would have an elect generation (who, having been chosen by and brought to Himself, are separated from that world) to render to Him an obedience He cannot elsewhere obtain.

Obedience then, is absolutely indispensable in any people if they are to be God's people. To maintain such relationship, either they must obey or God must modify His requirements, which latter we know is impossible. Consequently, if amongst such people there is a perverse spirit of disobedience it can only result in their rejection by God.

In the case before us in Exodus 19. we stand at the beginning of Israel's relation to God as His people. For Him to accept them as such is dependent upon their acceptance of the one great condition He has laid down, "*Obedience.*" Have they the will to obey His word and keep His covenant? Then they shall be (1) "a peculiar treasure unto Me." All the earth is His, but they shall occupy a unique place, they shall be specially set apart for Him, they shall be His in a peculiar sense, reminding one of the word in Malachi, "and they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I

make up My jewels (peculiar treasure), and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Oh, what delight would God find in His people! "The Lord's portion is His people." Let us try to understand and appreciate the fulness of meaning in those words, "a peculiar treasure unto Me."

(2). "A kingdom of priests unto Me." This would speak of approach to God and access as priests, and of the privilege of offering acceptable sacrifices. This we understand Israel was at the first, not the less so because one tribe was taken from the other tribes, and one family from that tribe, for in all that either the tribe of Levi did or Aaron's family did, they did only act on behalf of the people. What an exalted privilege was this!

(3). "A holy nation unto Me." The nations around were unclean and abominable, worshippers of idols and utterly corrupt in all their ways. God could find no pleasure in them, but it was His desire that He might be able to come to His people and find a holy people, a clean people, even as that word says, "I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be My people." What a relief (may we not say) for God to turn away from the nations and their pollutions and to come amongst a clean, a sanctified people, with what pleasure will He there dwell and walk.

Before proceeding, let us ponder the fact that the Spirit of God by the Apostle Peter has taken up this scripture almost word for word as possessing an application for this dispensation. So 1 Peter 2. verse 9 says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," applying such words to the little flock throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, and then he proceeds with soul-stirring words of exhortation: "I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul."

~ Moses conveys God's message to the people. He reminds

them (1) of what God had done, and (2) he lays before them the conditions upon which they may become a peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.

To those conditions they solemnly consent in the words, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

Then the ten words applicable to them in that time are set forth—words which might profitably engage our attention, for we also have obligations to fulfil toward God and man as the New Testament Scriptures abundantly testify.

Passing on to chapter 24, we find Moses again laying before the people all the words of the law and all the judgments, and receiving their consent thereto. Nothing is hurried or rushed through. *Everything is performed with the greatest deliberation, and the people are given ample time and opportunity for reflection.* Then a further stage is reached by Moses committing all these words to writing and forming the Book of the Law.

All things are now ready for the grand and impressive ceremony of the making of the covenant whereby this people are accepted by God as His people, and they on their part accept the obligation of obeying the commandments of God which were holy and just and good. So also are we exhorted to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

First Moses reared an altar—that altar was for God and set forth, together with the sacrifices of burnt offerings and peace offerings, the only possible way by which God could find satisfaction. Man at his best is imperfect, and nothing of obedience which can be rendered will satisfy God's most holy character. So even then ere the covenant, dependent on obedience on the people's part is made, we have clearly indicated the great gospel truth that Christ and His sacrifice can alone furnish what God is seeking. Nevertheless, this fact cannot and does not relieve from responsibility to conform our ways to God's revealed will.

Then beside the altar we have twelve pillars reared up.

These spoke of Israel, in twelve tribes, who there stood accepting the obligation of obedience, and these twelve stones remained as unchanging witnesses to that fact.

The Book of the Law is brought forward, and all the words therein written are read solemnly in the hearing of all. To this they make a further and final profession of acceptance. Nothing now remains but by means of the blood of sprinkling to bring God and man together in this covenant. Death was necessary, for the simple reason that sin stood between God and man, preventing a coming together; no covenant was possible (even a covenant of words) unless this obstacle were overcome. Therefore the blood of a victim, typical of Christ—Who in the end of the ages should appear to put sin away—was necessary. The altar of God receives one half of the blood, so binding the covenant to Godward, and the remainder of the blood is sprinkled on the book and the people, binding them to their part of the covenant. The victim had died to make such covenant possible, consequently the blood of that victim sprinkled upon them, bound them in a solemn manner not to make that death valueless by any disobedience on their part.

The people now go forward as God's peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. We need not now consider how soon they disappointed their own anticipations by their disobedience and perverseness.

May we now again record the fact that the Apostle Peter in his first letter speaks of this very scene, and applies it to the people to whom he writes? We may thus see that all the truth therein suggested may and should have a very solemn voice for ourselves. We are not oblivious of the fact that God's people in this dispensation have departed from God, and have forfeited those titles of which 1 Peter speaks. But we also know that even as in Israel's case, God gave gracious reviving on due repentance being shown, so in these days He does the same, putting it in our power, "after so long a time," if we will hear His voice, to occupy

an analogous position, and then with earnestness of purpose to set ourselves to the observance of all things whatsoever He has commanded. The blood of the new covenant has been shed and sprinkled, and does not this constitute a weighty and solemn reason why we should render obedience? If we are indifferent to His will, what does that indicate? Surely that we only see in the death of Christ what Israel saw in the passover lamb—a salvation from judgment, without further appreciating the fact that God desired a people in whom He should be glorified, and to bring this about the death of Christ was necessary. Then may our desire be that we also shall be to His glory.

In the foregoing paper we have glanced at the dealings of God with Israel as set forth in Exodus 19. We know what is the subject of chapter 25., even that of God dwelling amongst His people in a suitable habitation. Upon this we do not intend at this time to enter, but only remark that the truth set forth in the earlier chapters necessarily preceded chapter 25., even as the truth of the spiritual house in 1 Peter 2. 5 is preceded by a declaration of a condition in the saints necessary before such spiritual house could fittingly be spoken of.

The writer could desire that the weighty matters presented in this portion might serve as material for brethren gifted to exhort to press home upon the attention of beloved saints. We have need of teaching that the nail be rightly placed, but we need the exhorter to drive it home. May such be forthcoming for the glory of God and the profit of His saints.

S. J. HILL.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

(Continued from page 5.)

HIS SONSHIP.

AGAIN, He frequently calls Himself the Son of God, and by so doing wished those who heard Him to understand thereby not His office, but His person and nature. He does not call Himself the Son because He, the perfect Man, was the Christ, but because from eternity He stood to the Father in a relation of nature and being which could not be better indicated than by the term Son. As we have seen, He ascribed to Himself the natural properties of the Divine Nature. He is, it is true, Son of God physically, morally, and officially, but He means none of these by the application of the term Son to Himself. What He means is that He, Who is by nature God's Own Eternal Son, appeared on earth a Man, and that by His own act; it was not His fate, nor merely that He was appointed to be the Son, but being rich in the possession of all that appertains to the nature and essence of the Godhead, by an act of infinite grace, He placed Himself in the lowly position of a slave.¹ This Sonship of which He speaks did not begin at the incarnation, nor yet at the resurrection, for at the time He used this term the resurrection had not taken place. His birth from the dead, according to the second Psalm, introduced Him into His official Sonship as the Theocratic King, which could never have been had He not been the Son of God. As to His nature, He brought His Sonship down to earth with Him. It belongs to His Godhead and exists eternally. "Before Abraham was, I am."

HIS DIVINE-HUMAN PERSONALITY.

By appearing in flesh the Only-Begotten of the Father becomes that which He was not before by nature, and a new personality is brought into existence, a personality which

¹ Phil. 2. 7.

combines the Divine and human nature in one. In consequence of this personal union, the Divine and human natures of Christ become henceforth inseparable. This unity of the Divine and human in one person began at the moment "the Word became flesh," and once begun, it ceased not through the whole life of Christ on earth—and it continues unchangeable now and for ever. There is now a Divine-human person in the presence of God. When the Son of God took humanity upon Him, it must not be supposed that His Divine nature became sunk in the human, so as to change Him into a mere man. But there are not two Christs, one Divine and the other human, but one Divine-human Christ, possessing all that belongs to God on the one hand, and all that appertains to man on the other. He did not part with His Godhead when He became flesh. His possession of the Divine attributes remained unchanged. He ever remained "The Word," though the manifestations of His Divine Power were restrained. Nevertheless, by His voluntary self-humiliation, and all that necessarily follows from it, He ceased not for a single moment to be that which He was in His eternal nature and essence, the Son, unchangeably one with the Father.

Thus we have in the Person of Christ a God-man or Divine-human personality. A personality in which neither the Divine appears without the human, nor the human without the Divine. Such is the Person of the Christ. And such a Christ alone could have fulfilled the prophecies; satisfied the needs of mankind; and revealed the highest glory of the Godhead; made manifest the love of the Father; and revealed the grace of the Son. Such an one became us as Mediator, Sacrifice and Priest.

"Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord." "To Him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen."

W. SAVIGAR.

For Youngest Believers.

GOOD SUCCESS.

THE youngest believer ought to desire that good success may be with him in his life and service for God. How thankful he should be that God has made it possible for him to be assured of this! To think of a New Testament scripture in confirmation we might quote 1 Cor. 15. 38: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord."

But the portion of the Word to which especially we now direct attention is Joshua, Chapter 1. Note that here we have Jehovah speaking to Joshua after the death of Moses. Great men, God-given leaders, do not live for ever. Well for us when we recognize the grace of God in them and seek to profit all we can from their ministry. The worker may be removed, but God's desire and purpose are that the work should continue and extend. And we have in Himself and His Word a

DIVINE SUFFICIENCY

for this. Moses is gone, but God abideth! And thus we hear Him speak to Joshua: "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it. . . . As I was with Moses so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. . . . Be strong and very courageous to observe to do according to all the law which Moses, My servant, commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have

GOOD SUCCESS

whithersoever thou goest."

Paul's parting charge to the elders of Ephesus brings before us the same unfailing source of supply for the carrying on of the work of God, even God and the Word of His grace (see Acts 20. 32).

HOME OPPOSITION.

“You are no Christian; you do not say anything,” were the words spoken to a young disciple of the Lord by a relative.

Opposition at home is hard to bear, and there is a danger of the mind of the young disciple being disturbed, and perhaps the confidence in God becomes a little shaky.

At such a time a counteracting force is necessary in order that the young Christian may be kept: something that will be over against the trying circumstances with its opposition.

Perhaps the thought is: “Oh, that Mr. So-and-So were here; how he would explain; but I can say practically nothing.” If you think thus, think further. Better say nothing rather than say anything that cannot be shown from the Scriptures. Say little, read much. So in isolation perhaps: in an unsaved home it may be, or amidst unsaved friends, you can be affected for weal or woe, according to the attitude adopted when you are told “you are not a Christian.” The spiritual part of your being may rise or fall; you may rest in God or become indifferent.

Here, then, is a suggestion as to how spiritual exercise may be practised to our own good under such circumstances. In the quietness of isolation before my God—myself and my God—I turn to 1 John 5. 1, and there I read truly and definitely, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God.” No doubt: no questioning. I believe; therefore I am begotten: I am a Christian.

What have I done when I might perhaps have vindicated myself as I heard what discouraged me? I have simply turned to God’s word. Reading there what is truth, I have been preserved. I rejoice.

The Woman in Her Sphere.

PRAISE HIM ALL YE STARS OF LIGHT.

THE starry canopy above
 Shines down on earth beneath.
 It shines on hearts aglow with love,
 On hearts bowed down with grief.
 And Lord, Thou knowest every star,
 And callest them by name,
 They shine on rich and poor alike,
 For each Thy love's the same.
 Some hearts are weary, Lord, and sad,
 And yet the stars still shine,
 And as we note their splendour, Lord,
 The thought that we are Thine
 Makes care seem less, and weary hearts
 With joy look up and sing,
 The heavens declare Thy glory, Lord,
 And joy to earth they bring.
 The stars they speak their message, Lord,
 Straight down to earth from Thee,
 "My child, look up, remember soon
 Transplanted thou shalt be."
 We thank Thee, Lord, that as the stars
 In glory shine above,
 So they who walk with Thee on earth,
 Will reign with Thee above.
 We often wish that we could pierce
 Those starry heights above,
 And gaze upon the face of Him,
 Whom seeing not we love.
 Soon we shall see Him face to face ;
 The time will not be long,
 When we the trophies of His grace
 Will join the Heavenly song.

“LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.”

YEARS may have passed over our heads in the Christian pathway, we may have drunk deep and long at many a fountain of precious truth, yea, we may have attained a great understanding of the knowledge of the will of God, and after all with Job we must confess,—

“Lo, these are the outskirts of His ways,
And how small a whisper do we hear of Him !” (Job 26. 14).

And yet we must acknowledge that, judging by the writings of many Old Testament saints, their knowledge of the ways of God, their reverence and fear for His Holy Name far excelled the knowledge of many in this day of grace who lay claim to all the blessings that are ours in Christ, and yet shirk the responsibility which such a relationship involves.

Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in consideration of the subject before us, for many there are who would ridicule the idea that God leads into temptation ; some have even suggested that this must be a mistranslation ; all of which to our mind manifests deplorable ignorance of the ways of God.

In considering this matter we have to distinguish between temptation or trial which could be likened unto the refining pot for the silver, and temptation which carries with it the thought of enticement to do evil.

As to the former, it is one of the necessary elements that is conducive to the growth of robust healthy Christians ; not only has it a purging, refining influence within us, but it draws forth from us those very virtues and qualities that are frankincense unto God.

Thus we read, “Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations. . . . Blessed is the man that endureth temptation ” (Jas. 1. 2, 12).

The very fact that we are left in this world as witnesses for our absent Lord will bring down upon our head trial and

persecution; and let it be noted that this only as we bear testimony of the truth and testify to the world that its works are evil (*see* John 7. 7).

But then we must recognize that not only from the world will trial come, for does not God lead us through many strange and trying circumstances in order to test our faith in Himself and to prove whether we have a heart to keep His commandments and to walk in his ways? (*see* Deut. 8. 2).

Such is the pathway in which God has led the faithful of every age. We think, for instance, of men like Abraham, Moses, David, and Daniel, who were tested and tried, and who proved faithful to God in the midst of their suffering and sorrow.

"The Lord trieth the righteous" (Psa. 11. 5).

And yet how blessed is it to know that He will not suffer us to be tempted or tried above that which we are able to bear (*see* 1 Cor. 10. 13). "For the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation" (2 Pet. 2. 9).

Precious as all this is, it does not explain why the Lord Jesus should have taught His disciples thus to pray, "Lead us not into temptation" (Matt. 6. 13); and this again is emphasized by that double warning given during the hour of Gethsemane agonies, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26. 41).

Did the Lord Jesus make a mistake in thus teaching His disciples to pray, or is it inconsistent with the character of God to lead any of His own into temptation?

We are reminded of James 1. 13, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man."

But please notice that there is a difference between God tempting and God leading into temptation, for in our searching after the truth, we are assured that God does not tempt unto evil, though He does lead or bring into temptation.

If, in our onward progress to perfection, we turn aside in heart from God, He will discipline us, as He did Job, David and Peter, with this object in view, even our restoration unto Himself and our salvation from our own ways; this is something different from the trial of one living in sweet harmony and fellowship with God. We would say rather it is the internal discipline of the soul, brought upon us by the hand of a loving chastening Father.

But should all this prove unavailing and the purposes of God be still frustrated, there being developed within us that stubborn, perverse, rebellious spirit so hateful to God, then alas! He will lead us into temptation, not for our salvation, but, if we prove obdurate, unto the entire destruction of our usefulness to God, and we become dishonoured vessels (*see* 2 Tim. 2. 20).

(To be continued.)

A. ANDERSON.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 20. (Acts 15. 36-39.)

THE SEPARATION OF PAUL AND BARNABAS.

FROM JARVIS BROOK. After seeing a peaceful settlement of a doctrinal matter of considerable importance, Paul and Barnabas find themselves in disagreement on a comparatively very small matter and part asunder, Barnabas not only acting out of fellowship with Paul, but also out of fellowship with the brethren, who commended Paul and Silas alone to the grace of the Lord.

There appears to be nothing to account for the presence of John Mark at Antioch at this time. He had once been taken there by Barnabas and Saul, chapter 12. 25, and accompanied them thence to Cyprus, chapter 13. 5; when, however, Saul came to be called Paul, and takes precedence of Barnabas, and with his company sails from Cyprus,

“John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem,” chapter 13. 13. “He went not with them to the work,” is a fitting comment, and Paul surely had good reasons to decline to take him with them for the second visit into Asia. It might be suggested that they divided the sphere of their first visit from Antioch between them, Barnabas going to Cyprus and Paul to Asia.

As to their subsequent relations there may be a question as to whether the incident recorded in Galatians 2. 11–14 was immediately prior to this separation or after (see chapter 18. 22), but in 1 Cor. 9. 6 Paul links Barnabas with himself in such a way as suggests a renewal of fellowship between them; mention is also made of Mark in 2 Tim. 4. 11. The work and need of restoration may still continue, see Galatians 6. 1; 1 Tim. 4. 16.

Section 21. (Acts 15. 40–16. 5.)

THE FIRST JOURNEY OF PAUL WITH SILAS.

FROM BRADFORD. Of the many beautiful things in chapter 16. we would confine ourselves for the present to the first five verses. We shall do well as young men if we pay good heed to the Divine record of Timothy, and seek to do likewise. Timothy was the son of a Jewess which believed, and of him and his mother the Apostle long afterwards wrote, saying, “Having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded in thee also” (2Tim. 1.). There may be corner young men who cannot make a third generation of faithfulness, but they can be Timothys in all else, if they will take adequate pains.

One of the most important things about Timothy was, that he was well reported of by the brethren in his district. He belonged to Derbe (Acts 20. 4), but he was known by those at Lystra and Iconium. His faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. His faith and his works were of such a character as to be noticed with

approval not only by those of his own city, but by those of neighbouring cities also. What a lesson for the Lord's young men to-day! There is an assembly with a very few elder brethren and a few young men also. The elder ones have the care of that assembly, and perhaps there are other weaker assemblies in the district also needing and claiming their assistance. Their ability is taxed to the uttermost; and where are the young men? Alas! rarely, or perhaps never, is their voice heard, or their help given in their own company, that the others may have more opportunity to help neighbouring needy assemblies. Their faithfulness and works are scarcely known in their own city, much less in other places, and the result is that the Lord's people and the Lord's work are deprived of much-needed help. Let us take this to heart, learn what Timothy did, and go ourselves and do likewise (2 Tim. 3. 10-11).

With regard to verse 3; this is admittedly a thing hard to be understood. But whilst not wishing to controvert the point, we would like to say that we incline to the belief that the apostle Paul did not act contrary to the truth of the gospel in circumcising Timothy as is here recorded.

THE RAISING UP OF THE LORD JESUS.

NEEDED TRUTH, Vol 18, No. 180, *Section 18.* (*Acts 12. 24-14. 28, page 155.*)

From B. W. T. With reference to a remark from Bradford that the quotation of Ps. 2. 7 "seemed to speak of the First-Begotten from among the dead," may I suggest that verse 33 of chapter 13. is not speaking of the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, but the raising of Jesus as Son of God in like manner to Moses? Moses prophetically speaks, saying "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee" (Deut. 18. 15, Acts 7. 37). The Resurrection of Jesus is fully announced in verses 30 and 34. The word "again" in the A. V. in Acts 13. 33, is superfluous.

From BRADFORD. We think verses 30-37 of Acts 13. all

refer to the resurrection from among the dead. The conjunction "and" of verse 32, and also of verse 31, shows those verses to be based on verse 30. Moreover the other quotations from Ps. 2. 7 (Heb. 1. 5, and 5. 5) show it is spoken to Him in resurrection. Acts 13. 23, 24 was the fulfilment of Deut. 18. 15.

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 19.

From LONDON, S.W. In the first part of this Psalm (verses 1-6) the psalmist is delighting in the beauties of the book of nature. He sees the moon and the stars through the clear atmosphere of that beautiful land. He see the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course, rising in the eastern sky, and awed by the awful grandeur of creation he utters the words of verse 1: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament (or expanse) showeth His handiwork." For the psalmist does not stop at the works of nature—

"But looks through nature 'up to nature's God."

Sceptics have asked why God does not write across the face of the heavens words proving His existence. But are they not there in words that may be understood by all, even by the poor heathen who have never heard of that other book of God, the Bible, for although the testimony of creation is a silent one (verse 2) appealing to the eye and heart, yet—

"Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words unto the end of the world."—Comp. Rom. 1. 20.

The Apostle Paul quotes this verse in the epistle to the Romans, chapter 10., and shows the universal application of the testimony of creation.

The psalmist suddenly leaves the book of nature in the second part of this Psalm to meditate upon God's written

Word, probably the only other book in his library. He sees how much surer and clearer it is.

“The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul :

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.”

The law of the Lord means the teaching and direction of the Lord. In Psalm 23. we get the words “He restoreth my soul.” Here we see how He does it, it is by His teaching and direction. There seems to be a close connexion between the words, “Making wise the simple,” and the words of Luke 10. 21, “Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes.”

The psalmist now applies the words of God to himself. He says “moreover by them is Thy servant warned,” and then he prays to be kept from hidden or secret faults, and in contrast to this from presumptuous or wilful sins. Should not this be our prayer too ? for we are all prone to sin, and it is only with God’s help that we can overcome it. “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.” The Psalm begins with the works of God in nature, and ends with Him Who made all things ; our Lord and our Redeemer. This Psalm should not only cause us to search the Scriptures more earnestly, but also to “consider the wonderful works of God” more than we do, for it is to be feared that God’s book of nature has not the attention that it should have, even by those who live in closest contact with it.

[This comes from a new correspondent, as the previous one has removed from London. May God’s presence and blessing accompany him.—ED.].

PUNCTUALITY.

We are often reminded by one and another, and that truly, that our God is a God of order. Then should not we be a people of order ?

With this before us let us examine ourselves, especially

in connexion with the Lord's Day morning meeting. I take it that the recognized time for this meeting is fixed to suit the convenience of those in any given assembly, and those who are together in that assembly are responsible to be punctual and to be together at the appointed time. Have we any scripture to guide us as to time and punctuality? Surely. Read Luke 22. 14, "And when the hour was come, He sat down and the apostles with Him." If we read the context we see that this hour referred to was set aside for a particular purpose, and further we may gather that the Lord and the apostles were together, ready to sit down, for when the hour was come, He and the apostles sat down. Compare this beautiful example of punctuality with what we see in our meetings to-day.

Some are always punctual, whereas, alas! others are habitually late. How punctual we all should be, or even before time, if we had an appointment to keep with an earthly potentate or a very esteemed friend.

Then why be late on such an auspicious occasion as the Lord's Day morning meeting? Do we realize that each time we come together to remember the Lord it may be the last? Can we continue to grieve Him any longer with this disorder? It may be that we shall be left here for another year, then let us make an effort, if there be need for any effort, at this, its commencement, to keep time and punctuality; remembering that it was He Who set the example.

REPENTANCE.

QUESTION.—What application has the word repentance to an unsaved sinner, as one is confronted when speaking to sinners with, "Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish" (Luke 13. 3), "Repent ye" (Acts 2. 38, and Rom. 11. 29)?

Does the word apply to unsaved Gentiles, seeing that we are dead in sins?

ANSWER.—Repentance in the case of a sinner is a change

of mind due to the operation of the Holy Spirit of God convicting through the word of God. It is not simply conviction, but the change of mind which may result therefrom, if God gives increase to the seed sown, and which will evidence itself by a change of outward behaviour.

As an illustration of the relationship between conviction and repentance, consider Acts 2. 37, 38. Having heard the preaching of the Crucified One as being both Lord and Christ the hearers are pricked in their hearts (conviction) and ask what they should do. The answer is, "Repent!" Upon which such as receive this word proceed outwardly to show their repentance by being baptized in water. Thus they show that, having been convicted of the wrongness of their attitude towards Jesus of Nazareth, they in their repentance accept Him as both Lord and Christ.

A call to repentance is ineffectual unless conviction is wrought in the heart as to something wrong. Then the heart's desire, moved by the Holy Spirit, being to have things righted, leads to a sight of the Crucified One, and in believing life comes through His Name—Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God (John 20. 31).

Such scriptures as Luke 24. 47, Acts 17. 30, 20. 21, 26. 20, show very distinctly that repentance is part of that which is to be preached to Gentiles, and they, indeed, are not different to Jews in being dead in trespasses and sins as Ephesians 2: 5 makes plain.

We would compare the difficulty of dead persons repenting with that of the dead hearing in John 5. 24, 25 Here it is the fact of the dead hearing which gives life. Somewhat in this way is "repentance toward God" linked with "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" in Acts 20. 21. With this may be compared, "Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11. 18), and "Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10. 17).

We do not understand that Romans 11. 29 refers to the repentance of sinners.

PAUL ON WORSHIP.

I.

It is well known that in the English versions of the New Testament the English word "worship" is a translation of different words occurring in the original Greek Scriptures. This is perhaps unavoidable, as it would be a difficult or an impossible task to allot to each Greek word one English word as its universal translation without greatly distorting the sense of the original. It is not proposed therefore to discuss this general question of verbal translation in the present article, which is rather intended to offer help in a simple manner on this important subject.

The idea conveyed by the English word "worship" certainly contains three distinct elements:—

1. An attitude of body.
2. An attitude of the mind set forth by the bodily attitude.
3. An action or series of actions arising out of the mental attitude.

These three things are extremely closely linked together in pairs, of which there are three; and the idea of worship is only adequately grasped when these three things are apprehended both singly and jointly.

In three of his later epistles the Apostle Paul four times makes use of an expression that we desire to bring forward as illustrative of his teaching on the important subject of worship, especially in its present application.

The answer of God to Elijah recorded in the Second Book of the Kings is given by Paul in these words (Rom. 11. 4):—

"I have left for Myself seven thousand men
Who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

Thus the worship of Baal is indicated by this phrase, "bowed the knee." This was a prostration of the body indicative of a prostration of the whole being, leading to such acts of worship as are recorded in 1 Kings 18., 2 Kings 10.

The expression here used by Paul he uses elsewhere three times¹ with minor variations ; and, first pausing to notice that Jehovah had saved these 7,000 men for Himself, that is to bow the knee to Himself, we pass on to Paul's further uses of this word, which he has clearly explained and defined by its use here.

In the same letter to Romans (14. 11) he again quotes from an Old Testament scripture (Isaiah 45. 23), wherein Jehovah as the one true God declares and swears of the whole race of man without exception :—

“Unto Me every knee shall bow.”

And in his application of this to the present day he bases his statement :—

“Each one of us shall give account of himself to God,”
on this Old Testament passage, which he thus quotes :—

“As I live, saith the Lord, to Me every knee shall bow,
And every tongue shall confess to God.”

This clearly asserts that of the universal homage to God predicted through Isaiah our part will find special expression before the judgment seat of God (which we suppose to be identical with the judgment seat of Christ of 2 Cor. 5. 10), where our knees and our hearts will be bowed :

“While every heart before the throne
In holy solemn awe is bowed.”

Then again, in connexion with the Father's answer to the

¹ οἷτινες οὐκ ἔκαμψαν γόνυ τη Βάαλ, hōitinēs ouk ἔkampsan gōnu tē Baal ;

ἐμοὶ κάμψει πᾶν γόνυ, ἔμοδι kampsēi pan gōnu ;

ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ παν γόνυ κάμψη, ἔν το ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ παν γόνυ kampsē ;

κάμπτω τὰ γόνυα μου πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, kampto ta gōnata mōu prōs tōn patēra.

These are the only occurrences in the New Testament of the verb κάμπτω, kampto, I bend or bow, which is used twice transitively, to bow the knee, and twice intransitively, of knees bowing, in the above four passages.

self-humbling of His beloved Son, Christ Jesus, we read¹ :—

“ God highly exalted Him
 And gave unto Him the name which is above every name,
 That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow :
 Of things in Heaven,
 And things on earth,
 And things under the earth.
 And that every tongue should confess
 That Jesus Christ is Lord,
 To the glory of God the Father.”

Here again we specially note how the things in Heaven have their share with those on earth and those under the earth in rendering this universal homage which is associated with the Lord Jesus and His name, and is to the glory of His Father.

Lastly, we quote from Paul's letter to Ephesus, where, in connexion with his prayer for those to whom he writes, he says :—

“ I bow my knees unto the Father.”

Thus his prayer is seen to be that of a prostrate suppliant, a worshipper, of one who is utterly bowed down in the sense of the infinite greatness and holiness of the Eternal Father, before Whom in lowly prayer he humbly bends.

The attitude of body is pregnant with significance as to the attitude of mind. The attitude of mind which is all important is symbolized by the attitude of body. We are not here and now prepared to discuss how far bodily attitude itself is of prime importance in the present dispensation, though we fear it is a subject that has been much neglected. Our present object is to point out from Paul's fourfold reference to the bowing of the knee what the Spirit of God would teach us as to the bowing of the heart.

In all approach to God this is absolutely essential. The greatness of God, His infinite superiority, His transcendent attributes must be so apprehended as to prostrate the worshipper in His presence, if the drawing near to Him is to be acceptable and well pleasing. It is no question here of

¹ Philippians 2. 9-11. .

our standing in Christ to which we refer, we are dealing with that which is experimental and practical. And we make bold to assert that no sense of God's goodness, no appreciation of His purposes towards us in Christ Jesus, can alter the facts:—He is great and we are small; He is the Creator, we are the creatures; He is God, and we are men. Of this there never lived a man with keener sense than the one whom God chose to reveal the exceeding riches of His grace towards us in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, not to multiply words, we entreat and beseech our beloved readers to ponder over all that is conveyed in Paul's words:—

“I BOW MY KNEES UNTO THE FATHER”;

that it may be received by us not as a word of a man, but as it is in truth, a word of God which will work in us if we believe it.

II.

The attitude of mind that forms so essential an element of worship is symbolized by the attitude of body as already pointed out. It is also expressed very clearly by direct revelation. To illustrate this point we first recall a well-known historical fact. When Octavianus succeeded Julius Caesar after the latter had been assassinated, he was not content with the substantial power that his uncle handed down to him. He desired to surround himself with circumstance and majesty, for which Julius Caesar, who was a plain man, had never cared. Accordingly, Octavianus in addition to his title of Imperator (that is, General) took the designation Augustus, which became his name to later ages. But Augustus was really an adjective name describing him as a great and mighty one demanding veneration and reverence from mankind. In the Greek New Testament Scriptures we twice get a Greek equivalent of this word *ὁ Σεβαστος*, *ho Sebastos*, the Augustus, the Venerable One

applied to the successor of Octavianus, namely, to Nero. This helps us to understand certain Greek words of similar derivation which occur in Holy Writ.

In Rom. 1. 25 Paul speaks of degenerate idolaters who worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator ; the word "worshipped" here is *ἐσεβάσθησαν* *ēsēbasthesan* from *σεβάζομαι* *sēbazomai*, which is the root of *Σεβαστος*, *Sebastos*. The word describes the attitude of their mind, their veneration for a creature to whom they paid such reverence as properly belonged to the Ever-blessed Creator.

Then Paul twice speaks of *σεβασμα*, *sebasma*, from the same root, and meaning an object of veneration and reverence ; namely, in Acts 17. 23, "the objects of your worship" (R.V.), "gods that you worship" (A.V. margin), and then almost immediately after in writing to Thessalonica (2 Thess. 2. 4), "that is worshipped" (R.V. and A.V.) "an object of worship" (R.V. margin). As the unknown God in Athens, so the man of sin in the future will call forth awe and veneration from his many devotees.

This attitude of mind, this reverence with the true God as its object, is given as characteristic of "Lydia, . . . one that worshipped God" (Acts 16. 14), and of "Titus Justus one that worshipped God" (Acts 18. 7), whilst the charge against Paul himself when he had been teaching in the house of the latter some eighteen months was that he persuaded men to worship God contrary to the Law. In these three scriptures we get in each case the root verb, *σεβομαι*, *sebomai*, meaning to reverence or stand in awe.

We are thus taught that awe, reverence, intense veneration, becomes man in the presence of God. A measure of awe and reverence is in place always when an inferior is in presence of a superior, but here we have to do with this attitude of mind in its most extreme form, which is the only comely state of mind when the creature is in the presence of the Creator.

It cannot be doubted that if this matter were more fully

realized, and God's people were more sensible of the infinite terribleness of His person, there would be comely and God-pleasing fruits therefrom. It is helpful to see how the great Apostle of the Gentiles who knew so well God's exceeding goodness and grace was one who knew the fear of God (2 Cor. 5. 11), and, moreover, exhorted the Philippians to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. A little more fear of God would do us all good to-day—more awe and reverence in His presence we may well seek to cultivate.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

MELODY UNTO THE LORD.

Psalm 147.

FOR nearly twenty centuries the second verse of this Psalm has been thought primarily to refer to the rebuilding of Jerusalem by Nehemiah; and a widely accepted theory now is that the Psalm was composed as an anthem to be sung at the dedication of the walls, as a thanksgiving for the return of the remnant from the captivity.

Any one who carefully considers its contents will not fail to see how beautifully suited it is for showing forth God's praise, and making melody unto the Lord at so remarkable an epoch as the return from Babylon; and the dedication of the walls recorded in Nehemiah 12. 27-43. Take, for example, the first and last two verses of the Psalm, and paraphrase them in the following manner, and its adaptability for the purpose and the occasion at once becomes apparent.

Praise ye Jah! It is good to celebrate our God in song; it is lovely and comely; for Jerusalem is again a city with walls and gates; and Israel again in its national position. Jehovah has builded up the city; it is He that has gathered the outcasts of Israel together. The word which is His medium of rule in the material world is become for them, by electing grace, statutes and judgments, namely, a Divine law by which they are governed for His glory.

Then observe that it is the Feast of the Dedication, and

it is winter. Jah is giving the snow like wool, and scattering the hoar-frost like ashes, and casting forth His ice like morsels, and His cold is intense ; but Jah is also the Ruler of the whole revolving year. Wherefore the winter passes away and is replaced in turn by spring and summer. So south winds now make the waters to flow, and the warm sun makes the grass to grow ; not merely for the cattle, but upon the tops of the mountains ; and even the wild beasts become recipients of His bounty. The helpless young ravens, which have neither storehouses nor barn, but importunately cry, and instinctively look to the Lord for supply, are not forgotten : for He Who numbers, names and places the starry hosts—the Omniscient and Almighty One—taketh pleasure in those that fear Him, that hope in His mercy ; as the callow young of the raven unwittingly do.

But let us now observe the special burden of the song.

Jehovah buildeth up Jerusalem,
 He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.
 Praise Jehovah, O Jerusalem,
 Praise thy God, O Zion,
 For He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates.

These expressions suppose a ruined city restored ; a desolate house rebuilt ; and a dispersed people gathered again ; by which we are reminded of the return of the godly remnant which came back to Jerusalem in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Those whose spirit God raised at the first to go up to rebuild the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem ; and those that went up later to rebuild the walls and set up the gates, Ezra and Nehemiah especially ; the diligent teaching of statutes and judgments in Israel by the former ; and the indefatigable labour of the latter in the building of the walls and the setting up of the gates. But these, and their fellows, who did and suffered so much for the Lord's namesake, are not so much as named in the Psalm. Yet all their self-sacrificing labour of love is the unrevealed background which brings the beauties of this melody into full relief. It reminds us of the one in the par-

able of the pounds, who says : " Lord, Thy pound has gained ten pounds," and the Master's " Well done." Such labours cannot be passed over in silence by the Lord ; for " God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have shown to His name." But how very instructive it is to observe how these diligent self-sacrificing servants of the Lord forget themselves, and give all the glory and praise of their truly great achievement unto the Lord. Not unto us. Praise ye Jah !

Let the worshippers, workers, and warriors of the present, now say, Praise ye Jah !

WILLIAM SAVIGAR.

IT WAS WINTER.

THIS phrase is found in John 10., and like the phrase " It was night " of John 13., it is not without meaning. Winter speaks to us of cloud and cold, of storm and tempest. How we long in winter for the coming springtime,

" With its beauties tender
That ripen into summer splendour."

Truly many who heard the words of the Lord Jesus as recorded in John 10. were in a condition of soul that winter aptly sets forth. But if His words were received into the heart, what a change would be effected ? Old things would pass away, behold, all things would become new. A spring-time and a summer not again to be followed by a winter.

Much that the Lord Jesus said on this occasion was not understood. Amongst the many things of which He spake not the least worthy of our present attention is the contrast presented by Him of the Good Shepherd and the hireling. Please read the scriptures. We attempt no enlargement. Of the wicked we read in the Proverbs that they flee when no man pursueth, but this is not the view we get of the hireling. It is no case of a false alarm, an imaginary danger. He seeth the wolf coming, and as he cares not for the sheep but only for his own life and his hire, he seeks safety in flight. He leaves the sheep an unprotected prey to the ravages of the prowling, hungry wolf. " Resist the Devil,

and he will flee from you," is God's own assurance to us. May we neither be like the wicked, fleeing when there is no danger, nor like the hireling, deserting our post when there is real danger; but rather seek to be like the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, Who said: "I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd layeth down His life for the sheep." How many hirelings are there to-day! Some have confidence in these; but perhaps such simple trusting ones will have a rude awakening, and they will learn how little the hireling really cared for them and how much, how very much he cared for his own things, his own benefits, yea, himself.

It was all right in the springtime and the summer, but in this winter of danger and difficulty, oh, that is quite a different matter. And that which was but opportunity for showing the real value of a shepherd becomes the occasion of demonstrating the helplessness of sheep entrusted to the care of an hireling. How different with the Good Shepherd! The changing seasons, pleasant spring and peaceful, prosperous summer, or adverse trying winter made no change in His care, for He loved the sheep. Yea might we not say that the time of the greatest need, the greatest danger, was the time when He showed His care, His love most. What value He put upon them! He loved them unto blood.

May under-shepherds drink more of His spirit, that so the sheep of the Little Flock may at all times, but especially in the dangers and difficulties characteristic of these last days, know that protection from them they so much need, that they may neither be scattered nor devoured.

The burning love words of the Lord Jesus—

"I lay down My life for the sheep"

should surely act as a powerful incentive to all such, though doubtless judged by this standard their greatest exercise of care for His people must seem but trivial indeed.

"Watchman! What of the night?" "The morning cometh." Soon the winter will be for ever gone, and the time of the singing of birds be with us to abide. Be watchful therefore.

D. R.

“LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.”

(Continued from page 42.)

To establish this principle we have but to consider carefully several Old Testament examples which God has caused to be written for our learning.

First, the generation of the men of war who came out of Egypt, who, in spite of all that God had done for them and of His mighty power, made manifest before their very eyes, yet—

“How often did they rebel against Him in the wilderness,
And grieve Him in the desert ;
And they turned again and tempted God,
And provoked the Holy One of Israel ” (*Psa. 78. 40, 41*).

So great was their sin that God caused them to wander to and fro in the wilderness, not for their salvation, but to the end that they might be destroyed, “For the hand of the Lord was against them to destroy them ” (*Deut. 2. 15*).

Second, we have the case of the two sons of Eli. Their sin was very great before the Lord ; they knew Him not, nor hearkened unto the voice of their father, so that of them we read these solemn words, “The Lord would slay them ” ; and thus God led them into circumstances that when the Ark of God was taken, the two sons of Eli were slain by the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines (*see 1 Sam. 2. and 3.*)

Third, of Ahab the King of Israel we read, “There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to do that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.” Such was the character of this wicked king, and yet God suffered him to continue in his evil ways, until we read in *1 Kings 22.*, when he and Jehoshaphat the King of Judah had made a league to go and take Ramoth-Gilead, that Ahab asks counsel of his prophets, saying, “Shall I go up to Ramoth-Gilead, or shall I forbear ? ” Thus we find the answer, “Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.”

But when the faithful Micaiah is brought upon the scene, he very soon makes known who it was that put the lie in the mouths of Ahab’s prophets. “Behold,” he says,

"LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION."

"Jehovah hath put a lying spirit in the mouths of these thy prophets, for Jehovah hath spoken evil concerning thee" (ver. 23). Thus by an arrow shot at a venture was Ahab the King of Israel slain, and the dogs of Samaria licked his blood (ver. 38).

How true are the words of the Psalmist—

"With the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful,
With the perfect man Thou wilt show Thyself perfect,
With the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure,
And with the perverse Thou wilt show Thyself froward (or a wrestler)" (Psa. 18. 25-26).

We need not multiply examples. Sufficient evidence has been quoted, we think, to prove that it is consistent with God's holy character to lead into temptation; that just in the measure which we seek to imitate Him and to cultivate those virtues and qualities which are in accordance with His holy will, even so shall we have an understanding and knowledge of His ways; but if, on the other hand, we are perverse and kick against His rule and government, then He will be indeed against us.

"For the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (Psa. 34. 16).

We need to be on our guard, however, having a one-sided judgment of the character of God or a misapprehension of these precious truths as they balance and complement each other—

Love and Light,
Grace and Truth,
Mercy and Judgment,
Righteousness and Peace.

Neither exalting the one at the expense of the other, but holding each of them with just and equal balance, for

"Divers weights and divers measures,
Both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. 20. 10).

Further, let it be noted that it is only as we thus act that we can hope to attain to any measure of understanding of the ways of God.

Thus we have seen that while there is trial or temptation, which we may well covet, yea, glory in, as being absolutely necessary to the preservation of our life and testimony for God on the earth, there is also that aspect of temptation which we may well dread, taking heed lest there be begotten within us that spirit of rebellion that springs from an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, lest it be said of us—

“ But as for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways,
Jehovah shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity ”
(Psa. 125. 5).

or—

“ I hate the work of them that turn aside,
It shall not cleave unto me ” (Psa. 101. 3).

or—

“ Their sorrows shall be multiplied that exchange the Lord for
another God ;
Their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take their names
upon my lips ” (Psa. 16. 4).

To deliberately turn aside from the pathway of obedience to the will of God, to do so with one's eyes open, is but the visible outcome of a heart long since departed from God ; nor need we be surprised that many who once fought valiantly for the truth in the integrity of their heart are now turned aside after Satan. For that solemn scripture in Prov. 22. 14 explains much—

“ The mouth of strange women is a deep pit,
They against whom the Lord hath indignation shall fall therein.”

Does it not tell us of chastening despised and correction refused, evil and perverse ways persisted in, until the subject becomes an abhorrence to God, so much so that He deafens their ears and blinds their eyes until at last they become a prey to some of the spiritual diseases which are rampant on every hand ?

Shall we not take warning, giving earnest heed to the words of the blessed Lord, “ Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation ” ?

A. ANDERSON.

For Youngest Believers.

THYSELF.

THIS word brings matters very close to us. It forbids our looking out to others to see how they are behaving themselves. It comes right home to the youngest believer, like the word of the Lord Jesus to the little man up the tree, "Zacchaeus, make haste" (Luke 19.), or to that weeping woman beside His sepulchre, "Mary" (John 20.).

It is well when we thus hear His voice and know it. Samuel made a mistake and thought it was Eli who called him when all the time it was the Lord Himself (1 Samuel 3. 4-6). More frequently the other mistake is made and that which is only a human call is regarded as Divine. The youngest believer requires therefore to be on his guard, for in this matter the work of Satan is seen. He is a deceiver, and by such means he seeks to rob God of His joy in us, and us of our joy in God.

"KEEP THYSELF PURE."

There is no mistaking this voice. It is God's, and it is God's voice to me. It tells me of something not natural to me, something requiring effort on my part. It tells of temptation or inclination to be otherwise than pure. How may I be helped in this? One way is to let the hope of the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ fill my heart. Soon the heavens will burst asunder, and that voice, that fell upon our ears more sweetly than sweetest music, when as guilty sinners on our way to destruction He called us to Himself, will again break the Divine silence, and we shall ascend to be with Him for evermore. Blessed hope! "Every one that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." How sad, in contrast, is the picture of Luke 12. 42. ? We may go far, far astray if we cherish the thought of the unfaithful servant :

"MY LORD DELAYETH HIS COMING."

The Woman in Her Sphere.

FAITH UNFEIGNED.

THIS dwelt in Lois first; it actuated and controlled the upbringing of her baby girl, who learnt, as soon as her infant lips could lisp, to prattle on her mother's knee of the little girls whose stories were recorded in the temple writings which Lois held so dear. Miriam and her brothers; Jemimah and her sisters; Hadassah, and the maidens in more humble life who played their little part in God's will. Then as years went by, more and more of the sacred writings were read together, the oracles of God in which Lois had unfeigned faith became also the portion of Eunice, who in the goodness of God obtained like precious faith in the Scriptures, which later on made her wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All this upbringing of the daughter by the mother, this oint study of the sacred Scriptures in full assurance that they were from God, this earnest study thereof on their part, while as yet there was on the scene no man who could go forth and speak with the enemy in the gate—all this was necessary unto the fulfilment of the Divine purpose. For such a mother as Eunice and grandmother as Lois were absolutely essential for the upbringing of the child whom God was about to give, and for whom God had a work.

Not, indeed, through Lois, nor yet through Eunice came the fulfilment of that promise for which all Hebrew women looked. Neither of these women was as highly favoured as Mary the Virgin. But great became their happiness, and great to-day is their joy, in connexion with their son, worthy servant of the Highest and worthy custodian as of the earlier oracles of the Old Covenant, so of the later Scripture of the New.

Confessedly there is a lack to-day of worthy servants of the Lord, of competent ministers of the New Covenant. It may be many years ere this need is met. Are the women

in the assemblies doing their part? They have no time sometimes, we think we hear them say. Time is too easily found for braiding the hair and for costly raiment. Alas that the cost is not chiefly a matter of £ s. d. Too often money is spent on adornment contrary to the doctrine of God our Saviour rather than for the spread of the truth; but the cost cannot be counted in gold that perisheth. It will in many cases be found an eternal loss that time has been frittered on dress and the like that might have been put to better use; even to that study of the Holy Scriptures, to that prayer, to that helping of others, for which generations yet to come might bless those who were content with more lowly things of this life, so as to lay up a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed, as the result of present faith unfeigned.

For Young Sunday School Teachers.

SERVICE.

THE harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few (Matt. 9. 37).

These were words that the blessed Lord Jesus uttered, while upon the earth, as He beheld the multitudes distressed and scattered, and as it was then so it is now. But before service of this kind can be done for God, there must of necessity be found the servant with certain qualifications.

Even when men of the world seek one to fill a responsible place in their business, it is essential that the character bears the strictest investigation. If so with men, much more so with God.

If we have been called by God to do something, let none of us excuse ourselves, and say there is nothing to do, for we have still on record, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." There is perhaps no sphere of

service more important than our far-reaching labour of love amongst the young. A service more valuable than fine gold ; yet, it is too often undervalued.

But let those of us who have put our hand to the work go on in faithfulness, for as it is labour for the Master faithfulness is an essential quality that must characterize us, for in stewardship it is required that a man be found faithful (1 Cor. 4. 2). To teach a class of boys or girls in the Sunday School may be no easy task, because of the carelessness of the scholar. But if our labour with them is in the constraining power of the love of Christ, it will have its effect, for we read in Luke 1. 37, " For no word from God shall be void of power " ; and again it is written, " For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth ; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please. And it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it " (Isa. 55. 10-11).

Let us all the more seek to cast our bread upon the waters, for we shall find it after many days. " In the morning sow thy seed, in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good " (Eccles. 11. 1-6).

Moreover, our labour amongst the young is not merely a question of privilege, but one of the deepest responsibility. Are we as workers engaged in this work because it runs with the current, or because of a deep sense of the Lord's claims upon us as His workers ?

The precious seed we sow this Lord's day amongst the young, do we sow it with the expectation of meeting its results by and by ? If our service in this sphere is to be fruitful it must be sown in faith, in fellowship with our God. And if we ourselves are not in communion with God, our service will be barren, yea fruitless. Let us note well that

we can only give to others as we ourselves get through being continually in the sunshine of His presence.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might (Eccles. 9. 10), not in a half-hearted manner, for as God loveth a cheerful giver so does He love a willing worker.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 21. (Acts 15. 40-16. 5).

THE FIRST JOURNEY OF PAUL WITH SILAS.

(Continued from page 44.)

FROM BELFAST. How faithful is the record which God gives of His servants. As we mark their firm adherence to a wrong course of action, and their faltering steps when on the highways, we are readily reminded that they also were men of like passions with us.

Let us learn by their failings, and be taught to take courage by their successes; for no man liveth to himself, and to himself no man dieth.

Paul was a man of intense individuality, yet who ever showed as he did the beauty and blessedness of fellowship? As on his first journey, even so at the beginning of the second, he went forth having the fellowship of the brethren, who commended him to the Grace of God.

Silas fills the place of Barnabas, and with him Paul passed through the provinces of Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches. How many churches there may have been in these two provinces is not known, but a glance at the map will show how conveniently situated Antioch was.

Without wishing to suggest anything by the fact, it may interest some to note that Paul was a Cilician, of Tarsus, and Barnabas was a man of Cyprus by race.

In continuing their journey Paul and Silas passed into

Lycaonia, and came to Derbe and Lystra. These two cities were in a district where the work of the Lord had prospered on a former visit, and that against very severe persecution. It will be remembered that it was in Lystra Paul was stoned. The least opposition was in Derbe, where many disciples were made.

Now on the first journey when leaving this district Paul and Barnabas pointed out in each church which they had planted men whom they considered fit to do oversight work. These men were known as Elders or Presbyters, and their duty was to care for the churches.

So that knowing this, we may all expect Paul to be eagerly looking forward to seeing his co-workers again, and what earnest inquiries he would make regarding the welfare of the Flock. His expressed desire to Barnabas in chapter 15. 36, read in the light of that word which says :

“ Let us get up early to the vineyard ;
 Let us see whether the vine hath budded,
 And the tender grape appear,
 And whether the pomegranates be in flower ”
Songs 7. 12.

shows that he desired not to sow for nought.

The account of their sojourn in Lycaonia as given in the Acts is very brief, being concluded in four verses. But by referring to the letters afterward written to Timothy we are able to glean that some very important work was accomplished during this second visit.

The name of Timothy is now brought before us for the first time. This young man was evidently converted during the first visit of Paul, because in both letters to Timothy Paul refers to him as his child, and in 2 Tim. 3. 10-11 mention is made of some things witnessed by Timothy which happened on the first journey.

The Apostle seemed very pleased with the young disciple, and saw in him one who might well fill the place of John Mark. So he expressed the desire that Timothy should

be taken into the work. The brethren in Lycaonia gave their fullest fellowship in this matter, as will be seen by comparing Acts 16. 2 with 1 Tim. 4. 14.

It seems quite clear that Timothy must have been present on some occasion when the elders were together; and perhaps Paul is alluding to this occasion in 1 Tim. 6. 12, where he reminds Timothy of the good confession which was confessed in the sight of many witnesses (elders and others).

After the disappointment Paul had in John Mark, it is only likely that he would by all means possible seek to give Timothy a correct estimation of the seriousness and responsibility of the work to which he was laying his hand.

Before Timothy is finally initiated into the work Paul circumcised him. Now this would be hard to understand in the light of the decrees which Paul was at that very time carrying, did we not know how highly Paul prized the unity of the Fellowship; he thus submitted to a custom which he believed was abrogated in order that he might eventually gain his kinsmen in the flesh, and bring about an obedience to the will of the Lord in a Divine manner.

The writer here can see a precedent, which is of God, for leading men among the brethren who move from place to place in their service, guiding them how to conduct themselves when they meet customs which they believe are contrary to God.

[Surely there is a difference between a Divine ordinance which falls into abeyance and a thing contrary to God.—ED.]

From GLASGOW. Here we have Timothy's introduction to the arena of public service, commended and approved, not by a single assembly, but by a unity of assemblies acting together in their provincial sphere.

Are we right in supposing that the elders of these assemblies constituted the presbytery or assembly of elders mentioned in 1 Tim. 4. 14?

We note the care of the Apostle in the selection of those whom he chose to be his fellow labourers. "Lay hands

suddenly on no man" was the apostolic injunction laid down to Timothy.

The need of this is very great, for alas ! how many have been forced into a position of responsibility for which they have proved totally unfit.

"A man's gift maketh room for him."

We do not understand why Paul should circumcise Timothy (his father being a Greek), but we think that his motive was wrong, namely, because of the Jews that were in those parts. Does not the fear of man bring a snare ? [but let not Rom. 15. 2 be forgotten.—ED.]

Moreover, for a similar offence he publicly withstood Peter to the face (*see Gal. 2. 12*).

Therefore we are unable to reconcile the seeming inconsistency.

From BLACKRIDGE. We wish to draw attention to the Divine principle maintained here by Paul in his choice of Silas, and also of Timothy for the work of the Lord. This principle, which is set forth in the Old Testament (*see Deut. 19. 15*), is verified in the New Testament (*see John 8. 17* ; *2 Cor. 13. 1*), and amplified in the Gospels, Acts and Epistles of Paul (*see Mark 6. 7* ; *Luke 10. 1* ; *Acts 4. 13, 19* ; *8. 14* ; *13. 2*). Compare the beginning of most of the Pauline letters to the churches.

In this day of small things, or little blessing in the ministry, it may in some measure be attributed to the lack of this principle being given effect to. And also prayer in another respect (*see Matt. 9. 37, 38*).

As these servants of the Lord visit Lycaonia a young man of exceptional ability is found there, whom Paul would have to go with them to the work. The fitness and competency of this young man is due in great measure to the instruction given him by his mother and grandmother (*2 Tim. 1. 5* ; *3. 15*) which example might well be copied by grandmothers and mothers in Israel to-day, that their sons may be sent in answer to the prayer of *Matt. 9. 38*.

The circumcising of Timothy was not that Paul desired to conform to Jewish rites, but rather to become all things to all men, that he may by all means save some (*see* 1 Cor. 9. 19-23).

So we have Paul and Silas confirming the churches, and then together with Timothy going through the cities delivering the decrees for to keep, which all finds a splendid result—as witness, the Community strengthened and extended in verse 5.

From BRIGHTON. The Apostle Paul goes forth to the work, being again commended to the grace of the Lord by the brethren at Antioch, his companion being Silas. At Lystra they meet with Timothy, a young man who bore a good character from the brethren at Lystra and Iconium. He had previously manifested sympathy with Paul, and proved faithful to him in time of persecution (*see* 2 Tim. 3. 10) [Does this refer to a time prior to Acts 16. ?—ED.]; and in view of this scripture it is evident that Paul saw that Timothy had made progress in the things of God. The tuition received by him from earliest childhood from his godly mother bore its fruit in due course (2 Tim. 1. 5; 2 Tim. 3. 14-15).

It seems strange that Paul, who appeared so early to apprehend the wider purposes of God, should have circumcised Timothy ere he took him for a companion, unless indeed it was that he would not willingly offend his fellow-countrymen who believed and who were zealous for the law (Acts 21. 20; 1 Cor. 9. 20; comp. Gal. 5. 6).

Again, whilst Gentiles were exempted by the Apostle and by the decrees of the Apostles and elder brethren in Jerusalem from circumcision, the position of Jewish believers in relation to the law is not so clearly defined. The new dispensation grew out of the old (for Christ came in connexion with and in fulfilment of the promises made to the fathers), and as with the old so with the new there was the gradual unfolding of the will and purposes of God,

and a corresponding letting go of things that belonged to the past (Heb. 8. 13).

From BLACKBURN. The Antioch trouble brought about a united consideration which was representative, and whilst the judgment of the Apostles and Elders particularly referred to Antioch, yet it was intended to be brought before the churches throughout Syria and Cilicia, thus showing that as "no man liveth to himself" no assembly should so do, others being affected.

Reference is made in the letter directed to the brethren mentioned in verse 35 (Chap. 15.) of Judas and Silas accompanying Barnabas and Paul to deliver the decision arrived at, and this was observed so far as Antioch was concerned, the four brethren being together in that place accordingly; and although Barnabas and Judas do not go with Paul and Silas into Syria and Cilicia to give the further effect to the wording of the letter, the intention of the Apostles and Elders is still carried out by Paul and Silas alone bearing the message further. In delivering the decrees to the churches, a fulfilment of the expressed conclusion of the Jerusalem Conference is seen. But there is another object in view. The churches recently visited by Paul and Barnabas require strengthening. Paul had wished Barnabas to accompany him, but Barnabas went elsewhere. Silas goes with Paul, and both are commended by the brethren. Note verse 41. It is "he," Paul. Is this on account of Barnabas being absent? Silas had not seen anything of the first journey's experience. But in verse 4 (Chap. 16.) it is "they," Paul, Silas and Timothy. Is this mention of "they" on account of one having joined them who was a witness to the workings of God at Lystra previously, and who could remember the stirring events of verses 9, 13, 19, 22 of Chap. 13.—even Timothy?

1 Tim. 1. 13 undoubtedly first applies to the preaching preceding the stoning at Lystra, Timothy probably being a convert of the Apostle's first visit to Lystra. Acquainted

with the Scriptures from babyhood, as taught by a God-fearing mother and grandmother, Timothy was wise unto salvation and was one of the disciples of Acts 14. 20. The observation on the Apostle's part of the Jewish ceremonial as affecting Timothy seems to be somewhat secondary. To Paul "circumcision" counted for nothing. It was widely known that Timothy's father was a Greek, and of course Timothy being an uncircumcised Gentile would not be allowed to eat with a Jew, and it would be difficult for his labouring in the synagogues with the Apostle, which were apparently visited at the different places visited. Read 1 Cor. 9. 20.

[The circumcision of Timothy seems to have been a stumbling-block to many of our friends. We ask more careful attention to the reason given, namely: "The Jews all knew that his father was a Greek." Who can doubt that if Lois and Eunice had their wish Timothy would have been circumcised as an infant; it was prevented by his Greek father. Turn to 1 Chron. 2. 34-42, to see that Gentile fatherhood need not in itself have prevented his enjoyment of Israelitish privileges. Now Paul became to Timothy a second father and what could he—but give to him any benefits that circumcision entailed. True that as to substantial value "circumcision is nothing" as quoted from Paul's own writings. But surely the matters named at the end of the article from Blackburn were of great even though secondary importance. The decrees of Acts 15. were strictly meant to give liberty to Gentiles. We do not believe that Paul acted from fear of man at all, but the Jews' knowledge that Timothy was uncircumcised made him at that time impossible as a help to them in any way without his prior submission to what after all was a Divine ordinance—one, too, that was pre-Mosaic. Note, too, that at a later period when Hebrews was written, the first covenant is said to be "nigh unto vanishing away." It was not yet actually vanished as it now is.—ED.]

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 20.

FROM BLACKBURN. To write in such beautiful language as is seen in this Psalm, David must have been exercised as to the dire need of Jehovah's people in a collective capacity.

It seems to belong to a day ere David became king [But does not the inscription to the Chief Musician show that David had made the arrangements described in 1 Chron. 6. 31-48?—ED.] when much evidence was as to faith in material things, trust being placed in chariot and horse, and no further.

What a beautiful picture for to-day! and how encouraging.

A testimony that is dependent upon nothing higher than that which is seen by the eye, and only affected by faith in that which is pertaining to this world, is not the answer to the pattern set forth in the Scriptures.

A point beyond circumstances is seen: salvation reminiscences bring triumphal songs: truth is most pronounced: the testimony stands; and God's name is mentioned and known as a mighty reality.

FROM BLACKRIDGE.—This psalm might be aptly coupled with the following one, as they seem to run in the same strain, namely, that they are concerning the king.

The following are a few things which strike the reader:

Verse 1: Jehovah answer thee in the day of trouble. . . . Set thee on high.

Verse 2: Send thee help from the Sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.

Verse 3: Remember all thy offerings. Accept thy burnt sacrifices.

Verse 4: Grant thee thy heart's desire. Fulfil all thy counsel.

Verse 5: Fulfil all thy petitions.

Verse 6 gives us the confidence which they have in Jehovah; "Now I know Jehovah saveth His anointed. He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand."

Compare verse 7 with Isaiah 31, 1. Also read 2 Kings 6. 8-23.

PAUL ON WORSHIP.

III.

THE idea of worship further includes the doing of a series of things that shall be well-pleasing to God and accepted by Him as an expression of the loyal homage of the worshipper. This is often expressed in the English Bible by the words "serve" and "service." But it is not a matter of service in the ordinary sense. In their translation of Hebrews 12. 28 the 1880 Revisers very happily express the thought by the words:—

Whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God.

It is not so much the doing of the thing itself—it is the offering of this action to God. However, as we do not propose in the present articles to follow Paul's teaching in his anonymous letter to the Hebrews, we are content to leave this most important passage of Hebrews 12. 28, notwithstanding its present value, after merely citing it as a happy rendering of the thought conveyed by the Greek verb *λατρεύω*, *latreuō*, I offer service to God.

Before going further, we direct attention to the use of this same word as cited by the Lord Jesus in His reply to the tempter (see Matthew 4. 10 ; Luke 4. 8).

It is written:—

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God,
And Him only shalt thou serve.

That is to say, we have here a word describing such service as may only be offered to God Himself.

In what we have previously written as to worship expressing itself in a certain attitude of mind and of body, these are brought about almost involuntarily, one may say, as a result of the apprehension of who and what God is. Consequently they are equally in place, whether we are speaking of the Father or of the Son. Thus, for example, in Luke 5. 8, and in Revelation 1. 17, the intelligent sight of the Lord Jesus Christ prostrates before Him Peter in

the one case, John in the other, and this as truly when the Lord was in the humble guise of the days of His humiliation, as when His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

But we shall search in vain for any illustration of service being offered to the Lord Jesus Christ in the sense of the words—

Him only shalt thou serve.

For it is His special work to direct and control the offering of such service to His God and His Father.

We repeat, the true Divinity and transcendent greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ demand our prostration before Him, but the service which is the outcome and expression of worship is only to be offered to the Father.

Amongst the uses by Paul, in the letters to which he puts his name, of the Greek words *λατρεύω*, *latreuō*, I offer service, and *λατρεία*, *latreia*, service (religious service, worship), we shall first note that in Rom. 1. 25, a verse previously referred to (p. 53) telling of degenerate idolaters who—

Worshipped and served
the creature rather than the Creator.

It was no marvel that such men needed to be told that the Creator had no need of anything, as their gods and idols had. He has no need of service,¹ He has no lack that men can supply. Compare the sad plight of Dagon (1 Samuel 5. 3-5):—

For all the gods of the peoples are things of nought ;
But Jehovah made the heavens.

It must be remembered that in the offering of service to God mistakes, ay, fatal mistakes, may be made. Paul could truthfully say:—

God, Whom I serve
from my forefathers
in a pure conscience.

But what about the acceptance of the service that he

¹ A different word altogether is used in Acts 17. 25.

offered to God? When Saul laid waste the church, and persecuted it even unto strange cities (Acts 9. 1), he thought that he was offering service to God (see the words of the Lord Jesus in John 16. 2¹). We are sure that no service of his was acceptable, however well meant and zealous he was, till he had fallen to the earth and bowed his knee confessing "Jesus Christ is Lord."

Thereafter he says:—

God, Whom I serve
in my spirit
in the gospel of His Son.

The thought here is something done as an expression of worship of God. It is not here fellowship with God in His love of the world. Far less is it the gospel as something for the sinner. It is God to Whom he offers service as he goes forth heralding the gospel.

It is the continuance of what he first expressed on the Damascus road—

What shall I do, Lord?

And He Who, sitting by Sychar's well had told the Samaritan woman there of the Father's search for worshippers, brings this Saul to God; and then sends him forth with the pregnant words upon his lips (true expression of his heart's thoughts)—

The God
Whose I am
Whom also I serve

which we find in Acts 27. 23. This is not now the deluded service of the one exceeding mad against God's new people, but the service offered to God according to the instruction and command of Him Who knows God and knows God's heart's desire.

The manner of this service the Jews called a sect (as see Acts 24. 14)—

¹ δόξῃ λατρείαν προσφέρειν τῷ θεῷ, dōxē latreian prospereîn tō Theō, he will think to present service to God.

But this I confess unto thee,
 that after the Way
 which they call a Sect
 so serve I the God of our fathers.

Thus we have cited four passages in which Paul speaks of himself as offering to God that service which is really a part of worship—a kind of service only due to God. At first indeed, unregenerate, he served God unacceptably, persecuting in His members the Lord of Life and Glory, even as he fully acknowledged the twelve tribes to be

Earnestly serving *God* night and day.

But when the One Who alone knew what was pleasing to God had met him, and made him a disciple, none more earnestly than he preached the Faith of which he once made havoc, and he expresses the root cause of all this :—

Whose I am, whom also I serve ;
 After the Way which they call a Sect
 so serve I the God of our fathers,
 Whom I serve in my spirit
 in the Gospel of His Son.

What weight is thus given to the soul-stirring words of Romans 12. 1 :—

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,
 And be not fashioned according to this world ;
 But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,
 That ye may prove
 what is the will of God,
 The thing which is
 good and acceptable and perfect.

Thus may we, like Paul, offer to God acceptable service as the expression of the adoration of our hearts. While, as he writes in Rom. 9. 4, the service of God pertained to the Israelites in a day now past, and also indeed in a day

yet to come, nevertheless it is not only they who can offer service well-pleasing to God. But if we would do so we must avoid their faults (see Amos 5. 25-27). We must not bring ourselves into likeness or allow ourselves to be brought into likeness with the fashion of this world. We may use the world: we may not use it to the full. It is impossible to present our bodies to God as an acceptable expression of our worship if we conform ourselves to the world's fashions and neglect that transformation which the renewing of our mind alone can effect.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

CIRCUMSTANCES.

ARE we, after all, but the creatures of circumstances? On such a question being put to us we might be able to reply, and it may be with not a little indignation: "No! we belong to God, and love God, and from Rom. 8. 28, 'We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose.'" True! But we sometimes forget this, and it is at such times, alas! that circumstances have such an influence in our daily lives. The word itself is one we hear very frequently. "Under the circumstances we had to act thus," or, "considering the circumstances so-and-so could do nothing else"; and such expressions as these we meet with well-nigh every day. In one respect it is perfectly true that we must be influenced by circumstances, but too often, we are inclined to believe, such phrases are used as excuses for having acted wrongly; and in connexion with the things of God especially as a plea for not exactly carrying out what is written of His will.

Then, again, how often are we, the children of God, weighed down by circumstances? and how often, alas! are our circumstances put forward as a reason for inactivity in the Lord's work. But our very circumstances may be used by us to glorify God if, instead of allowing ourselves

to be taken up solely with the circumstances, we keep our eyes upon the Lord.

Coming to the Scriptures, we might say that the Word of God is made up to a certain extent of circumstances. Especially so the Old Testament, wherein God unfolds to us those wondrous events; the circumstances and the family incidents of so many of His saints of old. Wonderful to think that such circumstances are noted and given to us by the Living God Himself; and what for, but that we in the everyday circumstances of life, whether in sorrow or in difficulty, might look to Himself for help and encouragement?

Turning to the book of Psalms we see such thoughts exemplified in the life of David in particular. How peculiar and how distressing were his circumstances betimes! In Psalm 3., for instance, we have the attitude of the man who found himself in circumstances as recorded in 2 Samuel, chapters 15, 16 and 17. It is "a psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son":

"I laid me down and slept;
I awaked; for Jehovah sustaineth me."

Again, in Psalm 34. God lets us see the condition of the man who was driven away by Abimelech, and unto whom, in the cave of Adullam, the four hundred gathered themselves. Note the circumstances! Yet—

"I will bless Jehovah at all times:
His praise shall continually be in my mouth,"

and so on. Then in Psalm 63. we have David wandering in the wilderness of Judah. God's anointed, but despised and rejected by the many. Yet—

"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness;
And my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips;
When I remember Thee upon my bed,
And meditate on Thee in the night watches. . . .
My soul followeth hard after Thee:
Thy right hand upholdeth me."

And his bed, reader, would not, we venture to suggest, at that particular time, be as comfortable as yours or mine.

Does it not, in fact, remind us of Him Who afterwards said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the Heaven have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head " ?

It is when we come to ponder His pathway and to contemplate the beauties of His life that we are raised far above circumstances. Oh, to consider Him more ! Amid the sin and the suffering and the turmoil of earth there was ever in that heart the calm and the peace of Heaven. It was, indeed, the secret chamber in which Jehovah could dwell.

Have you ever thought of the circumstances associated with Luke 10. 21 ?

" In the same hour " when Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum occupied His mind, and He saw so little response, so little fruit, from His incessant labours and mighty works. At the time, too, when circumstances had such an effect on John the Baptist. What ecstasy had filled John's soul as he beheld the Lamb of God by the waters of Jordan ! " This is He," said John ! But he was not always by that cooling stream engaged in his blessed work. No ! Prison days came, and with the change of circumstances there came the change of condition. The little doubts entered, and then came the question, " Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another ? " Quite natural, perhaps, yet how different from his previous powerful testimony !

Well, it was at such a time that the Lord Jesus could rejoice in the Holy Spirit and hold sweetest communion with the One Whom He ever glorified. There was always a higher glory into which He could retire. Scribes might say, " He hath Beelzebub," and others, " Is not this the Carpenter ? " but let Him be misunderstood or misrepresented by all; He could ever say " All things have been delivered unto Me . . . and no one knoweth Who the Son is save the Father " :

" The high mysteries of His name
An angel's grasp transcend ;
The Father only (glorious claim !)
The Son can comprehend."

Nevertheless, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases." Wondrous stoop! Still more wondrous the grace which caused Him to become poor. And the extent of His poverty is seen at the place called Calvary. He is the One, and the only One, to succour us in all the varied circumstances of life.

Another incident we would recall to mind. It is the night of the betrayal, and He is sitting at supper with the few who had continued with Him. Gethsemane and Golgotha are near. It is a time when He might well have been occupied with Himself. But it is at such a time, and in such circumstances, that He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and He took a towel, and girded Himself. Then He poureth water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. Oh, perfect example! How true that, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. What blessedness there is in knowing such an One!

We would now pass on and ask you to think for a moment of His death and the effect it had upon those who loved Him, that is, upon those who manifested their love for Him by continuing with Him.

In John 20. as far as the disciples were concerned their circumstances were very pitiful. They were together with the doors shut for fear of the Jews. Discussing, probably, amid their grief, what they would do. How dark the future looked for them at that moment. But it was just at the moment of their fear that Jesus came and stood in the midst and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you." And He shewed them His hands and His side, and their fears at once gave place to gladness. How simple, yet what a mighty transformation took place when the Lord entered into their circumstances. And poor Thomas, he was not there in fear, but he was somewhere else in unbelief. "Except I shall see . . . I will not believe." And for a week he was

allowed to remain in that condition. But after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. And again Jesus cometh . . . and stood in the midst. Then saith He to Thomas. . . . And instantly his unbelief gave place to worship. "My Lord and my God." Why? Because the Lord had entered into his circumstances. How refreshing for us, beloved, in these days when so many destructive heresies abound and when men are uttering such daring blasphemy in regard to the Blessed and Only Potentate, to feast one's soul on such a confession, "My Lord and my God."

But to return, we find in Luke 24. that while the disciples were thus together in Jerusalem Cleopas and his friend were going to Emmaus. Possibly they thought it would be safer. At any rate, what filled their hearts was disappointment. "We hoped that it was He which should redeem Israel." And so it was; but not quite in the manner they expected. Oh foolish men! And Jesus Himself drew nigh, and went with them. And having interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself, they drew nigh unto the village . . . and He made as though He would go further. He would leave them with hearts burning, and with an understanding of the Scriptures such as they had never had. But they constrained Him. Their desire was for Himself, for although as yet they did not know Him, He had bound Himself to them. "Abide Thou with us." And He did. He went in and remained until their eyes were opened and they knew Him. Then He vanished.—But their disappointment was gone, for the Lord had entered into their circumstances.

So time passed, and then the day came when, over against Bethany . . . He parted from them, and was carried up into Heaven. So He is now there, and we might ask: What is His attitude towards us when we are afraid, or unbelieving, or disappointed?

Well, He was there when Paul was on the earth. The

one who wrote to Timothy, "This thou knowest, that all that are in Asia turned away from me." Truly trying circumstances! The one also who passed through such sufferings for the Name's sake and who, when referring to the hour of his deepest need had to write, "At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me." Circumstances still more trying! "But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me." Though up there in majesty, the enthroned Sin-purger, yet with what tenderness could He enter into Paul's circumstances? And is He not ever ready to enter into our circumstances? Yes, if we will but ask and let Him. Our anxiety should not lie in trying to get out of circumstances into which, perhaps, God Himself has brought us, but to cultivate that longing to have the Lord with us in them.

And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of such as Daniel or the disciple whom Jesus loved; men who were allowed to pass through most critical circumstances; but the Lord was there, and therefore they prevailed. Much more might be written, but we trust the foregoing will encourage fellow-saints to press on, notwithstanding the varied trials of everyday life.

Ere we close, we would remember that the pathway is becoming narrower. Some are looking back. Many have gone back. Nevertheless, the truth remains, as also the House of God, with all its holy privileges. Are you in the House of God? If so, what brought you there, into? And what is keeping you therein? God, or circumstances? If circumstances brought you in, then circumstances may, at any moment, take you out. If, on the other hand, you can trace your being therein to God, then He is all-sufficient to maintain and satisfy. Himself hath said, "I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee." So that with good courage we say:—

"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear."

NORMAN. D. W. MILLER.

Correspondence.

THE ETERNAL SON.

IN reference to what is stated in *January NEEDED TRUTH*, page 4 (line 10 from bottom), and in *February NEEDED TRUTH*, page 35, please define more clearly in what sense the Lord Jesus Christ was the Son from all eternity. Kindly give chapter and verse shewing that He was such, or was known as such, before His incarnation.

I.

In the Scriptures there are various aspects of God as Father revealed. But God stands as Father to the Son as to no other being. In this sense also the Son stands to the Father. Just as the effulgence which shines forth from the sun is of the same essence and nature as the sun.

God is love. This is the essence of His nature. Now love is active, and must have an object. Without an eternal and perfect object of His love the Infinite One could not possibly be the perfectly blessed or happy One. The idea that God Who is absolute Spirit, should have a Son at all has, at first sight, something strange about it; but when it is understood that in the Son the Father always had a perfectly adequate object of His love, and One, also, Who on account of His personality and nature, was able to reciprocate the Father's love, the strangeness vanishes. All creation is a manifestation of God's love, but in none, not even in the highest object of creation, is there found an adequate object of infinite love. All stand infinitely below the Creator. This object is found only in the Son Who is of the same nature and essence as the Father.

The uniqueness of this Sonship is carefully guarded in the New Testament, and defined by a series of appropriate terms. For example, we have *μονογενῆς*, *mōnōgenēs*, Only-Begotten (John 1. 18; 3. 16; 1 John 4. 9). *ο υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ*, *ho huios tēs agapēs autou*, the Son of His love (Col. 1. 13). *ἰδιὸς υἱὸς*, *idios huios*, own Son, that is, proper and peculiar to Himself (Rom. 8. 32). Read also the following pas-

sages : Eph. 1. 6 ; Col. 1. 15 ; John 5. 18 ; 1 John 5. 20 ; Heb. 1. 6. The glory of the gospel is that God sent this His Own, Proper, Only-Begotten, Beloved Son into this world to save sinners.

That this Sonship had no beginning but existed from all eternity, even as it can never change, nor end, follows from its nature. But see the following scriptures, each of which, as its context shows, refers not merely to His pre-existence, but also His pre-existence as the Son : John 8. 38 ; 17. 5 ; 24. ; 1 John 1. 1-4 ; Col. 1. 15-17 ; Heb. 1. 1-3.

That He was known as " the Son " before His Incarnation is proved by the fact that the Jews knew that the Messiah was, in some sense, the Son of God. See the following passages, and specially note the language of the High Priest in the last : Matt. 16. 16 ; John 1. 14 ; Mark 14. 61, with Matt. 26. 63. Compare also the utterances of the demons in Matt. 8. 29 ; Luke 4. 34 ; 41. And see the well-known Isa. 9. 6, and the less known Prov. 30. 4.

WILLIAM SAVIGAR.

II.

In further reply to the question asked, we briefly deal with three matters separately.

1. The eternal pre-existence of the Lord Jesus Christ is clearly taught in the following and other passages of Scripture : Matt. 22. 41-45 ; Mark 12. 35-37 ; Luke 20. 41-44 ; John 1. 1-3, 14, 30 ; 3. 31 ; 8. 58 ; Heb. 1. 2, 10.

2. The presentation of Him as the Son of God is frequent in the gospels. It may be specially studied in such passages as Matt. 11. 27 ; 16. 16 ; John 1. 18 ; 5. 18 ; 2 John 3., which shew the intimacy and reality of the relationship.

3. The question as to when the Sonship commenced now remains for consideration.

The only positive argument that we know for its beginning with the Incarnation is Luke 1. 35 as rendered in the Authorized Version of 1611. We understand the rendering of the Revisers to be correct.

At the Incarnation there was no new relationship with God commenced. It was a new relationship to man. The Word became flesh, He became Son of Man, and Seed of the woman.

The miraculous conception in the Virgin's womb was brought about, not by the direct operation of God the Father, but by the Spirit. By the incarnation the Son of God became Son of Man.

John 3. 16 is a passage telling of God giving His Son. If this stood alone it might be explained as meaning that He gave One Who at His coming became His Son. But the repetition of such a statement and similar statements forbids this interpretation. See, for example, John 3. 17; 5. 37 and especially Hebrews 1. 2. Note also that as the Only-Begotten One His place is in the bosom of the Father (John 1. 18).

Moreover, had the Divine Sonship commenced at the Incarnation, the Divine Fatherhood would have had its beginning at the same time, for without a son there can be no father.

Of course there is to be borne in mind the Lord's Sonship as First Begotten from the dead, which is different from His Sonship as the Only-Begotten before all time. Thus in Hebrews 1. it was His Son Whom God appointed Heir of all things and through Whom He made the worlds. This is altogether pertaining to ages long gone by. But when death has been undergone God again brings Him into the world, not as the Only-Begotten, but as the Firstborn, saying, Worship Him, all ye gods (angels).

It further may be mentioned that even in the infolded writings of the Old Testament Jehovah is revealed as Three in One; each Divine One bearing the Divine name Jehovah. See, for example, Numbers 6. 24-27:—

“Jehovah [Father] bless thee and keep thee;
 Jehovah [Son] make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee;
 Jehovah [Spirit] lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.”

Still more clearly do we see in Zechariah 10. 12 that there are two persons bearing the Divine name Jehovah.

“ And I will strengthen them in Jehovah,
And they shall walk up and down in His name,”
saith Jehovah.

We read thus words spoken by the One called Jehovah (saith Jehovah) referring to the Jehovah name as pertaining also to another. This is in agreement with the other passage :—

“ The Man that is My Fellow,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts.”

In none of these cases is the relationship of Father to Son definitely mentioned, but we are justified in reading it backward from the New Testament, especially as no other relationship is indicated.

C. M. L.

For Young Sunday-school Teachers.

HOW BEST TO TEACH A CLASS OF CHILDREN.

IN seeking to answer this question, the first thing that strikes one as worthy of consideration are the qualifications necessary for the teacher ; we would arrange them as follows, namely :—

- (1) Patience.
- (2) Zeal and earnestness in the work.
- (3) The need of being a sanctified vessel meet for the Master's use.
- (4) The constant need of meditating and feeding upon the Word of God for the good of one's own soul, and not with the sole object of teaching others.
- (5) It is only as you are strengthened and refreshed yourself that you can possibly be a blessing to the children.
- (6) The teacher himself must be a living exponent of the virtues he seeks to inculcate.

It being granted that the teacher has all the above qualifications and many more that we need not recapitulate

here, we may attempt to face the question of "How best to teach a class of children?"

Firstly, it must be allowed that no definite curriculum can be laid down, as no two children are alike in their natures or temperaments, therefore we can only point out certain principles that in our judgement would be a guide to the teacher.

Firstly, we must remember that many of the children live in homes where they are not taught anything of the Word of God or even to have any reverence for the things of God; moreover, many of them go to schools where their young minds are polluted with many false ideas and doctrines, therefore this renders the work of the teacher all the more difficult and calls for constant prayer that heavenly grace and wisdom may be granted him.

Over against all this the teacher must remember that there must needs be the constant ploughing and harrowing to prepare the soil for the good seed of the Word of God.

You must make it your business to get to know your scholars, to win their affection and confidence in order that they may feel quite at home in your presence.

Again, you must seek to make the children feel that they will be benefited by what you tell them, and that they have something to gain thereby.

Simplicity or speech easy to be understood must be the great rule that will guide you in laying hold of a subject and putting it before the children.

You must endeavour to come down to their way of thinking and speaking.

In doing this we would do well to follow the example of the Great Teacher Himself, Who in seeking to teach His disciples any important truth, almost invariably took up simple everyday things to illustrate His meaning, as, for instance, the raven, the lily, the sparrow, a sower sowing seed, a woman baking bread, a little child, and many other such incidents we could get in the gospels.

All this would teach us that simple things that the child knows and understands could be used to illustrate some simple truth, some little story or incident may be found helpful, albeit we must not rush to the extreme and degenerate into mere story-tellers.

The great supreme object must be to cause the child to know the Holy Scriptures, to store their young minds with the truths of God, to teach them to reverence the name and things of God.

Keep ever before them the person, work and glories of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do not seek to force the child to a conviction, rather allow the Holy Spirit of God to do His work in the young heart of the child.

Endeavour to cause the children to think of their need of God's salvation, but do not force it prematurely upon them.

Remember that a child's capacity for learning is very limited, therefore it must be precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.

In Deuteronomy God repeatedly says, "And your children shall ask," therefore encourage them to ask questions relative to what you may seek to put before them.

It is more encouraging for the children if a lesson be carried on in a conversational manner.

We would say that it may be a very good exercise for the teacher to sit and give the children half an hour's gospel address, but it does not do the children the same good that conversational teaching does. Again, we think that it is very unwise to preach hell-fire to a child, as it will only terrify a nervous child or render callous a careless one.

In closing we confess that we have but touched the fringe of this great subject, nevertheless, we trust that sufficient has been said to cause in our hearts a deepened sense of the glorious opportunity that lies to our hand that we may not be discouraged nor weary in well doing.

A. ANDERSON.

Young Men's Corner

Section 21 (Acts 15. 40-16. 5).

THE FIRST JOURNEY OF PAUL WITH SILAS.

(Continued from page 71.)

From LONDON, S.W. The young disciple Timothy, the son of Eunice, a Jewess, which believed, had been brought up by his mother and grandmother in a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. A knowledge that was to serve him in good stead in the future. It is probable that he was born again through the agency of the Apostle Paul on his first missionary journey to Lystra and Derbe. (See 1 Tim. 1. 2, in which he calls him my true child in the faith, and 1 Tim. 1. 18 ; 2 Tim. 1. 2, 21. Comp. also 1 Cor. 4. 14-17.)

After an absence of three or four years Paul is again led by the Holy Spirit to these parts. During this time Timothy's knowledge in the things of God has greatly increased, and being well reported of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium, Paul decides that he shall accompany him on his journeys. He first, however, circumcised him because of the Jews. This it may be thought was inconsistent with his attitude in the case of Titus (Gal. 2. 3), but it must be remembered that the two cases were entirely different. Titus was a Gentile, and if Paul had given way to the Christian Jews, who thought that he should be circumcised, the truth of the gospel would not have continued with them (Gal. 2. 5). Timothy, although his father was a Greek, had been brought up as a Jew, and it would have interfered with his intercourse with the Jews if he had not been circumcised. It does not appear to us that Paul, who in 1 Cor. 9. 20 says "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews," in any way sacrificed his general principles in this case. "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing"

(1 Cor. 7. 19); but it would have been a serious thing to have allowed such a matter to have retarded or destroyed Timothy's sphere of usefulness.

From this time Timothy is Paul's most constant companion, and he accompanies him on nearly all his journeys, even joining him in Rome (see the inscriptions to the Epistles to the Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, all of which were written from Rome).

In Timothy Paul recognized a man of action, one who, like himself, was zealous and untiring in the service of his Master, qualifications, absolutely necessary to any one who was to be his companion. Timothy also had a sound doctrine, which, together with his early training, made him well fitted as a teacher.

FROM JARVIS BROOK. Although Barnabas had departed from Paul, the proposed visit was not abandoned nor undertaken by Paul alone. In choosing Silas to accompany him, Paul had the fellowship of one in whom the apostles and elders had confidence—such as was particularly necessary for the work before them.

In the course of the work of confirming the churches and delivering to them the decrees to keep, whereby the churches were strengthened in the Faith, and increased in number daily, a certain disciple named Timothy is brought under notice and well reported of by the brethren (or elders, see Acts 14. 23), of more than one or two churches. "Him would Paul have to go forth with him" (Is it not to this occasion that reference is made in 1 Tim. 4. 14, "neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery—or elderhood?"). Thus after shewing an appreciation of his early privileges and training, faith, diligence and faithfulness in that which was least, Timothy becomes identified with others for more responsible service.

Section 22 (Acts 16. 6-10).

THE JOURNEY THROUGH PHRYGIA AND GALATIA.

From BLACKRIDGE. The journey through Phrygia and Galatia was not without its good results, as there they preached the gospel and made many disciples. (See Acts 18. 3; Gal. 4. 13.) It may have been in this journey that they met with such men as Philemon, Archippus, Epaphras, who afterwards were of the assembly in Colosse, of whom Paul in his letter to the Colossians made mention of as the faithful brethren (see Col. 1. 2). At this point we ask for a consideration of Col. 4. 7 to end, with Paul's Epistle to Philemon. [But Colosse was in Asia.—ED.]

And now the Holy Spirit forbids them preaching in Asia they pass by Mysia to go to Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus (that is, the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit as in ver. 6) suffered them not, and passing by Mysia they come to Troas, where they are joined by Luke. It is certain that Luke was the author of the Acts, and without mentioning his own name he slips from the third person into the first, and thus indicates his own presence. (See 16. 10-17; 20. 5, 6, and so on.)

At night Paul receives a vision. A Macedonian standing crying to him to come over and help them. No doubt Paul would tell the other three fellow-workers what he had received, and thus they sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called them to preach the gospel in these parts. In these few words we have the twofold operation of the Holy Spirit clearly indicated, namely, His convicting power amongst those of Macedonia, and His directing of the Lord's servants thither, when He had prepared the soil.

From BRIGHTON. When the end came of the period of fruitful activity in Lycaonia the Apostle seems to have been in doubt as to his next sphere of labour. It is suggested that the directions of the Holy Spirit (ver. 6) were given in a similar way to those in chapter 13 (ver. 4), that is, that the Apostle and his companions abstained from preaching the word in Asia in accordance with the directions of those who

sent them forth from Antioch. In contrast to this, could not the "suffering not" by the "Spirit of Jesus" (ver. 8) be considered an individual inward experience—a Divine intuition as to what was wisest or best?

It is interesting to note that while Asia (the region in which they were forbidden to preach the Word) was represented in Jerusalem at Pentecost, there is no record of any from Macedonia having been present.

To us this story of the preaching of the gospel for the first time in Europe is specially interesting, for was it not the dawn in this then dark Gentile continent of a day which (though its light has often been obscured by the clouds of superstition and doubt) has not yet closed? whereas, in those favoured regions from Jerusalem to Troas, where the Word was first preached, zealously and faithfully, there is left to day scarcely a vestige of the ancient testimony.

Paul did not go to Macedonia as he *might* have gone to Bithynia (ver. 7); but in response to a definite Divine revelation. How unmistakable the call, yet "when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no relief, but we were afflicted on every side; without were fightings, within were fears" (2 Cor. 7. 5). The opposition which attended their advent was not a happy augury of the success of their mission, but the truth triumphed, and in token of its firm establishment witness the beautiful tribute paid to the Churches of Macedonia by the Apostle in 2 Cor. 8. 1, and elsewhere.

Regarding the question as to whom joined Paul and his fellow-workers at Troas, it seems evident from the altered pronoun that Luke—the historian of the Acts—for one, joined them. It would appear from 2 Cor. 2. 12 that Paul expected to meet Titus here, and his absence occasioned the Apostle no little disappointment.

A QUESTION.

A remark in one of the above leads us to ask for clear proof of when Paul first preached the gospel in Galatia.

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

*Psalm 20.**(Continued from page 72.)*

From PICKERING. In this Psalm Jehovah is manifest as One with great power ; thus with this as the centre of our thought we can form many branches of thought. Thus
The power of Jehovah :—

“ The name of the God of Jacob set thee up on high ” (ver. 1).

“ In the name of our God will we set up our banners ” (ver. 5).

The power of Jehovah : Its blessings shared by man :—

“ Jehovah answer thee in the day of trouble ” (ver. 1).

“ Grant thee thy heart's desire, and fulfil all thy counsel ” (ver. 4).

“ Jehovah fulfil all thy petitions ” (ver. 5).

How obtained :—

“ Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice ” (ver. 3).

Whence obtained :—

“ Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion ” (ver. 2).

“ He will answer from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand ” (ver. 6).

The effect :—

“ We will triumph in Thy salvation ” (ver. 5).

“ Now I know that Jehovah saveth His anointed ; He will answer from His holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand. Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will make mention of the name of Jehovah our God.”

“ They are bowed down and fallen ; but we are risen and stand upright. Save, Lord.”

“ Let the King answer us when we call ” (verses 6-9).

Thus the Psalm affords a guide by which God's people may know how to obtain help from God.

The factors forming this Psalm are inseparable.

The extensive detail relating to Jehovah's power in ver. 7 gives us an idea of what that power is.

“ Some trust in chariots, and some in horses :

But we will make mention of the name of Jehovah our God."

All the strength of a Pharaoh-host overthrown by an element at God's command.

But what would man benefit if he could not share in these victories? Ah yes! God does deal with man: "I will make them an altar unto God, Who answered me in the day of my distress" (Genesis 35. 3); "Is any among you suffering? let him pray" (James 5.13).

Having thus seen God's faithfulness to man, let us look at the manner of obtaining such help. Verses 2 and 6 of this Psalm appear to give us some assistance. First, the place from which God's power is sent forth is noticed to be God's House. . . .

The Woman in Her Sphere.

ZAIN.

She considereth a field and buyeth it

With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

RESUMING our consideration of the virtuous woman at the seventh point of her description we find that she is not too easily satisfied. She is prepared to buy when she can find something worthy of her attention. She will have been looking forward to this and with thrifty care will have in her hand the needful price; saved from waste and from purchases of more doubtful value that she may be able to buy this field when the opportunity comes.

There are several fields that might be commended to the attention of women of God who have the wherewithal to buy them. We refer to fields strictly within their sphere where they may find profitable occupation that will be fruitful for time to come.

It goes without saying that time and money spent in less profitable ways cannot be available if a field of labour for and in the Lord is sought.

The vineyard that the virtuous woman plants is planted with the fruit of her hands. A little needlework if done for the Lord, whether for His saints or for others who are poor in this world's goods, may be so planted as to bring forth fruit.

We may connect here a verse in Psalm 107. because we especially write for hungry people. In the first part of the Psalm (verses 4 to 9) we read of the hungry and thirsty souls crying unto Jehovah, Who delivers them and leads them by a straight way to go to a city of habitation that they could not find by themselves, and satisfying them there with food; but in the last part of the Psalm (verses 33 to 43) we read of the hungry being made to dwell in a well-watered land where they may prepare a city of habitation for others and sow fields and plant vineyards and get them fruits of increase.

So that while on the one hand we may bless God for bringing us to His City (see Heb. 12. 22) and satisfying our hungry souls with food, it is also true that in another sense we may well be hungry still (see Matt. 5. 6). If then we are hungry He will occupy us in building in His city and in sowing the fields and planting the fields that belong thereto. Working women should note the words of John 4. 36, and imitate verse 39 rather than swell the numbers of the unemployed.

For Youngest Believers.

ETERNAL SECURITY.

AMONG the many enquiring thoughts which pass through the young believer's mind is the subject of eternal security; it is also one upon which there are many erroneous ideas among Christians generally, very many of whom hold and teach that it is possible for the believer to be lost again after being once saved.

If we wish to have accurate information on this as on all spiritual matters, we must come to the only source of knowledge of the things of God ; that is, the Scriptures.

First, let us read the passages which tell us that eternal life is a free gift. We read in Romans 6. 23, "For the wages of sin is death ; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." In John 3. 16 and 36, "Whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life" ; "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life" ; and notice especially John 10. 23—(the words of the Lord Jesus Christ), "I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand . . . and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

Is it not helpful to know that we are secure in the keeping both of the Father and the Son ? These and many other portions of the Word show that the one who has received the Christ of God as Saviour is the happy possessor of this life that cannot be lost.

But what about the verses which those who believe otherwise always quote to prove (as they think) their case ? We shall not lose anything by looking at them, but rather we shall gain. 1 Cor. 9. 27, "lest . . . I myself should be rejected," is one of the verses often used in this way ; but if the preceding verses are read it will be found that the subject is not gift, but reward. The Apostle recognized the need of the utmost care in his life, lest he should be rejected from the prize ; or, in other words, "forfeit the prize."

There is a difference between receiving as a guilty sinner the free gift of God, which is eternal life, and running in a race for a prize ; the one is something for nothing, the other is a prize earned.

(To be continued.)

“DISCERNING THE BODY.”

A REVIEW.

MANY of our readers will remember with pleasure a series of articles, by Mr. L. W. G. Alexander, that appeared in this magazine in the year 1901 (volume 13) under the heading “REMNANT TIMES.” These papers gave a very clear and perspicuous account of various stages in the history of the remnant people that were brought back to Jerusalem in the days of Zerubbabel, Haggai, Ezra; and applied the teaching with great force and emphasis to our efforts in the present day in connexion with the building of the spiritual House of God. Space will only allow of very brief extracts, and we will therefore ask all our readers to whom volume 13 is accessible to give their attention to the healthful teaching contained in “REMNANT TIMES.” All who have enjoyed the sound and searching words contained therein will join in our regret that the writer has withdrawn from the Community in which his love and his labour were expended and still more on reading his pamphlet “DISCERNING THE BODY,” which is an unequivocal denial and recantation of the principles which he maintained and enforced in the articles on “REMNANT TIMES.” His present position can be best described in his own words, for as he truly said, “neutral ground between the House of God and spiritual Babylon there is none, and those who have never reached the former must certainly learn sooner or later that they are still in some of the various domains of the latter.” But we will give some quotations from “REMNANT TIMES” to show how completely he was in harmony with the teaching which he now so unsparingly denounces.

Mr. A. having first directed the attention of readers to the books of the Old Testament dealing with the remnant times goes on in the first article to point out how

for more than seventy years God had no dwelling place on earth. . . . It was not possible during the seventy years of the captivity for God's people to build again a house for Him.

Then, after describing the ways of God in connexion with the raising up of Cyrus and in the preparation of those whose spirits He raised, he says :—

The company that went up with Zerubbabel numbered together forty and two thousand three hundred and three-score, and this feeble remnant . . . Great things, indeed, had God done for them in these days long gone past, yet things which are surely surpassed in their greatness by His merciful doings of to-day in the case of many of His people who have passed through an exercise of soul in His presence, known only in reality to Himself, and who like the remnant of old in felt weakness yet with holy confidence in the Lord, find themselves gathered together in the place where He has chosen to cause His name to dwell, forming there a dwelling place for God upon the earth.

In the second article of the series the distinction between setting up the altar and building the house is clearly set forth, and how the refusal of the remnant to have fellowship with those whom God had not joined with them led to bitterest opposition. This article (page 32) is worthy of most attentive perusal. So is the third article, in which the subject is pursued and wherein is found the following deeply solemn paragraph (page 61).

This is indeed no pleasing work for the flesh, nor is it the path in which nature would lead us to tread ; and all who desire to enter on such a pathway need increasingly to have real dealings with God, so that they may know His strength, which alone can enable them to stand in the conflict they have entered upon. Assuredly, they who do not know continually the strengthening of the Lord, when the reality of the self-withering work to which they have put their hands is apprehended by them, will either give all up in disappointment

and speak evil of what they once professed to strengthen,

but the glory of which they never really learned, or settle down in indifference and permit the purposes of God to be accomplished by others without their aid. These considerations, beloved, are stern and real, and may well lead us to covet more thorough dealings with God in private individually ; and may also explain in great measure why some, who appeared at one time to take up the Lord's work and identify themselves with His house with zest, quickly found their own level and drifted toward more genial quarters and work more pleasing to the natural man.

How clearly, alas ! these lines, written in apparent fellowship with God, have been exemplified in the writer, and we ask the reader to compare the tone and character of these weighty lines with what is to be found in Mr. A.'s new pamphlet.

From the fourth article in “REMNANT TIMES” we quote the following :—

He called not His emancipated people in the days of which we write to the borderland between Babylon’s influence and Judah’s domains where an intermixing and a passing to and fro at pleasure could be freely indulged in, but to Jerusalem city to be identified with the House of God there and to know the rule of Jehovah according to the law of Moses, the man of God, which was given for all Israel. This being unquestionably so, according to the analogy of the faith apart altogether from the many definite portions of New Testament Scripture which speak to the point, we might expect to find His will the same for His people to-day. And so it surely is, for neutral ground between the House of God and spiritual Babylon there is none, and those who have never reached the former must certainly learn sooner or later that they are still in some of the various domains of the latter. . . . What is the meaning of the thoughtless cry of to-day, “The house is in ruins”? Is it not too often in order that they who raise it may claim liberty to do that which is right in their own eyes? The House of God is the place where God’s authority must be known and acknowledged, therefore many seek to belittle the vital truths connected with His House.

It is well that God’s people should be reminded of this fact which all will surely admit is uncontrovertible, namely that a feeble remnant of God’s ancient people who had escaped from Babylonish captivity built, at Jerusalem, the place of God’s choice, a house for Him, which, though bereft of all the glory of Solomon’s Temple and in comparison to it “as nothing,” was as truly the house of God as was Solomon’s.

These articles were published in 1901. In 1902 Mr. A., who had special charge of the Young Believers’ Department, also contributed a series of papers, “NOTES ON PROVERBS,” in some of which the evils of Christendom were vividly depicted; a very useful paper on “INTERNAL DISCIPLINE,” and two on “THE PROSPERITY OF FOOLS.” All these appeared to come from one in fullest sympathy with the teaching the Lord was giving in connexion with God’s House and Kingdom. But 1902 and 1903 were years of great stress in Scotland (for some particulars of which see *A Record of Divine Deliverance* published with this magazine, vol. 17, 1905), and in the early part of the latter year Mr. A. withdrew from the Community and, of course, from his share in the editorial work of NEEDED TRUTH.

In the latter part of the year 1903 Mr. A. sought and found a place for repentance, and was received back into the assembly which he had left. But he was never after-

wards associated either with the editing of this magazine or with the work of oversight in the assemblies of God. In his pamphlet he says (par. 10 page 6) that he has been associated with us

since the separation from the companies of so-called Open Brethren which commenced about the end of 1892, and for a few years previous to the Autumn of 1903 he was co-editor of the periodical entitled NEEDED TRUTH. It is with very sincere regret that he has now to sever his connexion with these assemblies, for during the past fourteen years he has learned to love and to honour many of the saints who are associated with them. Indeed he is free to admit that the esteem with which he regarded certain brethren and his conviction as to their deep sincerity of purpose to do the will of God have been instrumental to a degree in keeping him amongst the Needed Truth party since the end of 1903.

As Mr. A. makes no mention here of his previous withdrawal from the Community, it has seemed necessary to give some of the foregoing particulars to prevent misapprehension on the part of readers of his pamphlet.

Before coming to the pamphlet itself we must also refer to an article by Mr. A. entitled "PENTECOSTAL TIMES," which was submitted for insertion in NEEDED TRUTH in the early part of 1906. Because in his pamphlet Mr. A. warns his readers (par. 8 page 5)

Let these facts have their due weight with Christians who constantly subject themselves to the teachings of any particular party. That the minds of such Christians can be trained to think in a certain groove and to view truth in a certain light is unquestionable, and that light may not be the light of God. How easy it is for such who never have anything but one view of things presented to their minds to form the idea that their view is unassailable when all the time it is not God's truth at all but only man's reasonings. Rome knows this right well, and consequently endeavours to hinder her adherents from reading or hearing anything opposed to her own teaching. Let Christians beware when the exigencies of the system in which they are found require its leaders to plead with them not to read, or to lend their ears to, the teaching of any save that of their own particular party, for it is one of the surest signs of a man-made system that could possibly be manifested.

It was said of the ancient gods that they first sought to blind the eyes of those they were about to ruin. Mr. A. follows their line of attack in the above paragraph, wherein at the very onset he uses all his power to insinuate dark, damning doubt, and so blot out in the reader the inner consciousness of having known and done the Will of God in those matters of which his paper deals. In effect

he says, "Hath God taught you about the One Fellowship, the One House, reception into the Assembly and expulsion therefrom? Impossible! These things are not of or from God, they are born of party teaching and distorted views of truth, they are from beneath and not from above." In vain the net is spread in sight of any bird. At the same time he makes it clear (by inference of course) that he is the Daniel come to judgment who has not so prostituted his sense of hearing, he could not be guilty of that for which he condemns others. He thinks for himself. We venture to suggest that he is misguided in this and both his paper "PENTECOSTAL TIMES" and his pamphlet "DISCERNING THE BODY" far from being productions of an original or independent thinker are rather examples of imitative and reproductive art.

Many will be aware that Mr. A. had submitted an article for insertion which never appeared in these pages, and may think our rejection of it laid us open to Mr. A.'s stricture just quoted. For the sake of such, we shall give a brief account of the paper and of our reasons for rejecting it.

After some introductory matter as to the nature of the prophetic scriptures of the Old Testament the writer speaks of the Jewish rejection of the Christ and of the preaching on the Day of Pentecost. He says:—

Thus after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus we behold a commencement made in the fulfilment of Old Testament Prophecy, and nothing is to be seen at Pentecost, save that which any one instructed in the prophetic Scriptures could easily account for. Peter could readily lay his finger on the portion of the Old Testament that explained what was taking place. . . The question then arises, How are we to regard these persons who received the apostle's teaching as to Him whom God had made both Lord and Christ and were baptized unto remission of sins? Our answer is that in them we may discern the commencement of the formation of the spiritual Israel the nucleus of the new nation. . . .

A little further on Mr. A. goes on to say:—

Then it was that God raised up the Apostle Paul who was not one of the twelve, and revealed to him . . . the mystery of the Church which is the Body of Christ; of this mystery the Old Testament knows nothing. . . . This mystery was not revealed, nor does there appear to be ground for supposing that the building of the Body was commenced until Israel had

definitely rejected the offer of the King and the kingdom as made after the Holy Spirit was poured out . . . Many Jews and afterwards Gentiles accepted the testimony of the twelve and were thus constituted a people prepared to accept the King and have the kingdom restored. They looked for an earthly kingdom. . . . But their hopes were not to be realized at that time. The kingdom was delayed and the revelation of the mystery came to them through Paul ; and

if accepted they would find themselves associated with the higher purpose of God and blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. . . .

Then further on this conditional entrance of believers into the Body is again asserted :—

Many doubtless there were, who had their place in both, who accepted the fuller revelation of the truth as given through Paul and consequently had a place in the Body ; but it is also abundantly clear that a very large number never advanced from their Jewish position, and instead of welcoming the new revelation they became its constant opposers.

Associated with this latter company in a very marked manner was James the Lord's brother who occupied a place of great pre-eminence in the Church in Jerusalem. He it is who writes the epistle bearing his name. . . .

Further on Mr. A. says :—

Both the elect Jewish remnant, who are viewed by Peter as an holy nation and by James as the twelve-tribed nation, and the members of the Body were outwardly one in testimony. They formed one community. But whilst this is so it must not be assumed that oneness of sentiment and acceptance of truth characterized them. The fact is most certainly otherwise. The Jewish remnant never rose above Jewish hopes and continued to maintain their Jewish standing, being zealous for the law. Jerusalem was their centre, and James, who occupied the prominent place in the church there, was their leader. . . . They of the circumcision never advanced into the light of the revelation of the mystery, but ever strove to lead those who had accepted this truth back into the shadows of Judaism and to bring them under the same yoke of bondage as they themselves bore.

Finally, that there may be no mistake, we are told clearly of two forces at work in the Community, which at the beginning was outwardly one ; of two powerful parties Mr. A. says, one leading backwards and the other led on in the light of God, and he says in conclusion :—

It would seem that all his life Peter remained as a connecting link between these two parties, the respective leaders of which were James and Paul, and we are far from suggesting that in so doing he was not fulfilling the place and doing the work that God intended.

We wrote to Mr. A. that in his paper there was much with which we could agree, and also much that might be

regarded as a fair contribution to the discussion of matters not without difficulty. But we said that his article went in our judgment much beyond this. There are, in fact, three main lines of teaching in the article "PENTECOSTAL TIMES" which we regard as unsound, and which we could not present to our readers except in the way of warning. He erroneously teaches in "PENTECOSTAL TIMES":—

1. That those of Acts 2. were neither in nor of the Body of Christ ; although they were baptized in one Spirit ;

2. That membership in the Body was contingent upon the acceptance of the Divine Revelation through Paul as to the Mystery ;

3. That the Apostles James and Paul were heads of rival parties.

We wrote to Mr. A. on the matter under three heads :—

1. The substance of what we said under the first head was in the main contained in the article HIS BODY, THE CHURCH, by one of the present writers in last year's NEEDED TRUTH, pages 241, 265, 289, wherein we gave reasons for maintaining that the building of the Church, which afterwards came to be called the Church which is His Body, commenced on the Day of Pentecost. We beg to refer our readers to these articles, and solicit their careful and critical perusal thereof.

2. Secondly, we wrote on the UNITY OF THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE. To our understanding the statements made as to rival parties headed by James and Paul can only lead to the undermining of the integrity of the New Testament Scriptures, and we accordingly sought to show our friend how far from the fact it was to represent the apostles as in any kind of opposition to one another.

3. Finally, we wrote some brief notes on THE EPISTOLARY SCRIPTURES, showing the true harmony between the writings of Paul and James and Peter and John.

The substance of these last two papers may yet be published. Meanwhile, we desire to point out that what we refused to publish was matter that we believed to be fund-

amentally unsound, and calculated to undermine the faith of the disciples who are readers of this magazine.

Mr. A. has acknowledged the receipt of our communication and courteously thanked us for it. But he has made no reply to it, nor in any way expressed himself as having in any degree been led to modify the very seriously unsound views contained in the paper.

We shall now come to Mr. A.'s recent pamphlet and let our readers hear his reasons for going back to the so-called Open Brethren, thus building up again those things which he had previously been destroying and proving himself a transgressor (Gal. 2. 18).

We have already quoted from two of his introductory paragraphs, and pass on now to what Mr. A. calls the special teaching which lies at the foundation of that which he is leaving. This, he says, (par 12) is

what has been termed "The Church and churches of God." It is contended that in Scripture the term The Church, meaning the Body of Christ, always views all the saints of the present dispensation from Pentecost to the coming of the Lord. In this church there is no responsibility: Christ is its Builder and Preserver. It is not on the earth: it is heavenly. It is not affected in any way by a person's behaviour; in it there are no distinctions such as male and female, bond and free—all are one in Christ.

- 13.—Now the danger of this teaching lies not in that it is not truth, but in this, that it is only part of the truth, and that part is taken for the whole. That there is such a view of the Church, the Body of Christ, in the Scriptures we cheerfully admit, but we also believe that there are other views of the subject with which we propose to deal. Whilst holding tenaciously to the clearly stated fact that there is One Body and glorying in this truth, we believe that the Body is set forth in Scripture in what may be termed three distinct aspects. Thus,

The Body is spoken of locally.

The Body is spoken of universally.

The Body is spoken of dispensationally.

- 14.—As to the local view 1 Cor. 12. 27 proves conclusively that the church of God in Corinth was the Body of Christ in Corinth. That the Church of God includes all who are in Christ Jesus is thus proved, for the church of God and the Body of Christ in any city are one and co-extensive. Hence this local aspect of the Body, which is the only unity recognized by God in any city at any time, carries with it responsibilities and obligations. The figure of the human body is advanced in 1 Cor. 12. to prove and enforce these. Some members are more honourable than others, some are more feeble than others, some are more comely than others; there is need and opportunity for caring for one another in the body, there is suffering in the body. These and other things are certainly said of the human body in 1 Cor. 12., but they are there advanced to prove that in the spiritual Body of Christ, the church of God in Corinth, they also hold good.

- 15.—Then as to the universal aspect of the Body this is probably the view most frequently referred to in the Scriptures. By the universal aspect we mean the world-wide aspect, embracing all the sanctified in Christ Jesus, all the called saints on earth at any one time. To this such Scriptures as 1 Cor. 12. 13; Eph. 3. 10; 4. 4; 4. 16 among others refer. Let it be carefully noted that in the aspect of the Body referred to in 1 Cor. 12. 13 such distinctions as Jew and Greek, bond and free are present; and that special legislation is given to the Body of Christ in Corinth for the behaviour of male and female. It is of the deepest importance that this aspect of the Body should be spiritually discerned by God's people. It cannot be seen, no one can behold it, but since the doctrine has been given to us by God in the Scriptures it can be discerned (1 Cor. 11. 29) by the spiritual, even as it is seen by principalities and powers in the heavenlies (Eph. 3. 10).
- 16.—This view of the Body embraces only the living members of Christ upon earth at any one time: the dead in Christ are not seen in it: those who are yet to be created anew are not seen in it. It is always upon the earth and the members are always seen in mortal body. We are told that every few years the entire human body changes, every atom disappears and is replaced by fresh material. Thus, when we look upon a friend, year after year, we see the same person yet not the same flesh and bones. So is it with the world-wide aspect of the Body of Christ. That body is ever changing all through the dispensation, yet it is ever the same One Body, and will ever be found on the earth until it is received up in glory (1 Tim. 3. 16. Members) are ever being put to sleep and are no longer seen in it, new members are ever being added; and thus the living Head in the glory ever has a living Body below, and this is the only world-wide unity that He ever recognizes on the earth.
- 17.—This is the unity of the Spirit of Eph. 4. 3, and the house of God of 1 Tim. 3. 15-16. This unity never was destroyed, nor can it be; this house never was in ruins, nor can it be; for whilst we may not be able to say who are of it or who are not, nevertheless the firm foundation of God standeth; compare 1 Tim. 3. 15 with 2 Tim. 2. 19. Now in this aspect of the Body there is responsibility—a man may behave himself aright or he may misbehave, he may edify the Body or he may fail to do so, and the Body may suffer (Eph. 4. 16); but that Body abides, that Spirit made unity remains, and despite all the divisions caused amongst the members on earth by man it is still seen in its perfect unity by principalities and powers in the heavenlies and by God, and may also be discerned by us provided God grants us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in such knowledge. It is a spiritual Body, a spiritual unity, hence it can only be seen by spirit beings; and by the spiritual of God's people it can be mentally discerned.
- 18.—This Body is God's dwelling place upon earth during the present interval: it is God's inner-temple where in the Spirit He abides (Eph. 2. 22). The unseen bond which binds all together is the Holy Spirit. When the Lord Jesus walked this earth God's temple was the Body of His Son—God was manifest in flesh. During the present interval the body of each believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and all who are thus indwelt by the Holy Spirit on earth at any one time are the temple of God. They are this because of the sovereign operation of God the Spirit and not because of anything that they have done. How blessed and elevating is this view of truth! How precious and how enlarging it is! It truly leads the soul to glory in the Lord. How different it is from being occupied with man's teachings and parties, where doctrines and men are the badge and centre of gathering, and where the theme of glorying is what they are and what they have done.
- 19.—The third aspect of the Body is the age-long one embracing all who are

a new creation in Christ during the present interval. In this aspect there is no human responsibility, there are no distinctions such as male and female and the like, all is eternally perfect and complete in Christ—one new Man. God is here the Workman according to the teaching of Ephesians chapters 1 and 2. God is the Builder. Although it is constantly asserted it has yet to be proved from the Word of God that Christ is spoken of as the Builder of His Body. He is certainly the Builder of the "church" of Matt. 16. 18, but there is solid ground for questioning if that is the Body. The members of His Body were chosen in Him before times eternal. The God who raised Him from the dead and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church which is His Body also raised and seated the members in Him. They are one in His Resurrection and glory, and will be manifested in all His perfection in the future. Of this wondrous union of Christ and His members Adam and Eve are the only figures with which Scripture supplies us. Their name was called Adam whilst as yet only the man was seen. God saw the woman whilst as yet she was hidden in the man and named them both Adam, just as Christ and His members are called Christ (1 Cor. 12. 12, Eph. 3. 8). Adam was put to sleep and from the rib taken from his side by God the woman was builded and Adam could say, "Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh." In this dispensational aspect the Body of Christ though perfect in the purpose of God when Christ was raised from the dead is not yet completed; whilst Christ rests at the right hand of God (typified in Adam's sleep) the administration of the mystery (Eph. 3. 9) goes on, the Body is being builded by God, and presently the Lord Jesus will again be able to say "A Body hast Thou prepared Me" as truly as He uttered these words when in lowly grace He was found on earth in fashion as a man. Truly this is a great mystery when we are permitted to speak thus concerning Christ and the church (Eph. 5. 32).

20.—Thus whilst Needed Truth brethren emphasize the last mentioned aspect of the Body of Christ they totally ignore the first and second aspects, a proper apprehension of which is absolutely essential if God's people are to be saved from partyism. It has often been remarked that part of the truth is as dangerous as positive falsehood, and the truth of the saying has been demonstrated by the system they have built upon part of the truth regarding the Body of Christ.

21.—Then as to the churches of God it is contended that a church of God is a term used to designate a company of Christians who are found together in obedience to the truth of God. We shall turn to the Scriptures to learn what God says on the point, and in 1 Cor. 1. 2 we shall find the only definition of a church of God that the Scriptures supply as far as the present writer knows.

The church of God which is in Corinth,
(even) them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus,
called saints.

22.—If the last two statements do not describe how, and of whom, the church of God in Corinth was composed then words have no meaning whatever. The church of God is the company of those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, the company of the called saints; it embraces all such and excludes none. This church of God is co-extensive with what we have referred to as the local aspect of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12. 27), and not one of the sanctified in Christ Jesus is outside of it. They come together because by the grace of God they are the Church of God, not in order to be the church of God. Moreover they are what they are, namely, the church of God, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, equally with all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place. In every place where such are found, there, consequently, is found a church of God. None save those who call upon the name of the Lord are saved (Rom. 10. 13-14), and all such saved ones compose the church of God wherever they

are found. What was true of Corinth was true of every city and hamlet for all were called by God into fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1. 9). This fellowship is unconditional to all who call upon the name of the Lord, to all who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and is co-extensive with what we have referred to as the world-wide aspect of the Body of Christ, and is identical with the house of God.

- 23.—But we will doubtless be met with the constantly employed argument that the second letter to Corinth is addressed to the church of God, and that there is a member of the Body of Christ outside whom they are told to receive into the church of God. Now is this argument sound? We answer No; and for the following reasons. In the first place the Corinthians are never told to put the man referred to in the first letter (chapter 5.) out of the church of God. The words employed by the Spirit are these: "Put away the wicked man from amongst yourselves." They were responsible for any they permitted "among themselves," but they neither received into, nor put out of, the church of God. They might welcome "among themselves" some who were never in the church of God, or they might refuse to welcome those who were in the church of God. The church of God embraces all, and only, the called out and brought together company of the sanctified in Christ Jesus, and although the oneness and integrity of that company may never be manifested before the world it is ever seen and known to God. The call of God's ecclesia is a spiritual call, and the bringing together is a bringing together in the Spirit. We plead that this point be grasped. The church of God, then, embraces none save those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, and it includes all who have been thus sanctified. We do not stay to enquire if all believers are sanctified in Christ Jesus, if all are called saints; if the day is not past when with intelligent Christians the question requires to be asked it is hopeless to try to help such. We can only leave them alone.
- 24.—Then let it be carefully noted that in the second epistle the Corinthians are never told to receive the person referred to in chapter 2. 6-8 into the church of God any more than they are told in the first epistle to put a man away from the church of God. They are told to forgive him and to comfort him and confirm their love towards him. They are not told to receive him into the church of God for the simple reason that he was in the church of God, and since by a life characterized by righteousness this fact was manifested, their obligation was to permit him to find his birthright place amongst them. If the facts here set forth regarding the putting away of 1 Cor. 5. and the receiving of 2 Cor. 2. are grasped, the weakness of the argument which is one of the main stays of the Needed Truth position is exposed.
- 25.—It is generally admitted that there is no Scripture to guide us either by way of precept or example as to receiving into a church of God. Why then do brethren presume to do so? Is not the silence of Scripture as important as its utterances? There must be a reason for this silence, and the present writer believes that reason to be that the church of God is not in man's hands but in God's, that He alone knows definitely, and is responsible for, who are in it. He only receives in and He never puts out. Men put away from amongst themselves and men receive amongst themselves in their assemblies, and for this they are responsible, but both their putting away and their receiving may be very different from God's. That those who never were in the church of God have been associated with the assemblies of the saints, and that those who were in the church of God were not permitted to be in those assemblies, is clearly seen in the Scriptures (Gal. 2. 4, Jude 4, 3 John 9-10).
- 26.—Not only do we find the expression church of God in the Scriptures but we read also of churches of God. In every city, town or hamlet where there are saints of God there, consequently, there is a church of God, meaning

the community of God's people in that place. They have been called out and separated from the world by God, and that call and that separation are realities whatever may be manifested to the gaze of men. They may be split up into parties, and they may not be calling on the Lord out of a pure heart, yet before God they are one assembly. The germ of this party evil was present in Corinth: they were exalting men, instead of exalting Christ and glorying in the Lord; and all such glorying and all such building is of the flesh and must be burned up, whether in the eyes of men it appears to be gold, silver or precious stones, wood, hay or stubble. The gold and the stubble will perish alike: only Christ will stand.

- 27.—When a local company is described by the term church of God in the singular number, the locality is always indicated in some way; so also with the use of the plural number (churches of God), the localities are always specified. When however the use of the term in the singular number is employed without any limits as to locality it views all the members of Christ upon earth at that time. Thus we read of "Jews, Greeks, and the church of God." "I persecuted the church of God" and so forth. It is therefore quite Scriptural to speak of all Christians on earth as The Church of God.
- 28.—Now compare with this the teaching which underlies the Needed Truth position. The church of God in any city is the company of Christians large or small which is in connexion with that fellowship. There may be thousands of Christians not with them, but these form no part of the church of God in that city. It is not enough that they are sanctified in Christ Jesus, it is not enough that they are called saints: there are other requirements. Certain attainments in knowledge are demanded. This may be denied, but that in actual practice it exists is clear to any one. A person must profess to see that the sects are wrong, he must profess to have formed an opinion as to the claims of the various assemblies of the Brethren and to have judged that the Needed Truth Brethren are right and all others wrong. That this is so goes without saying: the position demands it. The writer knows at the moment of a certain Christian who has been seeking fellowship for many months but has not yet been received, because brethren are not satisfied that this party sees and endorses the Needed Truth position sufficiently. That the person in question is a most exemplary Christian is freely admitted.
- 29.—Thus the Needed Truth company in any city claims to be the church of God in that city to the exclusion of all others who are sanctified in Christ Jesus and called saints, thus denying 1 Cor. 1. 2. They are the church of God because of their professed acceptance of certain doctrines; and it is therefore clear that doctrines are the ground of their gathering and are the bond which binds the system together. None save those who endorse these doctrines or submit to them can find their place there. It would be well if these Christians would take their Bibles and endeavour to find where a code of doctrines is presented to the saints for their acceptance before they can be the church of God.
- 30.—Then it is claimed for these assemblies that they together form the Fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, that they form the House of God, the unity of the Spirit, and much else. Indeed there is nothing that the Scriptures show to be true of the Body of Christ in its universal aspect, but these assemblies claim to be true of themselves alone. One really wonders if the solemnity, and the grotesque nature, of their claims will ever cause certain of them to question if they have not been mistaken in their interpretation of the Word of God. That the practical results of the advancement of these claims are pernicious need surprise no one, for saints are thereby encouraged to be occupied with themselves and what they suppose they are to God instead of being occupied with the Lord and with that which He is doing. Consequently a spirit of self-sufficiency

is engendered, allied to a resting and glorying in their system, which is only equalled by the intolerance manifested toward any who dare to question these claims. That it is not so with all we gladly admit, and are free to own that there are amongst them notable examples of grace and Christ-like forbearance.

- 31.—It is claimed for each assembly that it is a divine creation and for the entire system that it is the only divine unity upon earth. When these claims are admitted brethren are logically forced to declare that nothing that is divine, so far as an assembly is concerned, can come into existence apart from the assemblies in their fellowship. Let Christians understand that this means that God and His Spirit and His Word are not sufficient to form an assembly, but that Needed Truth brethren must be instrumental in bringing it into existence. Supposing a company of Christians was found that endorsed the Needed Truth position and desired to adopt it, the first thing required of that company would be that it should cease to break bread and abandon its assembly position. Then Needed Truth brethren would give it permission to come together as an assembly of God. It is not that they would recognise the work of God in that company and receive them because they are manifestly what they call a church of God, but it is the permission granted by the Needed Truth brethren that constitutes them a church of God. This is what they term the planting of assemblies. In view of the fact that these things are advanced in all solemnity by the most prominent leaders of the fellowship one ceases to wonder that the presumptuous claims of Rome are meekly acquiesced in by intelligent and learned men and women.
- 32.—It is only right to add that these extreme claims are developments of the system: they did not exist from the beginning. Certain brethren doubtless had the establishment of them in view, but these were a small minority. But the reverse is now the case, for as these things were advanced little by little, brethren who refused to endorse them had either to leave the fellowship, or they were forced out in one way or another, with the result that what was once a small minority is now the ruling spirit in the community.
- 33.—Reference must now be made to the developments in connexion with the subject of rule, for we are certain that many of the saints are ignorant of what they are submitting to, and have never grasped the nature of the system they are strengthening. Time was when the work of God in any individual could be recognized by the assembly in which he laboured, and he could find his place among overseeing men when the latter had discerned that God had put in his heart a desire and fitness to care for the saints. In later time, however, the subject of the Elderhood was advanced, and from this was evolved the idea that an assembly could not acknowledge any one as an overseer but that the so-called District Oversight alone had this power. Hence, to-day, before any one can have the place of an overseer in a local assembly he must first be brought to the district oversight meeting, and there he is made or placed as an overseer by the acknowledgment of the district. If, on the other hand, it may be thought necessary to cease to recognize one as an overseer who has been known as such a similar process has to be adopted, namely, he must first be "deposed" by the district and thereafter by the assembly. These are things that are in actual operation in the fellowship, and this notwithstanding the fact that no man has ever yet opened his Bible and shown saints a single instance of a district oversight meeting having been held in Apostolic days, or a single command from God that such should be held.
- 34.—Now if the power claimed by these brethren to thus place overseers, which for practical purposes is identical with appointing them, is actually theirs, it is surely not too much to ask that the proof be advanced; if they hold that they have the power to appoint others as elders we are

surely justified in requesting that they tell us by what power they themselves have been placed. When they can show us the authority that has given them this place, we may then be inclined to consider their claim to have authority to place others. The fact is they cannot do this: they assumed the place themselves, or were permitted to assume it by the consent of others, and then having got the place they claim the right to place others in a way they were never placed themselves, and will not suffer others to reach the same place in the same way as they themselves have reached it. Surely there is manifest inconsistency in such conduct.

- 35.—But more recently other developments have been introduced. It is now contended that some have oversight in the assembly, some in the county, some in the country, some in the fellowship as a whole. Thus from the assembly one reaches out through various circles of rulers, ever diminishing in numbers, till the widest circle is reached where a few men, or it may be one man, rule, or rules, over all. Many of the saints must have heard these things taught, and that we are not writing of things that have no existence can be proved by any one by reference to *Intelligence* for December, 1906, where the expression "Brethren who are recognized as responsible for oversight in the widest circles" is found. Whilst freely admitting that certain brethren are more highly gifted than others, and consequently have greater responsibilities than others, the present writer most resolutely combats their assumption to a place and circle above their fellow-overseers. Such a circle did at one time exist, namely, the Apostolic circle in Jerusalem; and if these brethren can show any claim to be endowed with similar authority we will fully acknowledge it, but not till then.
- 36.—The practical result of these claims and the formation of these "circles" is that in reality the upper circle rules from centre to circumference of the fellowship, and the lower circles exist for the purpose of carrying into effect the will of this upper circle. Written ministry is entirely under their control, and it would be considered a serious wrong to publish anything without their consent; oral ministry is as surely under their control indirectly, for means will quickly be found to silence any one of whose utterances or doctrines they disapprove. Indeed we might well address to them the words of the Apostle to the Corinthians: "What? was it from you that the Word of God came forth? or came it unto you alone?" for if these brethren are not infallible in their interpretation of the Scriptures their actions are intensely solemn in that nothing is allowed to reach the saints, either written or orally save that which is in accordance with their views.
- 37.—We will probably be told as others have been that we are speaking evil of that which once we strengthened, but it is well known that we never strengthened the Needed Truth system in the light of the developments of recent years; and no one can recall a single utterance from our lips that could be so interpreted. Indeed it has been in great measure these very developments which have caused us to examine the foundations on which the position rests, for we have been forced to ask ourselves if a position that leads to such extremes can possibly be of God; and our examination has shown us clearly that it rests upon a mistaken interpretation of the subject of the church and the churches of God, and all the developments of the system result from a position assumed on this false premise.
- 38.—It must be clear to any one from 1 Cor. 11. 27-34 that the evils prevalent in Corinth, in which we may perceive the root of all the divisions and sects among the people of God, were occasioned by the church failing to discern the Body (1 Cor. 11. 29 R.V.). The discerning of the Body was that alone which could deliver from, and counteract the tendency to, partyism. Failing to discern the One Body there were divisions among them; they were making men their centre and their theme of glorying. These men doubtless had their peculiar views and doctrines, and the saints who accepted these doctrines were exalting their favourite teachers and following them.

- 39.—What is seen internally in germ in Corinth is outwardly manifest in our day. The Lord's people are divided into sects and parties through failing to discern the Body, and through making men and the doctrines of men their centre. Now what is the antidote for this? Nothing but the discerning of the Body: to be occupied with God's Centre, the Lord Jesus Christ, and with God's Unity, the unity of the Spirit, the One Body! In no other way will God's saints ever be delivered from partyism and the shame of their divisions be removed; in no other way will they be enabled to speak the same thing (not things) which means to glory in the Lord. We do not say that a manifest unity of God's people will ever be seen on earth, but we do not despair of its being brought about in infinitely greater measure than we have yet seen, and we most sincerely believe that we are indicating God's only highway to such a desirable goal.
- 40.—Doctrines, however far they may be Scriptural, will never bring about a unity that is of God upon the earth. Man's parties and man's fellowships are formed and ruled according to the measure of supposed light they have, and only those who accept and agree with the supposed light of the respective parties can be associated with them. Until saints are delivered from men and their doctrines divisions can only be perpetuated; for no party has *all* the truth, and no party has *only* the truth—it is the One Body on earth, the House of God, the church of the Living God that is the pillar and ground of "The Truth," not any particular party (1 Tim. 3. 15-16). We are persuaded that one of the greatest evils of our day has been the occupying of the minds and hearts of Christians with men's doctrines and with the supposed evils and shortcomings of others of their brethren. By this means the flesh is fed but never the new man, and no one need be surprised at the carnality which is the result.
- 41.—With the present writer, then, the conclusion is irresistible that Needed Truth brethren have most solemnly erred in making certain doctrines the test of fellowship, and in separating Christians who profess to accept these doctrines from their fellows who were and are as godly in life and walk and as sound in the fundamentals of the Christian faith as they. Surely to divide the people of God under such circumstances, merely because of different ideas regarding assembly organization, could only be justified by the most definite command in the Scriptures. This command cannot be produced; on the contrary the command of Scripture is that we give diligence to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, not to divide the members of Christ (Eph. 4. 3).
- 42.—We are in no way surprised, however, that so many at one time associated themselves with this movement, for we believe it is calculated to ensnare those of the people of God who are most sincerely exercised as to seeing the Lord's will done upon the earth, seeing it offers what the heart of man is ever seeking after, namely, some earthly thing to glory in instead of glorying in the Lord; but a survey of the fellowship to-day will surely convince any observer that multitudes have discovered their error in associating themselves with it, for very few are found strengthening it to-day who were identified with it in its earlier stages.
- 43.—We have endeavoured to show in the foregoing pages that God's unity in any city is the Church of God, and that the Church of God embraces the members of Christ in that city (1 Cor. 1. 1-2 with 1 Cor. 12. 27). Further, that the churches of God upon the earth embrace all who are in Christ Jesus and form the One Body which is the unity of the spirit (Eph. 4. 3-4). Man is never called upon in the Scriptures to form any unity, but he is called upon to keep that which God has made. What then is our responsibility as Christians in view of the divided condition of the members of the Body in our day?
- 44.—2 Timothy 2. unquestionably views such a time. Whilst we know that the firm foundation of God (that is the House of God) standeth and will

- stand, we cannot say for certain who are of it or who are not. Men and their doctrines have brought things to such a pass that none but God really knows who are His, none but He can behold the unity that exists despite the disorder. The man of God who desires to be a vessel unto honour must purge himself from these, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace; and if he really does thus comport himself he may know that he is doing so along with all that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. This never for one moment views the definite formation of a new and narrowed circle of unity on the earth: the person who follows these things is one with all who likewise follow them without any effort on his part and without knowing in any way who these are the world over with whom he is thus allied. Those who are occupied with the doctrines and parties of men are not calling on the Lord out of a pure heart. A pure heart means a single heart, a heart that glories in the Lord alone and seeks to build up and strengthen His Body, and recognizes no other unity, no party of man.
- 45.—Our first business, then, as Christians is to discern the Body, though we cannot see it, and give it the place in our hearts that the glorified Head at God's right hand gives it. This will truly lead us to glory in the Lord, for the Body is nothing without the Head. It will cause us to love every member of Christ and to discern a mighty and eternal bond of union between us and every Christian; and it will make us hate the divisions that exist among the members of Christ's Body. This being so we will feel the dishonour that these divisions cause to Christ so deeply in our souls that we will labour to recall all the members of the Body we can reach who are occupied with man's parties to God's Centre, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to God's unity, the unity of the Spirit. We will endeavour in meekness to correct them that oppose themselves if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, the One Body.
- 46.—Further, the discerning of the Body will cause us to endeavour to deliver our brethren from sectarianism and to welcome and to receive them because they are members of Christ, not because they have subscribed to certain doctrines. Our basis of fellowship will be wide enough to admit all who are godly in life and walk and sound in the fundamentals of the Christian faith; and all such will be welcomed to share in all the privileges which are the portion of Christ's members and to discharge the responsibilities to the Head and to the members that may be theirs.
- 47.—And where and with whom can such worthy conduct be possible to us? We answer unhesitatingly that the only position we know of where God's will can thus be given effect is to that occupied by so-called Open Brethren. These Christians do not assume to be the church of God to the exclusion of others, but their assembly position is within the reach of all who give evidence that they are of the church of God. They acknowledge the work of God in individuals and receive them as Christ has received them. They acknowledge also the work of God in companies and are allied to them whether such are known to them or not, or whether they have been instrumental in bringing those companies together or not. Wherever saints are found giving evidence that by the Spirit and Word of God they have been led to acknowledge no name but that of the Lord and no unity but that of the Spirit with these they rejoice to be. They do not acknowledge any man-made fellowship the extent of which can be known by reference to a secret list. They recognize that God's knowledge of what is and what is not of Himself is greater than theirs, and they leave it to Him to define, as occasion demands, the bounds of their fellowship.
- 48.—Thus there is room amongst them for the discerning of the Body, and in principle their position offers the only possible basis of Christian fellowship for the members of the Body. It goes without saying that there will be differences of opinion amongst them regarding many things, and that there may be actually undesirable practices connected with these

assemblies, but if we are enabled by God to truly discern the Body we will also be enabled to distinguish between scriptural principles of gathering and erroneous practices amongst those so gathered. We will also be delivered from attempting to make our attainments in knowledge the standard by which others are required to walk. It has been the attempt to do the latter that has wrought all the havoc among saints gathered to the name of the Lord. It has been the attempt to establish a uniformity of doctrine and practice that has led to the formation of the various parties and fellowships among them, and wherever such attempts are made they can only result in repeated divisions and the multiplying of parties as experience has ever shown.

49.—Thus we have endeavoured to show from the Word of God why we differ with the doctrines of the Needed Truth party and why at length we withdraw from assembly fellowship with these Christians. It is no desire of ours to have to part company with these Christians for many of them have endeared themselves to us in many ways, but the system they are in compels us to part, for we cannot give practical effect to the discerning of the Body among them. We have also sought to indicate from the Word of God why we hope to be associated with the Christians we have named.

We have, for convenience of reference, numbered the paragraphs in Mr. A.'s pamphlet, of which we have printed above rather more than three-quarters, only omitting some of the early paragraphs which consist mainly in an exposition of John 7. 17, and such application thereof as may be found in paragraph 8 quoted above (page 100). We now proceed to make a few detailed comments on some of Mr. A.'s paragraphs.

But first it is our bounden duty to protest most strongly against the unwarrantable use by Mr. A. of such expressions as Needed Truth system, Needed Truth party, and the like. He says he does not do it to cast odium upon his brethren and we are glad that this is not his intention, but the use of such expressions is in itself very objectionable, and entirely without justification. It is the more reprehensible in Mr. A. who makes partyism the great evil by which Christians are afflicted that he should stigmatize us as a party as he does more than once, thus begging the whole question.

In paragraphs 12 to 20 Mr. A. warns his readers against our teaching in connexion with the Church which is the Body of Christ.

It will be observed here that though Mr. A. is writing controversially and striving to show that there is something fundamentally wrong in our teaching, he makes scarcely

any serious attempt to definitely point out wherein we err, and in offering his alternative interpretations of Holy Scripture he is content to make bald assertions without in any way verifying them.

Thus he says (par. 13), that the Body is spoken of in Scripture under three different aspects. One of these is the local aspect; he says (par. 14) that:—

1 Cor. 12. 27 proves conclusively that the Church of God in Corinth was the Body of Christ in Corinth. That the Church of God includes all who are in Christ Jesus is thus proved, for the Church of God and the Body of Christ in any city are one and co-extensive.

This is very incorrect. If the Church of God in a city is co-extensive with the Body of Christ in a city, why do we read in the Scriptures of Churches of God, and never of Bodies of Christ? Clearly in Scripture a Church of God is a local thing, but it has yet to be proved that we are entitled to speak thus of Body of Christ. Again, in what way does Mr. A. know that the Body of Christ of which he speaks included all believers?

Mr. A. definitely identifies the Church of God in chapter 1. 2 with Body of Christ in chapter 12. 27. Yet he refuses to identify "yourselves" of chapter 5. with either. This is illogical and unreasonable:—

unto the Church of God which is at Corinth.

Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.

Ye are [the] Body of Christ.

We do not regard this as the right time for expounding 1 Cor. 12. 27. But if it be correct to insert the article "the" in it in our English tongue, and to identify Body of Christ with the Church of God in Corinth, it follows inevitably that the wicked person was to be put out of the Body of Christ. At any rate, he was to be put out of the Church of God in Corinth, and he was not in it when the second letter was addressed to that company.

Mr. A. totally misses the point at issue. No one we

suppose would deny that when the Church of God in Corinth received its first letter it contained all the believers in the city. But did it cease to be the Church of God when it did not contain all? Or, when such as the wicked person of chapter 5. was to be put away, from what was he to be put away? "From among yourselves" we are told truly, but "yourselves" are the very people addressed as the Church of God in Corinth.

Then Mr. A. goes on to say (par. 15) that certain passages he quotes refer to the living members of Christ upon earth at any one time, the dead in Christ are not seen in it. For this statement he gives no vestige of evidence, only a supposed analogy to the human body (par. 16) changing its material every few years, utterly ignoring the fact that Scripture speaks of members of the body as eyes and ears, and feet and hands. No man changes these every few years, as he would need to do to make Mr. A.'s analogy good for anything.

Mr. A. goes on (par. 17), to identify this Body, consisting of all believers on earth at once, with the House of God of 1 Tim. 3. 15, 16. Let his previous writings quoted above (pages 97-99) answer him as they are well able to do. When he wrote in 1901 he expounded the Scriptures; in this pamphlet we have bare statements of pseudo-spirituality.

In paragraph 19, speaking of the Body in its dispensational aspect, Mr. A. says there is solid ground for questioning if the Church of Matt. 16. 18 is the Body, but then he does not say what the solid ground is. He goes on to refer to Adam and Eve as a figure of the wondrous union of Christ and His members. But only a few months before he wrote as to the mystery of the Church which is the Body of Christ:—

Of this mystery the Old Testament knows nothing. . . . The Church which is the Body of Christ is something that the Old Testament could take no cognizance of.

These may seem small points to some, but they indicate the laxity of thought and of expression that pervade Mr. A.'s recent writings.

We come to paragraph 20, where we are charged with ignoring what Mr. A. calls the first and second aspects of the Body of Christ. Observe here that no proof has been given that there are three aspects of the Body in Scripture. In fact what is called the Body of Christ as consisting of all believers on earth at one time is, we believe, absolutely a human fiction. It is strange Mr. A. should say we ignore it. We have combated it. One of the present writers remembers first reading about it many many years ago in a very well known book by an esteemed teacher 'amongst so-called Exclusive Brethren, and he distinctly recollects its being discussed on several occasions. This is not ignoring it.

In paragraphs 21, 22 Mr. A. seeks to convince his readers that a Church of God consists of all the believers in a given town. On the very face of it his argument is utterly unsound. He makes the expression "the Church of God," and "them that are sanctified," absolutely synonymous and necessarily co-extensive. Thus the word "Church" is rendered entirely meaningless, the fact that it implies that the sanctified ones are together is virtually ignored. He says they are one assembly before God (par. 26). But God speaks of them as one assembly in Corinth. It is not here in 1 Cor. 1. 2 a heavenly oneness, it is oneness on earth, namely, in Corinth (and this notwithstanding the internal sectarianism).

Note how as a direct consequence of his false argument Mr. A., referring to children of God in any place to-day, is carried irresistibly to the false statement (par. 22) :—

They come together,

when as a matter of fact they never do come together. Do the children of God, say in Edinburgh, ever come together? Are they not separated from one another, and

joined to the unregenerate by many Satanic ties? This is the dilemma in which Mr. A. and his disciples must find themselves. The Church of God, they say, consists of all believers in the given town; then either all the believers must be found together to form the unity called the Church of God in Edinburgh, or else there can be no such thing as a Church of God to-day. And the latter conclusion we believe Mr. A. and all who hold such views are inevitably destined to accept; that is the utter denial of corporate worship and testimony.

It is evident that the truth of the One Body, and saints as members of it, bulks so largely in Mr. A.'s view that it obscures other distinct and definite truths, and he becomes guilty of doing that with which he mistakenly charges us, namely putting a part as though it were the whole.

If any proof of this is needed we refer to paragraph 45, quoting 2 Tim. 2. 25, “if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth,” Mr. A. adds, “the One Body.” Again we find the term The Kingdom of God several times in Acts, Corinthians and other Pauline Epistles. Yet Mr. A. never speaks of saints in relation thereto but simply as members of the One Body. Surely the teaching of the Kingdom of God had a very definite place in Paul's teaching but Mr. A. never mentions it.

Plain words of Holy Scripture contradict and refute his meaningless and vague assertion, “Wherever such (saints) are found there consequently is found a Church of God,” and plainly show that God requires other things of men than that they should be Christians, members of Christ; and it is not enough that they are sanctified in Christ Jesus. For we note such operation in and among His own as expressed in the words:—

The Lord added together, day by day, those that were being saved, Acts. 2. 46.

Believers were the more added to the Lord, Acts 5. 14.

A great number that believed turned unto the Lord, Acts 11. 21.

Much people were added to the Lord, Acts 11. 24.

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, ye being gathered together, 1 Cor. 5. 4. (that is when you have been gathered together).

Let none be deceived, the pamphlet under review denies not only the fact of the present operation of the Lord, by the Holy Spirit and Word in the hearts of His own, who are members of the One Body, but also the result, that they were added to the Lord, and consequently, were together; they *were* gathered together, the verb being in the passive voice indicates that the action does not arise from their own initiative, but they are its subjects operated upon. Mr. A. asserts "they come together," truly the manward side. But the power that worked in their hearts, and so brought them together, he ignores. When saints are thus added to the Lord, they are brought together by the Lord in any given town, the Church of God in church as God describes them. But, according to Mr. A., it is only their assembly, and they put away the wicked from amongst themselves, not from the Church of God, thus showing that the verbal criticism of Scripture may be carried so far that the evident meaning is lost sight of and positively false issues result.

We are told in paragraph 25 :—

It is generally admitted that there is no Scripture to guide us either by way of precept or example as to receiving into a Church of God.

What Mr. A. means by this sentence we cannot possibly understand. Generally admitted by whom? we ask. By some of the so-called Open Brethren, to whom Mr. A. is going, perhaps. By others, perhaps also, who are desirous of belittling corporate testimony. Certainly it is not admitted by us. The very opposite is the truth. No scripture to guide! Has Mr. A. never all the last fifteen years heard any scripture used in this way that he should say it is generally admitted there is none? He says (par.

23) that the Church of God in Corinth was not told to receive the person referred to in 2 Cor. 2. 6-8 into the Church of God. But that is exactly what the Church of God, to which the letter was addressed, is bidden to do. He had been excluded from the assembly of God in Corinth for his sin and being repentant he is to be forgiven. But this we are to understand does not mean that he is to be taken back into the assembly. Let us seek to make this clear by a homely illustration from a bygone day :—A naughty boy is shut up in a cupboard for a punishment ; after a time he is repentant and forgiven, but according to Mr. A.'s teaching he is to be left in the cupboard, he is forgiven, but his punishment is not ended !

So much for the one precept and example contained in 2 Cor. 2. 6-8 ; we will not take up space by giving others here. How Mr. A. could say it is generally admitted that there is no precept or example we are at a loss to imagine.

In paragraph 27 we read that the expression " Church of God," means all the members of Christ upon earth at one time when it is used in the singular number without any limits as to locality. Let us apply this dictum of interpretation to 1 Tim. 3. 3 :—

If a man know not how to rule his own house how shall he take care of all the members of Christ upon earth at one time ?

Surely every reasonable man will admit that the Church of God here is local. We forbear to go into details here to show, (as has been shown in these pages more than once) that the expression " Church of God " has always a local meaning. Certainly it has in the passages quoted by Mr. A. Another mis-statement is that when we read of Churches of God in the plural, the locality is always specified (see 1 Cor. 11. 16 and 2 Thess. 1. 4.).

The remainder of Mr. A.'s pamphlet is largely occupied with a perfect travesty of what is believed and practised amongst us. It is amazing to find a person of Mr. A.'s ability

and intelligence so utterly misinformed after being so many years with us, and after having been so intimate as he has been with many who could have corrected his utterly wrong and false ideas. We can find no space to traverse all the mistakes of fact with which this part of his pamphlet is as thickly strewn as the earlier part is with doctrinal error.

It is devoid of foundation in fact to set forth as is done in paragraph 28 that we make a condition of fellowship

A person . . . must profess to have formed an opinion as to the claims of the various assemblies of the Brethren and to have judged. . . .

Again, we do not claim to be Churches of God because of our professed acceptance of certain doctrines (par. 29). The very opposite is correctly stated in paragraph 31 :—

It is claimed for each assembly that it is a divine creation. Yet in the same paragraph (31) we are told that we teach that God and His Spirit and His Word are not sufficient to form an assembly. Thus it will be seen that the statements in Mr. A.'s pamphlet are mutually contradictory. In reference to this last charge

Let Christians understand that this means that God and His Spirit and His Word are not sufficient to form an assembly let us remind our readers that from of old God has been pleased to use human instrumentality for the accomplishment of His purposes, and as He has frequently and almost universally chosen weak and feeble instruments, we have nothing to glory in or to provoke our pride in believing, as we assuredly do, that God is working at this present time in a very especial manner through those whom He has brought together into the Fellowship which is not the NEEDED TRUTH Fellowship, but :—

The Fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

We desire further to point out that much of what Mr. A. says about the reception of individuals and the process

of recognizing any company of Christians is based on his own experience and is therefore necessarily imperfect and inaccurate. Moreover, he speaks of procedure that would be adopted (par. 31), he does not quote any case where such a procedure has been adopted.

We now come to the paragraphs (33-36) in which Mr. A. warns his readers against

the développements in connexion with the subject of rule.

In paragraph 33 the gravamen of the charge lies in this : that for the acknowledgment or the displacement of an overseer, it is necessary for overseers in the city or town to seek the fellowship of their fellow-overseers in neighbouring places. In setting this up as a serious charge against us, Mr. A. does not say whether he would maintain the opposite position. Suppose, for example, as is often the case, that there are no more than three overseers in an assembly and one of them is judged by the other two to be amenable to discipline, so that he should be no longer acknowledged as an overseer. Does Mr. A. seriously maintain that the two overseers need no help from other assemblies ? they may act as witnesses and judges and all else and the men with whom, according to 1 Pet. 5. 1-3 and other scriptures, they and the accused overseer are alike united are to have nothing to say in the matter ?

Mr. A. thinks he has scored a point in his remarks about oversight when he says (par. 33), that no man has ever yet opened the Bible and shown saints a single instance of a district oversight meeting having been held in Apostolic times, or a single command from God that such should be held. He considers such a position impregnable, like the infidel who challenges one to show a single verse of Scripture which asserts that any one saw Christ leave the tomb, and this being wanting he denies the Resurrection. Such assertions are like others who demand wherever a Gentile was commanded to baptize any one, and so such

treat baptism as a carnal ordinance. Such a statement only goes to show how verbal criticism has so dominated Mr. A.'s mind that the sense and meaning which nature itself brings is altogether lacking. When he considers a heap of stones a house, no wonder he believes that men are told to shepherd the Flock, taking the oversight, but that they cannot come together, because God has not told them so to do.

We do not comment on paragraph 34 because, if it carries with any readers the weight that it is evidently expected to have, we can only ask such readers to spend some care and thought on the question of whether the argument is as reasonable as at first sight it may seem.

The substance of paragraph 35 is well calculated to appeal to that natural tendency of human nature which finds its expression in democracy. According to this idea, in its fullest form, all men are equal and equally entitled to a share in rule. In a milder guise it appears simply as an expression of equality amongst overseeing men. In "A Record of Divine Deliverance" (already referred to) published with NEEDED TRUTH, June, 1905, we have put on record (pages 8, 10) the following conclusion:—

God has given to some overseers a larger share of responsibility than to others. This principle must find due expression in the joint acting of overseers

which was carefully considered at an important meeting held on April 2, 1904. There was nothing new in the conclusion that some overseers have a larger share of responsibility than others. But circumstances that had occurred gave it a very special importance and led to the recognition that this principle must find due expression in the joint acting of overseers. This conclusion was afterwards frequently discussed, and was, in fact, specially brought under the notice of all in the Fellowship in the early part of 1904, together with the following explanatory note ("A Record of Divine Deliverance," page 10).

This is aimed against the very prevalent idea of democracy. It is not true that all overseers are equal. God gives first a heart to care for a single assembly. This may broaden out till one has responsibility in a very definite sense in a shire or in a larger circle until we arrive at the largest thing of all, the Fellowship. This will depend on the gift God has given and on the spiritual growth of the overseer and on the degree in which he has won the confidence of his fellows.

As to the due expression hereof, when overseers are together for conference or action it is needful truly for the more highly gifted to seek to have the younger ones or less instructed ones acting in fellowship with them. It is equally needful for the younger or less instructed ones to allow due weight to the judgment and so forth of the elder or more instructed. Similarly in a larger circle. See for example 1 Tim. 3. 5 (a Church of God) compared with 2 Cor. 11. 28 (all the Churches). Note also 1 Tim. 5. 1, 17. Moreover as to the Divine principle see 1 Peter 5. 5.

Later on the question of giving due expression to this principle came up for consideration, and what took place was that certain brethren were specially recognized as having responsibility in the widest circles. It will surprise persons, who may only know of these things from Mr. A.'s pamphlet, to be told that these brethren confer together and give their counsel and the like as there may be occasion, but they exercise no authority in any shape whatever. Yet such is the fact. Mr. A. says that he freely admits that some brethren are more highly gifted than others, and, consequently, have greater responsibilities than others; but he says he most resolutely combats their assumption to a place and circle above their fellow-overseers. The reply is, firstly, that they make no such assumption; secondly, that whilst among us, presumably as believing he was in a Divine position, Mr. A. never combated the matter at all.

The statement in paragraph 36 that the upper circle rules from centre to circumference of the fellowship, has no foundation in fact. It is an entire mistake to speak of an upper circle. There are a few brethren, as we have

said, who are recognized as having God-given responsibility in areas greater than a county or district, but while they take counsel together and put themselves at the service of their brethren, they exercise no corporate functions whatever.

In confirmation of our statement we quote in full a minute arrived at after full deliberation at the first meeting of the men referred to and afterwards communicated to fellow-overseers throughout the British Isles.

God has certainly given to some of His servants special responsibility in the things pertaining to His House and Kingdom as distinct from matters of a local character. To fulfil this responsibility such men need to know one another and to keep in touch with one another to the utmost.

We do not know any ground for regarding such men as forming a definite corporate entity with executive authority. But clearly it is permissible and advisable for them to deliberate on any matter concerning the House and Kingdom of God.

We are told paragraph 36 that nothing is allowed to reach the saints, either written or orally, save that which is in accordance with their views. It may, therefore, be well to explain :

(1) That no attempt is made to coerce the saints in regard to what they read, though we would desire earnestly to warn them against the much guileful literature which abounds on every hand.

(2) Though we seek in this magazine to lead on our readers in the ways of truth, we do not hesitate at times to give them such abundant opportunity of hearing the contrary part as they have in our reproduction of 17 pages out of Mr. A.'s pamphlet.

In paragraph 37 Mr. A. says :—

it is well known that we never strengthened the Needed Truth system in the light of the development of recent years.

The correctness of this can be judged in view of Mr. A.'s return to the Fellowship in 1903 and the complete absence

of protests from him then and subsequently (see the dates given in this review). He further says:—

and no one can recall a single utterance from our lips that could be so interpreted.

This we cannot for a moment accept in view of the facts.¹

In paragraph 38 Mr. A. comes to the expression which he has made the title of his pamphlet. If his interpretation of 1 Cor. 11. 27–34 be accepted, it follows that when those who follow his teaching seek to carry out 1 Cor. 11. 23–25, instead of its being a remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ, it will become an exercise in discerning this Body, which we are told consists of all believers on earth at any one time. In other words, all believers must occupy the mind rather than the Lord Himself.

Let it be well understood that in saying this we are in no wise undervaluing the importance of that care for the members of Christ’s Body which Scripture enjoins. But there is nothing in common between the mutual care of members for one another conformably to God’s Word and Will and the fanciful ideas that find expression in Mr. A.’s pamphlet.

We shall not follow Mr. A. through his eulogium of so-called Open Brethren. If he adheres to all he says (for example, in paragraph 47) he may find out that he has made a great mistake in his estimate of them. But of these matters we need not speak—at any rate at present.

Before concluding, however, we wish to add a few lines in reference to the comparisons Mr. A. makes in some places between things he says about us and the so-called Church of Rome.

. . . such statements are so very evidently made for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of Christians that it becomes a duty to endeavour to enlighten them.

What is more likely than that on reading such a statement many Christians should be led to believe that what has been termed a united oversight claims to have the “right” to make laws for God’s people and to enforce them. . . . Let

not Christians, we implore, accept such unwarranted statements nor be misled by such dust-throwing ; but rather let them with unbiassed mind investigate for themselves the practices of brethren referred to, and compare the same with the Scriptures. . . .

. . . they are responsible according to the grace and ability granted them by God to see that the "all authority" of the one and only lawgiver and Lord, Jesus Christ, is respected and bowed to by His saints, so that they thereby may be delivered from every man becoming his own lawgiver and doing what is right in his own eyes which obtains among the companies of

OPEN BRETHERN

from which in the fear of God they are separated.

These are not our words ; they are taken from an excellent article "The WAY EVIL SPOKEN OF" by Mr. L. W. G. Alexander which appeared in these pages in 1899 (vol. 11, pages 25-29). It is well worthy of careful perusal.

In Mr. A.'s present pamphlet as a whole we are grieved and surprised chiefly not at the sad mistakes of doctrines and facts that he makes, though these are serious enough, but in it there is a marked absence of any humiliation, contrition or confession for the part he has taken for fifteen years in fostering, and building up that which he now views as a system of heresy. True, he assails his former position with denunciation after denunciation, but not one falls upon his own head, there is not one recriminating word against himself ; surely his heart has never said, and hence his pen never wrote, "Woe is me." Upon one who has so conspicuously aided and abetted such a system, as he now views it, the law of equity of a Just God would lay a share of the blame and shame. Of any acknowledgment of this we detect no trace, and moreover, he is expecting to be received by the "Open Brethren" with open arms. Where is God in all this ? are there any marks of His ways here ? If any proof of the above is required, see the pamphlet, par-

agraph 20, page 11. “ *They* totally ignore . . . *they* have built,” while the writer was in guileless innocence!

We have sought to deal faithfully, as the need demands, with Mr. A.’s pamphlet, but we desire to express our great regret for the necessity to write, as we have been compelled to do, of one whom we have long known and loved as a fellow-worker unto the Kingdom, and from whom we part with feelings of no ordinary grief.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

JOSHUA HAWKINS.

For Youngest Believers.

TRYING TIMES.

THERE can be no question that the present times are trying indeed : but instead of regretting that his days have not fallen upon more peaceful times, the believer should be thankful for the greater opportunity God has granted to him of shining for Him amidst the deepening darkness. He must, however, be on his guard against acting in his own strength, or doing anything through strife or vain glory. The pathway of obedience can only be trodden, and the service that glorifies God can only be rendered, as we lay hold in faith upon the power of God and seek to know the leading of an ungrieved Holy Spirit.

God’s Will is sweetest to Him when
It triumphs at His cost,

and however humble may be the sphere of service we are called upon to fill, the Divine principle is ever the same—

Apart from Me ye can do nothing.
Our sufficiency is from God.

When it is true at all times that apart from the Lord Jesus Christ we can do nothing, then how very helpless we must be of ourselves in times that are trying ! But

Great the grace,
If great the need ;

and God is able to make all grace abound unto us, that we, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound

unto every good work (2 Cor. 9. 8). We should not therefore be downcast by a sense of our own weakness and let our hands hang down; for God is wont to use the weak things to confound the mighty. Let us then seek that He may be pleased to exhibit His own power through us (1 Cor. 1. 27).

We are called 'upon as

Good soldiers of Christ Jesus

to suffer hardship. These trying times will not last for ever. The opportunity during them to

Fight the good fight of the Faith

will soon be gone. Shall we win or shall we lose a crown? His provision is ample. May we prove its fulness more and more.

What a dark day in Israel's history is recorded in Numbers 25! Truly trying times! But one man at least in that dark day shone brightly for his God. An opportunity presented itself, and in the power of God, Phinehas arose and executed judgment. He honoured God, and God highly honoured and abundantly rewarded him.

Let us seek together to buy up the opportunity that is ours, to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and be led to glorify our Father Who is in heaven.

It is not sufficient that we are children of God—His desire is that we may be

Children of God, without blemish,
in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2. 15).

May we prove in our experience how true the word is,
As thy days, so shall thy strength be (Deut. 33. 25).

And may we rejoice abundantly, amidst all the darkness and difficulty, in the truth that—

Thy God hath commanded thy strength,

Whilst we pray (as in Ps. 68. 28)—

Strengthen, O God, that which Thou hast wrought for us.

PAUL ON WORSHIP.

IV.

IN his letter to the saints in Philippi, with the overseers and deacons there, Paul makes use of the word *λατρεύω*, *latreuo*, I offer service to God, of which we were writing in our last article (p. 73), in the following very remarkable passage :—

Beware of the dogs,
 beware of the evil workers,
 beware of the concision ;
 For we are the circumcision
 who worship by the Spirit of God
 and glory in Christ Jesus
 and have no confidence in the flesh.

in which it is translated “ worship.”

It is worthy of note firstly how Paul claims here, as he does elsewhere, the place of privilege that had previously belonged to Israel as the portion of God’s present people gathered from both Jew and Gentile. Compare Gal. 3. 14 ; the blessing of Abraham (for example : In thee shall all the nations be blessed) is to come upon Gentiles. Again, see in Romans 11. how we are regarded as a wild olive branch, grafted into a good olive tree. Compare again what is said through John to the assemblies in Smyrna and in Philadelphia, as to sectarian persons who claim to be Jews, though in truth a synagogue of the Adversary. Thus while the passing away of the Old Covenant causes literal circumcision, circumcision in the flesh, to be nothing ; yet there is a circumcision of the heart, and in this higher sense the present people of God are the circumcision. To such then, there passes the service of God which was the privilege and responsibility of the literal Israel (as see Romans 9. 4 where the word *λατρεία*, *latreia*, is used).

It must of course be carefully noted that this collective service is spiritual in character. It is carried out by the Spirit of God. Therein it resembles that which is individual, for Paul served God in the gospel of His Son in his spirit. This shows how fundamental is the attitude of mind and

heart. We do not say that this is everything, but we do say that a right attitude of heart and mind is absolutely essential (see also John 4.).

Thus we learn that the special and peculiar service which is the highest expression of worship and which may only be offered to God the Father, is not to be regarded as individual merely. We have, indeed, cited several passages in our third article (pp. 74, 75) bearing on the individual offering service to God, but we now come to the consideration of such service as can only be offered by a people

Who Worship by the Spirit of God.

We have established from the epistles to which Paul has attached his name that worship in the fullest sense of the term is becoming for the present people of God. Paul definitely inculcates therein prostration of spirit before the Divine Being, and the offering of service both individually and collectively to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we have headed these articles: "Paul on Worship," it will now be proper to briefly indicate some of the reasons which lead us to link the letter to the Hebrews with the letters to which Paul puts his name, before we turn to that epistle for further help on the matter of worship.

Of the twenty-seven books of the New Covenant Scriptures thirteen bear Paul's name as writer, whilst five bear the names of James, Peter, Jude and John respectively. There remain thus nine books which give in the text no name of the writer. To ascertain so far as possible the writers of these nine books, it is needful to make use of other means. The writer of a book may be discovered with more or less certainty in three main ways:—

1. By passages in the book which point out its author, though without naming him.
2. By peculiarities of style and language which are characteristic of the writer.
3. By such collateral evidence as is contained in the

titles or can be derived from other sources. To illustrate these points fully is beyond our present purpose, but we may give some brief instances:—

1. The first four verses of the gospel commencing “Forasmuch,” and the first verses of the book of the Acts “The former treatise,” and so forth, need only to be compared to indicate that the books were both written by the same person.

2. The style and language can only adequately be appreciated by persons to whom the Greek of the New Testament Scriptures is very familiar. Such are all virtually agreed that the third gospel and the book of the Acts are by the same writer.

3. The titles of the books have considerable value as evidence of what was generally believed when those titles were affixed. As the Revisers of 1881 say in their preface:—

The titles of the books of the New Testament . . . are no part of the original text.

We must not, therefore, regard them as inspired. But in their shortest form they are of great antiquity. For example, the four gospels are headed “According to Matthew,” “According to Mark,” “According to Luke,” “According to John,” in Greek manuscripts written in the fourth century, and in Latin versions of still greater age.

We base our opinion that Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews very largely on one particular fact. In the end of his second letter to Thessalonica he says:

The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand
which is the token in every epistle:
so I write:—

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Now it is a remarkable and noteworthy fact that in all the thirteen epistles bearing his name Paul concludes with this salutation. It varies somewhat in form, but is always in its main features the same.

It is always GRACE. It may be “of the Lord Jesus

Christ," or "of our Lord Jesus Christ." It may be conjoined with "the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit." It may be "with you," "with your spirit," or "with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness." But it is always Grace.

On the other hand, James puts no such salutation at the end of his epistle, nor does Jude nor Peter, though the latter when he has Silas for his scribe goes so near as to say "Peace be unto you all that are in Christ." This is like the peace salutation at the end of John's third letter—he says nothing of the kind in his first or second letter.

Now this very grace salutation,

Grace be with you all. Amen.

is found at the end of the letter to the Hebrews, and we judge it to be definitely meant as a token of the Apostle Paul, who wrote the epistle.

It is true that John uses a similar salutation in the end of his fourth letter, but this can lead to no confusion, for the letter he sent to the seven assemblies in Asia bears his name in the text which no other of his writings do.

We are not competent to judge of the Pauline authorship of the Hebrews from its style and language, and therefore submit the above reason with due modesty as our ground for ascribing the letter to Paul. We regard the absence of his name from the beginning as due to reasons like those which hindered John from putting his name in a preface to the gospel written through him. The beauty and grandeur of Hebrews, like that of the gospel according to John, demand that no human instrument shall intrude an impertinent introduction. Genesis, John and Hebrews all begin with God.

In case our reason for ascribing Hebrews to Paul should appear to any inadequate, we desire to point out that if some one else was the writer it was manifestly a man in very close touch and sympathy with the Apostle Paul. This we say because of verse 23 of the last chapter. When

we consider how closely Timothy was always joined with Paul in the work of the Lord, it is impossible to suppose the writer of this epistle, who speaks as in Hebrews 13. 23, can have been other than a very intimate and sympathetic co-worker of the Apostle Paul, if he were not indeed the Apostle himself.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

THE RUNAWAY SLAVE.

A SUGGESTION AS TO HIS STORY.

IN a city called Colosse there lived, a long time ago, a family, or rather, perhaps, a household composed of four persons, the husband, wife, and son, and a slave; so the slave would look upon each as master, mistress and the young master. This slave, I may say, was a domestic slave; that is, he did not work in the farm or in the fields, as a hired servant might, but in the house; therefore he had more to do with the mistress of the house than with his master and owner. Reminding one of Joseph, who was also a slave in the house, and would thus be thrown more in contact with his mistress than his master. How wisely he behaved!

The family of which we now write was a Christian family, so we must suppose that this slave had a good home and was kindly treated.

I can happily give you the names of this family. Philemon the husband, Apphia his wife, and Archippus the son and young master. And now some of you will know who the slave was; Onesimus (which means helpful, and so is also profitable), the one who ran away from this home and would be more missed by his mistress than by his master and owner, for the home was the woman's sphere then as now.

This Onesimus had not always been a slave, he had seen better days. Thus the bondage was harder to bear. He had met with reverses like many another then and now, and you will think it strange when I tell you, that Philemon, his master and owner, was his own brother, his very own

brother. See Philemon, verse 16. "In the flesh" the one served the other, not now under the best of conditions—it is hard for relations to get on together if one occupies a subordinate place. This may be specially true perhaps of brothers; it ought not to be, yet it is so: oftentimes, not always, the more so when one hates and the other loves the things of God.

Philemon did not buy this slave. No, Onesimus sold himself to Philemon, for in his business complication he became greatly indebted to him, and the only way to repay this was such as then could be: he sold himself to work off the debt. Things evidently did not run very smoothly, friction came in, and in desperation Onesimus ran away. I wonder whether he thought running away would pay the debt? A silly man, indeed, if he did think so. Or perhaps he thought he would be free. Foolish man; at large he may be, but free never. At any moment he could be brought back into his bondage. And so it turned out; back he had to come. To be free is to be beyond the reach of your doom—fearing none.

We said Onesimus had known better days. And so there was a time in Man's history when he, too, was free in the full enjoyment of all that God had given; but alas for the day when he sinned, and became a bondsman to a cruel master and degrading service. Adam in the garden—those golden days. But alas for him and his posterity, for while he was not born in slavery we were; and such are we, under Satan. Do you know this, who read these lines? While you read with much interest, I hope, about Onesimus, think of yourself; running away won't help you; in fact your salvation is not in your hands: and after it is your salvation it is not in your keeping.

Now let us see how it fares with the subject of our story. Get your map, and find Colosse; then see what a long way he wandered, going south to the nearest port for Rome—for he must see the great sights of Rome, as such must see

London to-day. So he reaches Lycia according to the map, and possibly like runaways or stowaways, he worked his passage over to Puteoli, the nearest port for Rome.

Do you see the family praying for the runaway slave and brother? That is the best and surest way to reach him and restore him. God's ears are open to their cry and His eye is on the poor runaway slave.

The novelty is soon over, the sights of Rome do not feed him, and no one cares to engage one without a character. A runaway, so tired, hungry, weary of wandering, in adversity, disappointed, he somehow crosses the path of Paul.

I wonder how this came about? How long had Paul been in Rome? I cannot say; but the great Apostle soon became known to all the Jews there, and one day Onesimus is much startled as he hears the name of Paul, mentioned by passers-by, in hot debate about him and his teaching. What magic there is sometimes in a name! Paul! Paul! Can that be the Paul I heard of in my master's house? He has now ample time to think. He remembers hearing of the burning words of that mighty man. It all comes back. What he said and how he said it; how tenderly at times he besought, but in vain—yet not in vain. Take encouragement, fellow-labourer, your words have reached to the ends of the earth, and are to-day ringing in the ears of one far, far away. He finds out this great Apostle, spoken of everywhere. What a surprise and what a cheer to the aged man in irons, in the cruel bondage of Rome, and a bondslave of Jesus Christ—owing to Him what he can never repay, though he lays his head on the block. A surprise indeed to see this slave under such condition. He is now ready to hear the Apostle—the result, of course, his salvation. Belief cometh by hearing. He that heareth My Word and believeth Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life.

How this great event changes everything! The first impulse of the new man is, I will arise and go to my master, like the one who ran away from his father. "I will arise and go to my father." And it is this that gives rise to the epistle of

Paul, written to the family concerning their domestic slave, and to the church in their house concerning a brother beloved. He is the slave of the family, brother to Philemon, and much more to Paul than either of these. He is "my child," begotten in my old age, the son of my bonds, my own Benjamin, my youngest. So "I am sending my very heart; receive him as myself; how I would like to have retained him as my servant, my minister in the gospel, that so in my service he might wipe out the debt thou owest me, for thou owest to me thine own self; but without thy mind I would do nothing, that this goodness on thy part may be free and spontaneous, not of necessity but of free will." Thus we approach another side of this interesting slave; he owes you something, you owe me something; very well, now count me as a partner, take me into the concern, let me assume my share of the responsibility, and though he by his service has paid much but not all, what he still owes I will repay. I give you my note of hand, and the slave shall be free, not running away now, but if he choose can go out on the basis of redemption. Well may he sing—

My chains are snapt
And I am free.

Give him his discharge, return his indentures, break the bond that degraded him.

Oh the blessedness of knowing the One, the Only-Begotten of the Father, the sent One, receiving Him who came to redeem from sin's bondage, cancelling for ever the service in which He found us servants of Satan, in the service of sin! And now let me say Philemon, Onesimus and Paul the aged are all bondslaves of Jesus Christ, and we may together sing—

"All to Him I owe,"

and the handwriting that was against us, and our indentures, that bond that bound us, is nailed to His Cross. He has taken them out of the way. Read your discharge in that Cross, and see your new Lord and Master in that Throne.

G. R. GEDDES.

For Youngest Believers.

ETERNAL SECURITY.

(Continued from page 96.)

Now turning briefly to Gal. 4., "Ye are fallen away from grace." These words are not written to those who have failed in the ordinary sense and lost their life as some say, but to some who were seeking to keep the law for salvation, and thus throwing grace overboard (to use a common expression) and virtually saying that the propitiatory work of Christ was not sufficient. The unbiassed reader will soon discern from the setting that these verses do not bear out the construction usually put upon them; so in all similar cases, if the context is considered, a correct understanding of the truth taught will be gained.

It is thought by those who do not believe in the Eternal Security of the believer that those who do accept this truth will not be so anxious to avoid sinning, but will act as though it does not matter what they do, all will be well.

That this is not so would be the unanimous voice of all who believe the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "Shall never perish" (John 10. 28). Unto many, indeed, the realization of this blessed fact, after accepting Christ as their Saviour, has been like a second spiritual birthday, for now, instead of holding on day after day in uncertainty, and always wondering if after all they would fail and be lost, the knowledge that they shall never perish fills them with new joy, new happiness, and supplies a new motive for service.

Formerly they were working in order to keep saved, but now they are using all their powers in loving service for Him and to Him Who died for them and rose again.

In connexion with our subject may be mentioned the oft-repeated assertion, that every one is a child of God. True, it is stated in the Scriptures that we are "His offspring"

(Acts 17.), but that is as creatures from the hands of the Creator.

God is the Father of all who believe, or as it is written in Gal. 3. 26, "Ye are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus," which is true of believers everywhere, and we would say here that as in the human family, so in the spiritual, one born into the human family can never be anything else but a child; wayward possibly, and one who may require the disciplining of the parent, but this does not affect the birth relationship; so in the family of God, nothing can alter the relationship of one born into it. The Father may have to discipline us for our profit (Heb. 12. 10) that we may not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11. 32).

Modern teaching errs by announcing salvation as the result of behaviour.

It is quite true that good behaviour is expected from those in the family of God, but not in order to keep saved, but in the language of the Apostle, "Wherefore also we make it our aim . . . to be well-pleasing unto Him" (2 Cor. 5. 9). Seeking also to bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, "If ye keep My commandments ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love; these things have I spoken unto you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be fulfilled" (John 15. 10, 11).

We would like to point out that just as it is necessary to discern between a reward and a free gift, so we must discern between children of wrath by natural birth and children of God by spiritual birth.

We are not saved by behaviour, neither can it keep us saved, for that would imply salvation by works. By grace have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, that no man should glory, for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them (Eph. 2. 8-10).

“ Can it be that I, an alien,
 Now a child shall ever be ?
 Can it be that, all forgiven,
 Glory is prepar'd for me ?
 Even me ?

“ Yes ! for Jesus liveth ever,
 And His blood hath made me free.
 From His love no foe can sever,
 For He gave Himself for me.
 Even me.

“ Lord ! I thank Thee for salvation,
 Grace so mighty and so free.
 Take my all in consecration,
 Glorify Thyself in me.
 Even me.”

In a recent issue of a well-known periodical it is taught to be a “snare” to hold what we have set forth in this article ; and whilst they admit that neither man nor Devil could pluck out of His hand, yet they believe “we can pluck ourselves out.”

If this were so, then puny man would be stronger than both the Father and the Son, which we are assured from what we see in nature and read in the Book is not so.

Then further, such teaching makes the salvation of the sinner to depend upon his own efforts instead of being based entirely upon the propitiatory work of Christ. It is evident that those who hold such ideas (unconsciously, perhaps) do not grasp the fact that man has absolutely nothing to do for salvation, and in reality can do nothing ; for man at his best falls short, and therefore could never become fit for God's holy presence.

It is in Christ “we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses” (Eph. 1. 7). “Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us . . . through Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Titus 3. 5) ; consequently not by our holding on.

We would conclude this contribution by asking the reader to believe God rather than man.

“SHALL NEVER PERISH.”

Compare John 10. 28 with 12. 49, and daily live in the enjoyment of the truth:—“For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3. 3). “Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath Eternal life, and cometh not into judgment; but hath passed out of death into life” (John 5. 24).

THE COMMUNION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

IN the gospel according to John, chapters 14., 15., 16., the Lord Jesus is unfolding some of God’s purposes for those few who are around Him and from whom He is about to depart; purposes which undoubtedly are concerning this dispensation.

In making known His departure He seeks to still their fears and to strengthen them with the words, “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth.” Much He had spoken to them concerning Himself which they had not understood, and much they do not yet understand; but when the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, is come, whom the Father is about to send in His name, He will lead them into all the truth.

That the Holy Spirit did come is certain, and we accept without question that the Lord Jesus was speaking concerning that which came to pass at Pentecost, when they who were around Him, and those that were with them on that occasion, were baptized in the Spirit into one Body.

The purpose for which the Holy Spirit was sent may be summed up in the words of the Lord Jesus, “He shall bear witness of Me.” It would take much prayerful reading and meditation on the Word of God to understand what

these words fully meant. No doubt this ministry of His is in and through those in whom He dwells. To this agree the words of the Lord Jesus, "Ye also shall bear witness"; and on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2.) they began to bear witness to the risen and glorified Lord Jesus Christ, facing a pathway of persecution and tribulation that lay before them, encouraged and comforted by the words, "Fear ye not, I have overcome the world." Not for their sakes only were these words spoken, but for our sakes also, who afterwards should be indwelt by the same Holy Spirit to bear witness to the same Lord Jesus Christ.

If this witness is to be borne by us we must firstly learn of Him by the Holy Spirit. If we are to walk in God's ways we must know His truth. How many of God's people do err, because they know not the mind of God for the circumstances in which they are found. It was the law of God given through Moses that was to be Israel's wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations. This is that for which the Psalmist longed in Psalm 119.,

"Grant me Thy law graciously."

And again :—

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed thereto according to Thy word."

Even as it is written, "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things that I write unto you, that they are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14. 37). These are the words of Paul in writing to the saints in Corinth, so that to be spiritual is to give heed to the Word of God. Is there that longing desire of the Psalmist in us?

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me."

To sum up what we have been saying, the communion of the Holy Spirit is dependent upon the hearing and doing

of the will of God. Beloved, grieve not the Spirit of God. "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk" (Gal. 5. 25). "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wrath, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like" (Gal. 5. 19-21). We ask, Is it possible for any such things to be found in God's people? If not, why then is Paul found writing thus to those saints in Galatia? Is there not enmity, is there not strife, is there not jealousy, is there not wrath to be found in God's saints? We would call special attention to the words "and such like." Much else could be named that are indeed works of the flesh, things, it may be, that are looked upon as being of small moment; thus they are passed over, and thus the heart is hardened, and we become past feeling and give ourselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, temperance; against such there is no law" (Gal. 5. 22-23). This fruit, which is of the Spirit, is seen in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which Paul so often refers throughout his various epistles. It becometh us, then, to seek to grow in a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ.

We would here note down a few of the expressions concerning Him in Psalm 21. 2-6:—

"Thou hast given Him His heart's desire,
And hast not withholden the request of His lips (Selah).

For Thou preventest Him with the blessings of goodness:
Thou settest a crown of fine gold on His head.

He asked life of Thee, Thou gavest it Him,
Even length of days for ever and ever.

His glory is great in Thy salvation:
Honour and majesty dost Thou lay upon Him.

For Thou makest Him most blessed for ever:
Thou makest Him glad with joy in Thy presence."

These with other scriptures surely tell out the great delight that God had in His Son.

As we thus consider God's standard of perfection, the Lord Jesus, surely we are reminded of the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 3. 1: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ." How far short we come, and how little we know of Him whose love in its breadth and length and height and depth cannot be known, and whose riches are unsearchable! It is an easy matter to write or speak of these things, but how much is He in our thoughts in the hurry of business, in the every-day life? Of this we must give account. Will there be the wood, hay and stubble, when it might have been gold, silver and precious stones? Or have we never learnt that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in us, which we have from God? "Quench not the Spirit."

"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13. 14). For what communion hath light with darkness, or a believer with an unbeliever? None whatever.

Having looked so far at the individual, we must now refer briefly to the collective side of things.

1 Cor. 3. 16: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Unities there are on earth that are not unities of the Spirit, but in the temple of God the unity of the Spirit must be kept. When we are found as assembly in assembly on the first day of the week, is there a discerning of the leading of the Spirit? How can we discern the leading of the Spirit if we have not learnt the mind of God in regard to our being together? It is impossible. Oh, how much we need to be reminded that the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God!

The Woman in Her Sphere.

“YE SERVE THE LORD CHRIST.”

WHAT high service; Could we desire anything greater? What are His claims? Will a few hurried moments morning and night suffice? or if we rise late, just a little time at the close of a busy day? No, no, may such a thought never enter our hearts. “Ye turned unto God from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven,” therefore may we seek earnestly to glorify Him, with good will doing service as unto the Lord and not unto men.

Very lowly, seemingly, our service may be, but if done as unto Him it will in no wise lose its reward. Faithful in that which is least, may we be found. There are the duties of daily life which rightly must be attended to, there are sick ones to visit, lonely ones to cheer, bereaved ones to comfort, a word in season to speak to the perishing ones around us, many who need upholding in prayer, some in the forefront of the battle, or young ones who are tempted and tried.

May we be wise-hearted and willing to go or stand at His bidding, giving diligence to show ourselves approved unto God, knowing that they also serve who only stand and wait.

I was watching some trees lately, stripped and bare, every branch standing out against the grey sky; big and little branches, even the tiny twigs, were pointing upwards—their service is one now. Presently clothed with all their beautiful new foliage, another service will be theirs. Sisters, are we day by day pointing upwards, walking in newness of life, just where He has placed us in the conflict, seeking to glorify Him? Surely He placed us where we are for a purpose. Oh let us serve Him loyally, and if we serve faithfully the Lord Christ surely we shall “by love serve one another.” May these words burn in our hearts, “Ye serve

the Lord Christ." He is coming, soon we shall be with Him then in His presence.

Prepared down here below
 For service high above,
 His face we soon shall see
 Whom seeing not we love.

Young Men's Corner.

TIMOTHY AND TITUS.

From LONDON, S.W. In comparing the little that we know of these two men, the first thing that impresses us is the difference between the circumstances into which they were born. Timothy was the son of a Jewish mother and a Gentile father, while both the parents of Titus were Gentiles. Here Timothy had a great advantage, for his mother and grandmother were both godly women and gave him a thorough training in the Word of God. Titus on the other hand being of Gentile parentage and uncircumcised had probably been brought up as a heathen.

The Apostle Paul addresses both as "my child in the faith," from which we gather that both had been saved through his instrumentality. There can also be little doubt that Titus was the elder, as no mention is made of his youth, as there is in the case of Timothy.

A comparison of 1 Corinthians 16. 10 with 2 Corinthians 7. 15 and of the relations of the two with the difficulties at Corinth seems to show that Titus was the stronger character of the two. The work he was given at Corinth, where the assembly was full of contention and corruption, and at Crete, where he was left to set things in order in the Churches (Titus 1. 5) of that semi-barbarous island, the inhabitants of which are described as "always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons," would prove him to be strong both physically and mentally, one eminently fitted to teach and to reprove.

Timothy was weak and sickly in body (1 Tim. 5. 23), but his moral fortitude and zeal enabled him in a great measure to overcome his bodily weaknesses. His work was more of a doctrinal character : for this reason he was chosen by Paul to go to Ephesus to combat the doctrinal errors into which the Church at that city had fallen.

These two men though so different in character both gave their lives entirely to the service of the Lord, and both served Him well and faithfully, through trials and persecutions, as far as we know, to the end of their days. Surely our desire and prayer should be, to be as true, faithful and single minded in the service of our Lord and Master as were these two companions of the Apostle Paul, Timothy and Titus.

FROM BRIGHTON. From his first appearance in the Divine record, at his meeting with Paul, Timothy appears to have been the object of the Apostle's special love and care. That, in the first place, he should have so favourably impressed the Apostle Paul, is evidence that "the unfeigned faith" that was in him was manifest to all—the fruit of progress in Divine knowledge, and zeal in God's service, encouraged from earliest childhood by a godly mother's faithful instruction in the sacred writings. He early became associated with the Apostle in his travels, and his son-like devotion to the Apostle rendered him a faithful scholar, minister and delegate. In writing to the Philippians Paul bears testimony that, except Timothy "I have no man like-minded who will care truly for your state, for they all seek their own. But ye know . . . that as a child serveth a father so he served with me." One would infer from the detailed description as to how the will of God was to be carried out, given in the Apostle Paul's letters to Timothy, that it was to him Paul looked as the one who would carry on his work when his own course was finished.

The Scriptures leave the history of Titus in obscurity, and beyond the facts that he was a Greek, and was not

circumcised, we have but very little information to aid us in comparing him with Timothy.

While Timothy was apparently delicate physically (see 1 Tim. 5. 23) Titus, judging by the often arduous nature of his work, especially while among the Cretans, was strong and vigorous.

Though the exhortations in the epistles to each are somewhat similar (though more detailed in those to Timothy), yet the classes of people with whom each had to deal were quite different; Timothy, refined and cultured, was ably fitted to deal with those seductive men who were endeavouring to introduce false doctrine into the churches (see 1 Tim. 1. 3, and so forth), while Titus dealt with evil of a more blatant and grosser kind. In the case of the Cretans the tendency was to revert to the old state, and it was against this resurrection of the old nature that Titus had to contend.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS. There is much in the character of these two servants of the Lord, not only to admire, but also endeavour our utmost to imitate (Prov. 2. 20). But it is well for us to remember, that as the work reveals in some measure the character of the worker (Prov. 22. 29), so the character of the individual is the natural outcome of teaching and training (Prov. 6. 20-23). The early training of Timothy appears to have been the foundation upon which his character was built (Prov 22. 6). The unfeigned faith and piety which were seen, both in the life of his grandmother, Lois, and of his mother, Eunice, are plainly manifested in that of Timothy (2 Tim. 1. 5), and their godly example and teaching will assuredly have their reward.

“A man's gift maketh room for him” (Prov 18. 16), and by the exercise of that ability which God had given him, Timothy gained for himself the commendation of those among whom he was placed (Prov. 20. 11 and 22. 1). The man that is wise and diligent in his work, whatsoever that

work may be (Prov. 14. 23), will win for himself the respect and regard of all (Prov. 12. 8 and 22. 29).

As a child with a father, so he served with the Apostle in furtherance of the gospel (Phil. 2. 22). He followed his teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions and sufferings (2 Tim. 3. 10), and manifested in his labours that faithfulness unto God which will one day win for him the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25. 21).

The sphere of the work of Titus appears to have demanded a man with a more determinate will than what we would imagine Timothy to possess. Paul seems to have discerned this in Titus, in leaving him at Crete, for he had manifested to the Apostle in the many journeys he had made a willing mind to suffer any hardship for the sake of the gospel. His return unto the Apostle after his travel to Corinth gave Paul much comfort (Prov. 25. 13). Earnestness and diligence appear to have been his characteristics, and though he may not have had the training which Timothy knew, yet he showed himself, in diligence not slothful, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and was called by Paul "my partner and fellow-worker" (2 Cor. 8. 23).

From GLASGOW. Timothy's early training, in a full and complete knowledge of the Scriptures, was of great importance in moulding his after life and future usefulness.

We have no definite authority for saying that he was a convert of the Apostle Paul. He was probably a witness of the Apostle's sufferings at Lystra, and it is not improbable that it was at this time that the Apostle made the intimate acquaintance of Timothy's mother and grandmother, of which he speaks in 2 Timothy 1. 5.

Timothy accompanies the Apostle on his second missionary journey; he is associated with him in the superscription of six epistles. He is sent to comfort the heart of the Thessalonians. He is sent to Corinth with a letter of rebuke and

correction. He is left in Ephesus in the face of a coming apostasy.

Such was the confidence that the Apostle reposed in him ; albeit he was of a shy timid nature, young in years and weak in body.

The Apostle found in Timothy a companion and fellow-worker, who was a continual joy to his heart in the midst of his sufferings and travels.

Titus on the other hand was a Greek ; very little is written concerning him, his name is not even mentioned in the Acts.

He probably belonged to Antioch, and may have been one of those who were sent up to the Conference at Jerusalem—a representative of the Church of God in Antioch. He was probably a companion of Timothy in carrying the first letter to Corinth ; at any rate the Apostle waited his return with deep anxiety as to the results of his mission.

Driven from Ephesus owing to the riot caused by Demetrius and his compatriots, the Apostle came to Troas, and because he found not Titus his brother, crossed over to Macedonia and met him near Philippi. The joy of that meeting resulted in the writing of the second epistle to Corinth.

Titus was one of the messengers chosen to convey the bounty of the Churches of Macedonia and Achaia to the poor saints at Jerusalem.

He appears to have been strong and robust spiritually and physically, useful to the Apostle as a messenger to the Churches and a companion in his travels.

The Apostle, while on his voyage to Rome [?] evidently desired to remain in Crete in order to set in order the things that were wanting. He, however, was overruled, and accordingly delegated Titus to this important work, this resulting in the epistle to Titus being written when the Apostle reached Rome.¹

Titus is mentioned in 2 Timothy as having gone to Dal-

¹ See Titus 3. 12.—ED.

matia at the time when the Apostle was left alone save for the presence of Luke the beloved physician.

From BLACKRIDGE. Comparing these two servants of the Lord as to what they were prior to their being saved, concerning the former we have something, but of the latter nothing is said.

Timothy was the son of a Greek and had a Jewish mother. "The son of a Jewess which believed." His upbringing was that which ought to be attained unto by every mother whose heart is not as the ostrich (Job 39. 16). From a babe he had known the sacred writings which were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. These sacred writings were the books of the Old Testament of course.

He had a mother and grandmother whose faith was unfeigned.

Titus is mentioned as being a Greek, and may we wisely infer that such an upbringing as was Timothy's was not Titus', seeing his mother was a Greek, for unto the Jew were given the oracles of God, and all that that encircles?

The first time we have Timothy mentioned is in Acts 16., and from Acts 20. we would gather that he belonged to Derbe, whereas Titus is mentioned on an earlier occasion, namely, in Galatians 2. 1-3, in connexion with Paul and Barnabas going up to Jerusalem, which is recorded in Acts 15. We are unable to find the place to which he belonged.

From these it would seem that Titus was earlier in the work as a co-worker with the Apostle than Timothy, and Timothy seemed to be some years Titus' junior. Compare such injunctions as 1 Timothy 4. 12 and Titus 2. 15.

Timothy is much oftener mentioned in Scripture than Titus, being one that the Apostle specially chose to go forth with him. The Apostle includes him in the address of six of his epistles. Titus is not mentioned in this way.

Timothy is sent by Paul to Corinth. 1 Cor. 4. 17 ; Thessalonica. 1 Thess. 3. 2. Paul purposes to send him to Philippi. Phil. 2. 19.

Left in Ephesus. 1 Tim. 1. 3.

Titus is sent by Paul to Corinth. 2 Cor. 8. 16-24.

Presume he was sent by Paul to Dalmatia. 2 Tim. 4. 10.

Left in Crete. Titus 1. 5.

Thus we have somewhat of their work.

The chief points of interest in these two men's lives are Timothy's work at Ephesus and Titus' in Crete.

Timothy is left in Ephesus to charge certain not to teach a different doctrine (1 Tim. 1. 3), which, no doubt, found much opposition, for in 2 Timothy 2. 14-26 we find he and others outpurging themselves from those whose words did eat like a gangrene.

Titus in Crete likewise is to speak, exhort and reprove with all authority, and if there is such a person as we find in 2 Timothy 2. 17-18 he has after a first and a second admonition to refuse. We do not view Titus acting independently in this action of course.

It is refuse in Titus because he and those with him have power to do so, but it is outpurge in 2 Timothy 2.

Both these men have to show splendid examples. (See 1 Tim. 4. 12, and Titus 2. 7 and 8). Let young men copy.

[We miss in the above interesting papers the stress that we should have expected to have seen laid on the difference in Paul's attitude towards Timothy and Titus as to circumcision.

That he circumcised Timothy was clearly an evidence of his desire to have him as a fellow-worker towards Jews as being himself a circumcised man. To such an one he writes about men wishing to teach the law who knew nothing about it. Compare 1 Timothy 1. 3-11 especially 7 with Galatians 4. 21-5. 1.

Titus was not circumcised because neither Paul nor any

of the other Apostles ever taught that Gentiles must become Jews, or be circumcised in order to be brought into a position of blessing. Titus then is found, though a Greek by nature and education, on just the same footing in the Community as the circumcised Timothy. This gives an added interest to much in the epistle to Titus, see for example Titus 2. 15. Note also that to Titus Paul calls himself an Apostle of Jesus Christ—not as usually an Apostle of Christ Jesus.—ED.]

THE SONG OF THE EXILE.

“Set your mind on things above.”

AN exile from Home,
 Of Thee I am dreaming ;
 And far though I roam,
 On my spirit are gleaming
 Sweet thoughts of Thy pleasure,
 Bright hopes of Thy treasure,
 That faintly but measure
 The gladness to come.

And far though I be
 From the reigon of Glory,
 Fresh glimpses I see
 In God's wonderful story,
 Of sunshine the token,
 And Peace that is spoken,
 That ne'er can be broken
 In Heaven for me.

Then humbly I'll bring,
 As lowly I'm bending,
 And glad on the wing
 Of the morning ascending,
 Till over life's ocean,
 In deepest devotion
 My soul in emotion
 God's praises shall sing.

“THAT I MAY DWELL AMONG THEM.”

EXOD. 29. 46.

WHEN the Children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt, Jehovah SAW their affliction, HEARD their cry, KNEW their sorrows, and CAME DOWN to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land, unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. (Exod. 3. 7, and so forth.)

From *their* point of view this was very desirable, even to be delivered from taskmasters and oppression, to wit, from slavery with all its attendant miseries. How they rejoiced when the deliverance was accomplished and Pharaoh's host destroyed, as recorded in chapter 15. of the same book, the Song of Moses being a mighty tribute to the emancipating power of Jehovah the Great I AM.

Later, the Eternal One expresses the wish for them to make Him a sanctuary that He might dwell among them (Exod. 25. 8), and further announces the fact that He did not redeem them solely for their own comfort, blessed as that was, but, as He Himself declared, “they shall know that I . . . brought them forth out of the land of Egypt THAT I MAY DWELL AMONG THEM.” This was the desire of Jehovah their God (Exod. 29. 46). Thus we discern the purpose from His standpoint, why HE had brought them back out of the enemy's hand.

The Bible-student will find items of interest, as well as instruction, in tracing the subsequent history of this people.

Their accredited leader had full details given to him respecting the sanctuary, and when the work was finished “as Jehovah commanded Moses” the Cloud covered the “Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle (Exod. 40. 33, and so forth); thus He owned that which was OF and FOR Himself.

This arrangement was especially suited for the wilderness journeyings of God's People, but on coming into the land,

and the kingdom being established, the temporary habitation was replaced by a substantial and permanent structure of which Jehovah was again the Architect, and when completed according to the pattern, He as before owned it by His presence (2 Chron. 5. 4).

In passing, we might here notice the conditions under which He promised to walk among them, so much being based upon the words "IF YE WALK IN MY STATUTES" (Lev. 26. 3-13). Alas, they failed, and went astray, and He forsook His Temple, and they were carried into captivity, to Babylon; but God again revived His desire, and some whose hearts were stirred up, returned and commenced to rebuild the House of Jehovah the God of Israel who is in Jerusalem (Ezra 1.).

All along the line Satan has shown himself to be the Adversary; here again he causes the work to cease, and unfortunately indifference takes the place of zeal—the people say it is not the time for Jehovah's House to be built, and they settle down in their own comfortable ceiled houses, whilst God's House was lying waste, notwithstanding the fact that He had been trying to speak to their hearts in various ways; but all in vain, so He sends Haggai the Prophet unto them with the exhortation: "Consider your ways," and also Jehovah's encouraging message, "Go up to the mountain and bring wood, and build the House, and I will take pleasure in it and I will be glorified."

The remnant of the people obeyed the voice of Jehovah their God and received from Him the assuring words, twice repeated: "I am with you." So with stirred-up spirits they came and worked in the House of Jehovah of Hosts, their God (Hag. 1. 2.). Notice also the fact that God in His sovereignty uses a heathen king (Darius) at this point to prosper the work. "They builded and finished it according to the commandment of the God of Israel . . . and they set the Priests . . . and the Levites . . . for the service of God . . . *as it is written in the book*

of Moses." These purified themselves, and all who had separated themselves to seek Jehovah, were made joyful by Him.

Thus God-given joy followed the restored condition and position of the remnant in Zerubbabel's and again in Ezra's day (Ezra 6.). The effort was small, insignificant when compared with the former glory of the House, even "as nothing" (Hag. 2. 3); but Jehovah was pleased with it, and that compensated for all else.

Their guide-book was the same as their forefathers had used, no new laws were given to suit the times; would to God there were more to-day like Ezra who had set his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments (Ezra 7. 10).

He had much more to do, but it is not now our purpose to enlarge further upon that. It is sad to relate that failure again followed, and Jehovah in His last words to His people through Malachi the prophet casts them back upon what had been written so long before: "Remember ye the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even statutes and judgments" (Mal. 4. 4).

In turning to the books of the New Testament for instruction, we may not find definite command to build a House for God to-day, but we do find a pattern, something real in this respect for our imitation.

After reading in the Acts respecting the pioneer work of the Apostles, and the formation of churches (or assemblies) of God in many places, we turn to read the letters addressed to some of them; for instance, the saved, baptized and gathered together of God in Corinth are spoken of, not only as God's assembly, but as "God's tilled land" (1 Cor. 3. 9, R.M.) or cultivated patch in the midst of the barrenness of idolatry and apostate Judaism abounding in that city, also "God's building"; then in verse 16 the same company is spoken of as "Temple of God," and the words of Lev. 26. 12—already referred to—are quoted to them, showing

the condition attached to the promise "I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (*see* 2 Cor. 6.).

A similar company in Ephesus are spoken of as builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit (Eph. 2. 22, R.M.).

"Whose House are we if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3. 6).

"Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual House, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2. 5).

The apostle here appears to be contrasting the House of the present with that of the past dispensation—living stones now contrasted with the hewn stones of Solomon's Temple then: a spiritual House now, a material House then, but with this parallel, just as the stones of the past age had to be builded together, so must those of the present dispensation be likewise builded together to form the House: the sacrifices are spiritual, in contrast to material of former times.

A careful study of these references will reveal the fact that House and Temple have to do with a gathered people, which in time past were no people but who are now the people of God, having obtained mercy. (*See* verses 9, 10.)

This cannot be the same as the Church which is His Body, for many who have a place in that which the Lord Christ is building are already "with Christ," their period allotted for priestly functions ceased when they left this scene, whereas priesthood and sacrifices are in connexion with those who are still on earth, in mortal body, whose bodies are Temple of Holy Spirit, but being (in a collective capacity) together of God and for God, are indeed found in these remnant days.

HOUSE OF GOD

Church (or Assembly) of Living God, pillar and ground of the Truth (1 Tim. 3. 15). These are those who have learned

God's desire for this day of small things, and having found the pattern, are endeavouring to be in agreement therewith ; not having discovered anything new to suit modern times, they return in practice to the Apostles' Teaching, which has not been superseded.

May it be our aim to be, and to continue to be, here on earth, builded together, so as to provide a dwelling-place for God.

We may be told that this cannot be in these days, and under existing circumstances. Satan will always try to hinder ; but let us take encouragement from the Scriptures, and know experimentally the fulfilment of the words, " I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

W. H. B. FULLARD.

PAUL ON WORSHIP.

V.

A CONSIDERABLE section of the Letter to Hebrews is taken up with a contrast between the Old Covenant and the New. The Melchizedek priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ is shown to be a more dignified thing altogether than the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood. But while the contrast is brought out in a very marked manner, it is nevertheless strongly insisted on that the things associated with the Old Covenant bore a definite relation to those associated with the New, each to each.

First we get the contrast of the priesthods, one hereditary, the other perpetual in one Person ; one being after a carnal commandment, the other after the power of an endless life. Thus the Lord Jesus is the surety of a better Covenant. The chief point or sum of the chapters immediately preceding the eighth being that we have such a High Priest—so great, so high.

He is then spoken of as being Minister of the Sanctuary and True Tabernacle, whilst the tabernacle made by Bezalel

is called a copy and a shadow of it. Moses had seen by Divine revelation a pattern whereof he had to prepare a copy and a shadow. This order of things, which was associated with Moses and Aaron, was in its nature capable of decay; it was transitory, and God has something better in view. This better something is the Divine reality which is associated with the New Covenant; "new" here we understand as that which never can become old, never can decay nor corrupt.

Now we come to chapter 9. and direct special attention to the word "Even" in verse 1. "Now even the first covenant had ordinances of Divine Service." In serving God, that is, in expressing their worship by their offerings and the like, the worshippers were not at liberty to follow their own ideas. There were ordinances even then. How much less is the New Covenant without its ordinances of Divine Service? The words Divine Service in Heb. 9. 1 represent the Greek word *λατρεία*, *latroia*, which expresses the actions that flow out of worship, and may only be offered to the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the same word is used in verse 6. These are the services that the priests accomplished in the tabernacle in the wilderness.

Now we come to the Divine provision that no service ever need fail, as service often did fail of old and become degraded to the level of dead works. This is found in the ever and infinitely valuable blood of Christ, for He offered to God the one priceless offering that alone was in itself worthy of Divine acceptance. A true understanding of this can cleanse the consciences of the worshippers from dead works to offer service unto the Living God. This then gives infinite value to all that conformably to God's word and will is now offered to Him, in contrast to the worthlessness of all the Levitical sacrifices when viewed in themselves.

This gives access into the Holies, and its infinite worth is thus in measure to be appreciated. But none the less there is in existence to-day the antitype of the hangings at the entrance of the court. There is that of which

the altar of burnt-offering was a shadow. There is a reality of which the laver speaks. Further in still the screen of the tent of meeting stands and speaks its own message in connexion with the true tabernacle. Within this we yet have to perceive those things of which the table of shewbread and the golden lampstand are copies. This brings us to the altar of incense standing before the veil. And now and not till now we come to that which speaks of His flesh, and though in fact the veil was rent once for all, yet as a matter of our appreciation again and again we may see the veil rent, which gives access, in no other way to be obtained, into a place of nearness—how dread, how solemn—which, whatever may be said, is never really known except as the culmination of the new and living way which commences in the Antitype of the gate of the court.

As we approach the concluding portion of Hebrews we again obtain valuable help in seeking to learn what Divine Service is, namely, that service which is well-pleasing to God, Who is a consuming fire. For, to do this, we must have thankfulness—we must recognize that all we receive is His grace. Thus from full and thankful hearts with reverence and awe we may offer service well-pleasing to Him.

That this service may be special at special times, but that all times are times for praising God; that it may be individual, or again that it may be in the strictest sense collective, the Scriptures show conclusively. For the moment, let us be content to set down the God-breathed exhortation, that we offer through the Lord Jesus unto His Father a sacrifice of praise continually, even the fruit of lips which make confession to His Name.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

For Youngest Believers.

WHAT I GAINED BY COMMITTING 2 TIMOTHY 2. 3. TO
MEMORY: BY A YOUNG BELIEVER.

THESE chapters have been to me—a young believer—a word fitly spoken, like apples of gold in baskets of silver. Yea, I have much cause to thank and praise Him, to Whom alone thanksgiving and praise are due, that I ever committed this portion of the sacred writings to memory, because I feel sure they are seasonable words to all, but most of all to us who are not fully grounded in the truth.

Now let us listen to what God has said by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul in this place: “Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 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” (2 Tim. 2. 1, 2). Truly here in the beloved Apostle’s utterance of these loving words from God to his beloved child Timothy, whom he bore on his heart, there is an excellent example for those who are fitted of God to teach and guide in the assemblies of God, and also are responsible to God to guard with all their powers the Flock of God, that the adversaries of the truth may not come in with their fine speeches and deceive dear young fellow-saints.

Maybe we have read of another who was also guarding his father’s flock in a very difficult time, when the lion was seeking the lamb. But through the help of Him Who is a present help in the time of need, he rescued the lamb from the lion. Is not this a difficult day, when the lion is seeking the lamb? No doubt the Apostle, with the wisdom which cometh down from the Giver of every good gift and perfect boon, is pondering in his heart the heresy of those adversaries of the truth, Hymenaeus and Philetus, who having erred from the truth themselves, by a deceitful tongue had managed to overthrow the faith

of some, telling them that the resurrection was already past. From which we can imagine how seasonable this word of warning was in a day when the truth was being denied.

We ask, Is it not seasonable for our days also? Is not the truth being set aside as it was then? Not this particular truth of the resurrection, perhaps, but other truth of great importance to the people of God. Read 2 Tim. 3. 13. But evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Surely it is seasonable, especially to us young ones; for it is painful to hear of young Christians departing from the Faith, and refusing to be under kingdom rule. Consider, now, how Timothy would receive this exhortation from his guide and teacher in the truth. Did he cast it aside and neglect it? Surely not? We rather believe that he treasured this golden advice in his heart, using the words of one of old, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste." "Moreover, by them is Thy servant warned."

Let us, then, also ponder them prayerfully before the throne of grace, where sits our Daysman to urge our plea, to have this precious warning confirmed in our hearts (Ps. 119. 38), so that we may not be led away by the fair speeches of the Adversary's servants. Rather let us seek unto those who are "Faithful men" (2 Tim. 1. 2), men who are walking in close communication with God, "who are able to teach." It is they who are able to guide and lead us on by the Divine wisdom they have received from Him that giveth it liberally and upbraideth not. Being on our guard lest we with our child-like minds be deceived, we are to mark them who are unfaithful and full of vain thoughts. How often has it proved fatal to young Christians to go and consult the wrong person or the works of men. Let us not be deceived in thinking that because a person has been a long time born again that he is one of the "faithful men." "Old men are not always wise." May we, then, value the time we are able to spend with those who are fitted of God to guide in

the truth, "buying up the opportunity," that eventually we may be able to present ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, handling aright the Word of God, and not judging Scripture by our thoughts, but letting the Scriptures guide us, that we may follow after righteousness, faith, love and peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Department of Review.

A FEW REMARKS ON A BOOKLET ENTITLED
 "SHALL THE SWORD DEVOUR FOR EVER?"

BEFORE proceeding to the subject matter of the booklet, the title arrests attention and encourages a consideration of the circumstances in which the words were uttered. The early part of 2nd Samuel brings before us the fact that God's judgment had fallen upon Saul, the man after the flesh, and that those in the mind of God had anointed David as King; but Abner, captain of the host, who was also related to Saul, chooses a path for himself, and, instead of leading a united Israel to the hearty acknowledgment of David, sets up a puppet king of his own and so causes a disastrous schism. Further, he actually suggests the commencement of civil war in the land, with all its attendant horrors of brethren fighting with brethren, and it is only when he and his men are worsted that the bitterness resulting from his action comes home to him. Then with indignation (real or feigned) he chides the leader of David's forces in the words, "Shall the sword devour for ever? Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?" The pity of it all is that he did not think of this at the first, for had he done so, perchance he would not have caused strife by adopting a course of self-will.

This needs to be borne in mind when sectarian men are found pleading for grace and tolerance. Let them

consider that by maintaining unscriptural positions they themselves are an occasion of that which they deplore.


Coming now to the booklet, we find that the main contention in it is that all who are members of Christ should be allowed the privileges of the assembly of God, on the simple ground that they are members, as on p. 2 it is stated, "the gathering together of the scattered members of the body of Christ simply *as such*."

Now, the truth of the Body is a great and glorious one, and the fact of the vital and corporate union of Christ with His members and of the members with Christ and with one another we thankfully acknowledge.

Further, we hold that all thus embraced in the grace of God are also under responsibility to the Word of God, and that that Word is unto all, though we recognize God's sovereignty in the granting of enlightenment to whom He will.

We further add that it is by the subjection of saints to the Word and will of God, by their evident delight in God and Christ, that we discover them to be members of the Body, and as a result our affection is drawn out to them.

Sectarianism is a work of the flesh which very sadly hinders the *expression* of the truth concerning the Body. But [the truth of the Body, allied as it is to other truths, such as that of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and our participation in the coming of the Lord, while it should give colour and character to our life and walk and our dealings with one another, fails to furnish much-needed instruction as to matters relating to the together character of saints on earth.

The writer of the booklet (on p. 4) says, "Our fellowship extends to every member of the Body of Christ, and that is the 'Unity of the Spirit,' that is, the one Body." But is it so indeed? If we turn to Ephesians 4. we find the Unity of the Spirit is a sevenfold one expressed as follows,  One Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one

Hope of your calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all." It is this Unity we are to give diligence to keep; all involved therein should have a place amongst God's gathered saints. Do we not rejoice in the first three? These represent the side of sovereign grace and privilege. But can we ignore the second three, "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," though these bring in the principle of subjection and obedience? One God and Father suggests both privilege and responsibility. Is it proper, in view of this comprehensive unity, to limit the words to the truth of the Body? We may grant that the first three, "One Body, one Spirit, one Hope," stand on a higher plane than the latter three, "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," yet they are not more important when viewed in relation to the purpose they are designed to fulfil.

Then again on p. 7 it is asserted that the New Testament only recognizes one Unity, even the one Body, but this overlooks the fact that "the House of God," and "Temple of God," as applied to God's gathered saints, hold a prominent place. Then the expression, "the people of God," is suggestive of a *together company* under His government; and the further expression, "Kingdom of God," as setting forth the principle of righteousness which should obtain, must not be ignored. But what place has truth relating to such things as these been given in the booklet?

It may be objected that all these expressions are found in the Old Testament in relation to Israel, but we reply that they are also found in the New Testament in reference to saints of this time, and this fact affords a valuable suggestion, namely, that so far as the questions of government and administration of God's people are concerned, the same principles apply both to Old and New Testament times. And this leads us to say how much we deplore the setting aside of the Old Testament in matters relating to the ordering of saints on the earth. Of course, wrong

interpretations may be put upon such Scriptures, but that proves nothing; for the New Testament Scriptures are also wrongly dealt with.

But, returning to the above-mentioned expressions, we remark that each and all imply responsibility. Only as obedience was rendered, and God's will responded to, could there be a continuance in such positions of privilege. What became of the House and Temple? Eventually they were forsaken and destroyed. The People? They became Lo-*ammi* (not My people), and were scattered. The Kingdom? It was taken away. So far, as to the old order of things. Coming to the present dispensation we read thus, "Whose House are we IF we hold fast . . ." evidently a conditional thing; and again, judgment must "begin from the House of God." As to the Temple, we are told that wrong material may be built, "wood, hay, stubble," and the builders are warned against spoiling God's temple, which the assembly in Corinth was. Then the "People of God" are those whom the Lord judges. As to the Kingdom, the principle thereof is righteousness, and we know from 1 Corinthians 6. (with chap. 5.) that those unfit for the Kingdom of God are not to be allowed a place in the assembly of God.

If it be acknowledged that these expressions, House of God, Temple of God, People of God, Kingdom of God, have an application to saints in the present time, it will necessarily follow that membership of the Body is not a sufficient principle of gathering, but that the thought of human responsibility as implied in these terms must hold a very prominent place. What, then, is the teaching of the Word concerning the principles of gathering?

1st. Those who afterwards are found together in assembly character, first hear the Word of God and receive it, so becoming *disciples* of the Lord Jesus.

2nd. They as disciples are baptized.

3rd. The same persons are added together to form

one company, which is spoken of in Scripture as an assembly of God.

4th. And being so added, they should continue steadfastly in the teaching, fellowship, breaking of the bread, and the prayers.

We desire that these propositions receive due consideration, for they are fundamental in character.

Matthew 28. 18-20 is absolutely invaluable in this connexion, for there is asserted a most important fact, namely, that the Lord Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth—He is Lord and Christ, so He needs disciples to obey Him. SUCH are to be baptized, and such to be taught to observe all things He has commanded.

The truth of the Body is not fundamentally and necessarily associated with the truth of the assembly of God. It is an added truth, but as disciples are gathered in subjection to the Lord, they are in a position to set forth the principles of the Body. Israel was God's assembly in the wilderness, but they were not the Body, nor gathered on the ground of the Body, but gathered as a redeemed, separated, baptized people in the acknowledgment and under the authority of God's appointed leader, Moses.

It may be asked how disciples are added together in assembly character, and who are the responsible actors. If the assembly of God is spoken of as a house, then we have certain men referred to as "builders"; if considered as a farm or tilled field, then those men are spoken of as "planters"; or if as a sphere of administration, they are termed "overseers." The three families of the Levites had each their allotted work, but they all worked to one end, and their responsibility lay in connexion with God's House as to its establishment, furnishing and so forth. Do we not see that the men used of God for the conversion of the converts were responsible as to their establishment? Here we see the work of builders and planters, and after the establishment we have the work of overseers. What

is an overseer's work? 1 Timothy 3. 5 gives a helpful word in this connexion, "How shall he take care of a Church of God?" Now this discloses a very important truth, supplying a link which is missing in much of the teaching on Church order. We find it is contemplated that there should be in connexion with saints a circle of rule, of government (Heb. 13. 24); and the special responsibility of guarding the saints is theirs; they must exercise vigilance as to who and what comes in amongst them. In Exodus 35. we have a helpful word as to two classes of persons found among God's people; namely, "willing hearted," and "wise hearted." The first describes disciples, the second describes those who are over them. The first brought their gifts, the second took up those gifts and wrought them into God's House.

As a fellowship or partnership all in it have an interest as to who should be received or who should be put away, and so the assembly act in binding or loosing, in putting away or receiving back, but this they will do on the testimony of their overseers.

It is well to have men like Hananiah (Neh. 7. 2), "a faithful man, and one who feared God above many," to guard the door, so that none shall creep in unawares.

As to the procedure adopted by many of proposing a person one day and receiving a week later, we are not bound to any form, but we must observe the principle that people cannot join themselves, but must be received.

Here it will be fitting to speak a word on "letters of commendation." The giving and receiving of these imply that both assemblies concerned were one in principle, only being sundered by distance; that such letter was "needed" to ensure reception, and that being in one assembly gave a title to all, and being outside of an assembly excluded from all. We observe that when Apollos desired to go from Ephesus to Achaia, the brethren wrote to the disciples to receive him.

Let it be clearly remarked again that we do not receive people simply as members of the Body, but we receive them because they are disciples and have expressed the fact by baptism, or if there has been entanglement in wrong, by repentance. In the case of a professed young convert, how can any one say with certainty that he has received the Spirit and is in the Body, particularly now that there are no supernatural signs, as in certain cases there were at the beginning, to mark the Divine operation? Who has such discernment? Does the reader possess it? Such is not the principle to guide in this matter.

It will be remembered that no uncircumcised person might eat the passover. One might be of Israel and yet be excluded. Has not this a bearing on the place of baptism?

In the same connexion we read that a stranger and a hired servant could not eat, but a bond-servant, if circumcised, could do so, the teaching of which is tolerably plain that a person at liberty to come and go as he pleased was not eligible. So "occasional fellowship" (misnomer as it is) is a mere human invention.

It is claimed in several places in the booklet that persons involved in sectarian positions have the right to share in the breaking of the bread, and it is suggested that to deny them such a privilege is to constitute them wicked persons.

Now this contention proceeds on a misunderstanding of the place of the breaking of the bread. It puts it outside the House instead of keeping it in the House. If what we have said has been followed, it will be seen that persons must be *in* an assembly, subject to its government and discipline, if they are to share in its privileges. It should be seen that in a fellowship or partnership those who are in it must take part in both privilege and responsibility, in gain and loss, in grace and government. It is not even fair to take one and to shirk the other. Therefore, we do not receive to the breaking of the bread, or to the privilege

of prayer, and so forth, but into the Fellowship, with all that is involved therein.

We thus have before us a company gathered to the name, standing apart from the sin of sectarianism, subject to the Lord's will, carrying out His discipline, and to such a company one comes claiming the privilege of the breaking of the bread. He has never seen the wrong of sectarianism, has no intention of identifying himself with a Church of God, which is a standing condemnation of sects, has no thought of continuing steadfastly in these things, but merely wishes to make a convenience of the assembly! Let him prove his right to such occasional fellowship.

We do not say they are wicked persons, they are simply in a position where they cannot do the will of God, just as there were many most estimable people in Babylon, but they could not keep the passover because they were not in the right place.

As to the expression of the unity of the Body in the one loaf, this can only be done as, apart from sectarianism, saints are gathered together according to God's Word. It was when the remnant came up from Babylon, having had their spirits raised by God to seek after His will and to build His House, that they offered up twelve he-goats as a sin-offering for all Israel. Faithfulness and separation are not inconsistent with entering into God's purposes for all His saints.

Now, coming to the question of being gathered to the name of the Lord, and the *bona fide* of a meeting.

At the beginning we find God's work began in Jerusalem, and from thence extended to Samaria and onwards to the Gentiles—there was nothing of independency. However, those various Churches have passed away, the lampstands have been removed, and we are now living in a remote and remnant time. We believe, however, that God has again wrought, and that His work spread out from a certain beginning. But that work was one of recovery, and the

truth was only partially made known. It was absolutely essential that saints should be in a condition to go on with God, ready to learn more of His will and give effect thereto, but herein there has been much failure.

In the days of the returned remnant from Babylon, as set forth in Ezra and Nehemiah, we find the work of restoration was carried out in stages.

1st. A returning to Jerusalem and setting up of the altar, leading to a rebuilding of the House, though this work was interrupted and spread over a long time.

2nd. Ezra came up to instruct the people in the Word of God—in statutes and judgments.

3rd. Then lastly Nehemiah arrives to build the walls and set up the gates.

All this is very suggestive, and we believe there has been something answerable thereto in our days.

The result has been that many meetings professedly gathered to the name have proved they had no title to the name of a Church of God, because there has been no possibility of God's further teaching being received, far less practised.

Then, in not a few cases meetings which there was reason to believe were assemblies of God, had, through the walls of separation and government being broken down, received certain lawless persons and principles, so that when the day of testing came it was found impossible to do God's will in such associations, and, consequently, those whose spirits God had raised found themselves obliged to leave.

Can such meetings be recognized as assemblies of God? We do not profess to judge of these things by God's secret counsel, but we are bound to do so by the standard of the truth. If such a meeting having had Scriptural principles brought before it, such as separation, unity in the Fellowship of God's Son, the unscripturalness of receiving unbaptized persons, and of occasional fellowship, after space being granted for repentance, refuses to entertain the truth and

much less to practise it, can such a meeting claim in any reason to be considered as an assembly of God? Surely not. As to the attitude of the Lord Jesus to such a company, that can only be determined for us by their treatment of the present testimony of the Spirit through the Word.

As to the treatment of assemblies once recognized as in the Fellowship, but which have forfeited the right to further recognition, have we any guidance in the Word? 2 Timothy 2. is referred to on p. 24 of the booklet, but in a very halting manner, for there is no pursuing the matter to the end. The truth there expressed is that an assembly may become so identified with evil as to possess no power to purge it out. The course for those who acknowledge the Lord is to purge themselves out. This does not mean to cleanse themselves, for they are clean, but that in order to keep clean they must get away from the unclean vessels. Having so left, they are to follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Is not this a rejection of an assembly which has heretofore been an assembly of God and the substitution of another assembly? for a company calling upon the Lord is a company occupying Church of God position.

We may gain some light on the subject of recognition or non-recognition of assemblies by noting how the work extended in the early days, as Acts shows. Philip had gone down to Samaria and a great work is done. God has wrought wonderfully, but the work needs to be humanly investigated and acknowledged, so when the apostles had tidings of the work they sent Peter and John. May we not suggest that one purpose served in not granting the Holy Spirit until Peter and John arrived, was to avoid independency and to bring Samaria into touch with the already established Church in Jerusalem? Again, when the preaching extended to Antioch and the Gentiles, tidings came to Jerusalem and Barnabas is sent forth, who looks

upon the work and approves the same as being of God. Thus the work extended—there was no independency.

It will be seen from this that the leaders of God's people are responsible to take cognizance of any fresh development, to investigate it, and to acknowledge it if they are satisfied. The reverse of this is also, as a necessary consequence, true.

Then, despite the fact that reference to the Old Testament is deprecated in connexion with these things, we refer the reader to Leviticus 14. dealing with leprosy in a house, the 13th chapter having dealt with the treatment of a leprous person. The house suspected is to be shut up seven days ; if the plague is spread then the affected parts are to be removed, the house thoroughly scraped and restored, but if after all this the plague is still discovered as remaining, then the house itself is to be utterly destroyed.

Again, in Deuteronomy 13., on hearing of a city that its inhabitants had been drawn aside to idols, then they are to inquire and make search and ask diligently and behold if it be truth and the thing certain . . . then the inhabitants are to be utterly destroyed, and the city having been burnt is to be made a heap, testifying to God's judgment by the hands of His people. Can anything be plainer as to the responsibility of all Israel in regard to each of its cities ? As to the application of all this to our times and to individual Churches of God, it is so plain that surely a child in spiritual matters can see it ? If an assembly thus turns away from the truth, if the thing be certain, then it must be utterly rejected.

But who shall decide ? On p. 14 we read, " Each one should see the evil for himself. It will not do to blindly follow leaders." Of course, one agrees with this, but there seems to be a suggestion in it which is very dangerous. Leading men, elders, are always viewed as responsible for the guidance of God's people, and such men are uniformly seen as acting on behalf of the people. This is a point that

has been much overlooked, and which, if regarded, will supply not a little that is seemingly wanting in the administration of God's House. We judge then, that whether in the recognition and reception of a new assembly or in the rejection of an assembly, the overseers of God's people in those parts are responsible to take the initiative on behalf of all.

The grouping together of assemblies in countries, such as the assemblies in Asia, Galatia, Macedonia, and the referring to all the Churches in such countries by the name of the country, thus, "Achaia was ready a year ago," meaning the Churches in Achaia in their together character, all this is very suggestive, and shows that for purposes of order and effective administration, something larger than one assembly and smaller than the whole, is contemplated as acting together.

The writer of the booklet on p. 21 says "the Churches of Galatia, of Macedonia, of Judea, present no difficulty," but he fails to show how there can be room for such an arrangement if the Body principle is the only one to guide. Let saints consider why these different circles, cities and provinces are specified, and they will find it is to help in the more perfect administration of the House of God.

The writer of these few remarks finds it none of his business to defend wrong actions of many brethren in the past. He believes that to carry out in fellowship with the Lord the principles he has sought to present will be the best check to mere fleshly division. On the other hand, he is persuaded that to adopt the line of things taught in the booklet under review will only lead to a greater multiplication of those divisions which have been perpetrated by those who profess to gather on the ground of the One Body.

S. J. HILL.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 22 (Acts 16. 6-10).

THE JOURNEY THROUGH PHRYGIA AND GALATIA.

(Continued from page 92.)

From JARVIS BROOK. In this section the importance is not the making of disciples—although disciples were made, (*see chap. 18. 3*)—but the guidance of Paul in the pathway unto the accomplishment of that for which he was called, (*see Acts 9. 15, Gal. 2. 7, 9*). To Peter was shown in a special way the calling in of the Gentiles (*Acts 10.*). To Paul guidance was given as to his sphere of service among the Gentiles, thus at this time he was forbidden to speak the word in Asia, suffered not to go into Bithynia, and now guided forth to Macedonia.

Does not Romans 15. 15-21, supply reasons for this? Note the words, “making it my aim so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man’s foundation; but, as it is written—‘They shall see, to whom no tidings of Him came, and they who have not heard shall understand.’”

The penman of the Acts (Luke) discloses not only his presence with them at Troas, but his fellowship in the work before them, “straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them.”

From GLASGOW. Very little is recorded of this journey of many hundred miles in the upland, inland provinces of Asia Minor. It must have taken a long time and would probably be done on foot.

That the visit to Galatia was not fruitless we know from Paul’s subsequent visit in Acts 18. 23, where he sets in order the things that were wanting by establishing rule and order in these virgin assemblies.

His care for them is seen in his Epistle to the Galatians, written at a time when apostate Judaisers were sowing seeds of discord and false doctrine, against whom the Apostle contended so resolutely and continuously.

The wanderings to and fro are remarkable as showing how much the Apostle depended upon the leading of the Holy Spirit in guiding him into a proper and fruitful field of service.

By the very insignificant change to a plural pronoun we understand that Luke announces his arrival and begins his life-long companionship as the devoted friend of the Apostle Paul.

From BELFAST. The three co-workers passed through Phrygia and Galatia. The Holy Spirit guided them not to speak the Word in Asia. Is not this remarkable, seeing that their journey would probably lie through Asia, after they were not permitted to enter Bithynia ?

They arrived at Troas, where Paul beheld the vision. It was here also that Luke joined the pioneer band.

Troas is a town in the district of Troas, which is part of Asia. It lies on a poetic shore, which has at times been visited by mighty men. Alexander the Great passed through this place on his way eastward, and Paul, an Apostle, a mighty man of God, but in the sight of men a weakling, leaves Troas and sails westward to Philippi.

Section 23 (Acts 16. 11-15).

THE WORK AT PHILIPPI.

LYDIA.

From GLASGOW. To the Jew first was a great principle that guided the Apostle in choosing his fields of operation, but in Philippi there was evidently no Jewish synagogue, therefore they sought the place where they supposed prayer was wont to be made.

And here amongst a few womanfolk, the first handful of

that precious seed was sown that was to reap such an abundant harvest.

The heart of Lydia was prepared soil for the good seed of the word of God.

She venerated the name of God and being a seeker after God her diligence was rewarded on the principle that they that seek after God shall be found of Him.

From BELFAST. As pioneers in the Gospel we find they used discretion in going to a prayer meeting (this gives no licence in the present day for associating ourselves with various sects).

• The same principle characterizes all disciples which characterized Lydia, whose heart God opened, and her words: "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord," may be pondered to profit.

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 22.

From DARWEN. From scriptures in the Gospel records of words spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ we conclude this Psalm to be concerning Him.

Literally David knew not what verses 16 and 18 meant, although times were in his experience when the application of some of the words used was appropriate.

This Psalm concerns the Lord Jesus prophetically. It is Calvary's scene, and beforehand allusion is made to the sufferings of the Son of God endured upon the Cross.

Note the following comparisons: Verse 1 and Matt. 27. 46; verse 8 and Matt. 27. 43; verse 18 and Luke 23. 34 and John 19. 24.

But why is the question asked in verse 1 by the Lord Jesus Christ when upon the Cross? The reason of His being forsaken was not unknown to Him.

“RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.”

A REVIEW.¹

OUR review in the May number of NEEDED TRUTH of Mr. L. W. G. Alexander's pamphlet entitled *Discerning the Body* will be so fresh in the minds of our readers that we are very reluctant to take up the pen again to deal with what is, we suppose, really the same heresy, though in a somewhat different guise. But we could scarcely avoid some notice of a recent booklet by Mr. James Allan, bearing the title *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, without being guilty of neglecting Jude's exhortation (verses 22, 23).

As in the previous case it was needful to prevent readers from misapprehension of the circumstances by giving a more full and accurate account of them than the writer had given, so here it is necessary to correct the false impression that would otherwise be produced by the brief account that Mr. Allan furnishes of an interview that he had with certain persons on the 9th of March last.

The greater part, say the first twenty pages of Mr. Allan's booklet, is taken up with an attempt to divide the Word of Truth in what he conceives to be the right manner (to this we will return later), and then after a little of his personal history he proceeds to say—

After spending eleven hours with eight of these brethren on March 9, 1907, the leaders of the leading men told me that it was utterly impossible for me to go on with them, as what I held, the substance of which is found in the foregoing pages, was destructive of what they held and taught. It was not that they tried in any way to prove from the Scriptures that I was wrong, but that what I believed was contrary to what they taught. I assured them that my mind was in no way changed regarding what I believed when we

¹ The writer of this review desires to acknowledge help he has received from two of his esteemed co-workers, though only his own name is undersigned.

left Open Brethren with the exception of the meaning of the term Church of God.

Now, we wonder how many persons with the above before them as their source of information would believe what the actual story is!

It is now just two years ago that Mr. James Allan submitted for insertion in NEEDED TRUTH a paper entitled *The Dwelling Place of God, as seen before and after the Cross*. This article was very carefully read and considered by the Editors, all of whom were impressed by the extent to which the writer of it had wandered from the right line of truth. In recognition of his person and place it was determined to make every effort to help him. This was done partly by correspondence, and the undersigned has letters in which Mr. Allan gratefully acknowledged his welcome criticism and helpful paper on his article. At the same time he said that he was not helped in any way. Subsequently, in accordance with the wish of fellow-workers, Mr. H. Elson and the undersigned travelled together to Edinburgh and spent a considerable time with Mr. Allan, interviews taking place on successive days. During these interviews the ground covered by Mr. Allan's article was traversed, and most painstaking efforts were made to show from the Scriptures wherein Mr. Allan was in error. Amongst other matters which they impressed on his notice there were two points which seemed to weigh with him. One was that in his article he definitely spoke of some of the Apostles as holding to Judaism in opposition to what was Divine revelation. The other matter we will not mention here, though it was very serious. In regard to both these points Mr. Allan was impressed, and was not desirous of his article being published until they had been eliminated. Apart from these two admitted errors, Mr. Allan was not convinced, though he courteously thanked us for our attempt. At this time there fell due a meeting of overseers in Edinburghshire at which it had

been arranged that Mr. Allan should lay his thoughts before his fellow-workers. When the meeting took place, Mr. Elson and the undersigned being also present, Mr. Allan asked permission to withdraw from the arrangement to make known his thoughts, as he first wished to think over some of the points which we had urged upon him. This led us to hope for some further communication from him, but in this we were disappointed. Two things stand out prominently in regard to the issue of our interview with Mr. Allan. Namely, that he never asked us to meet him again, and that he never attempted to rewrite his article so as to present its essential features unchanged with these two errors eliminated. At least, no such amended article has been sent to us, nor do we believe it would be possible to remove these mistakes from the article on *God's Dwelling Place*, without altogether changing its character.

Although Mr. Allan never asked Mr. Elson or the present writer to renew their conversation with him, many attempts have been made by Mr. J. A. Boswell and others to help him and to show him from the Scriptures the unsoundness of the position he occupied. The meeting on March 9, therefore, must not be regarded as an isolated thing, it was the sequel to all the efforts previously made to reach and help Mr. Allan, and it was intended mainly to discover where Mr. Allan was, and how far he had been helped or might be helpable.

It is very significant that on this occasion Mr. Allan expressed himself as heartily in sympathy with Mr. L. W. G. Alexander's article *Pentecostal Times*, with its wealth of false teaching, to which we referred in our May number. Mr. Allan, however, up to this point (as well as Mr. Alexander previously) had assured us that what he held was in no way antagonistic to the existence and constitution of the Fellowship in which he has had his place for many years. At this meeting Mr. Allan took up the attitude that

several things with which he could not agree had been added since we left Open Brethren, and in order to get at these one by one, it was thought wise to go back to the foundations and see where foreign material first came in. It was stated that the chief point of difference between us and those whom we left was the doctrine of the church of God being composed only of believers in any given place who were baptized and together of God, as distinguished from the Body of Christ which includes all the born again. All were surprised to find that Mr. Allan did not fully accept this statement, although those present were perfectly clear about it, both as expressing their own minds and the minds of all in their districts at the time of the separation. But the further surprise can be imagined when Mr. Allan declared that he never was clear about this teaching, and always questioned it in his own mind. This brought matters to an issue beyond which it was not necessary to go ; it being pointed out that teaching on these lines was destructive of what we have all accepted as the will of God, down to the very foundation stone of our collective position ; to take up time looking at the superstructure, when we were not one as to the foundations, was seen to be useless.

Mr. Allan fully admitted that all the teaching which we have had since the separation was in harmony with the first principles as understood by most, although he never so understood these first principles.

Mr. Allan states in his pamphlet (p. 21)—

About fourteen years ago many left those who are termed Open Brethren because of certain practices which obtained among them.

But in point of fact it was not merely a question of certain practices that caused the separation from so-called Open Brethren. The separation was based on difference of doctrine, as Mr. Allan ought to know very well. The evidence for this is overwhelming. The early volumes of **NEEDED TRUTH** were used to set forth the very doctrines

previously in the background which led to the separation from Open Brethren of those who desired to carry out the will of the Lord. A pamphlet, *The Cause of the Separation*, by Mr. Elson, may be cited as a witness; for in it was distinctly stated (as no one then would have denied) that the vital paramount issue was a doctrinal one.

The distinction between the Church which is the Body of Christ and the church of God, which was one of the points of Scriptural exposition on which we have all been absolutely at one from the first, is now completely given up by Mr. Allan, as he freely admits.

It must be clearly understood that what was said to Mr. Allan on March 9th was not based on the fact that what he held was destructive of what we held and taught. What was pointed out to him was that his present position was utterly inconsistent with that which he had occupied in fellowship with others for many years. He was forced to admit far more fully than he does in his pamphlet that it was himself who had changed. It was explained to him kindly, but firmly, that his doctrines were root and branch subversive of the existence and constitution of the Fellowship, and, therefore, it was not consistent nor honourable in him to teach them within the Fellowship, nor could such conduct be connived at by those responsible for the care of the saints.

At the risk of repetition we cite three witnesses to show how very different Mr. Allan's position is to-day from what it was not so very long ago.

1. The paper, *The Church, and the churches of God*, by the late Frederick Arthur Banks, published originally in 1883, clearly sets forth the distinction between the Church, which is the Body of Christ, and a church of God, and Mr. Allan and every one else in the Community knows well that this was universally seen and acknowledged, and that it occupied a considerable place amongst the

things assuredly believed at the time of the separation from Open Brethren, 1892-4.

2. The article entitled *Doctrines of Holy Scripture* which appeared in NEEDED TRUTH, volume 18, had previously been considered and approved by a number of leading men amongst whom was Mr. James Allan, who appended his signature thereto. A comparison of the articles on *The Fellowship*, *The Churches of God*, and *The House of God* (to which he then consented) with his present pamphlet shows clearly that Mr. Allan now destroys what he then built.

3. Mr. Allan refers in his present booklet to a pamphlet issued some time ago bearing the title *On the High Ways to Zion*. Almost the whole of this, we may mention, was reproduced in the supplement to NEEDED TRUTH, vol. 17, 1905—*A Record of Divine Deliverance*, pages 5-19. Mr. Allan may criticize this now as he thinks right, but he ought to mention that when the second part was issued it bore his signature as one of the representatives of overseers of Scotland (*A Record of Divine Deliverance*, page 19); and indeed at the meeting on July 11, 1904, whatever Mr. Allan may have had at the back of his mind, not one word did he say to indicate in the least degree his dissent from the principles of Holy Scripture on which we were then acting.

Far be it from us to reproach any man for changing his mind or revising and altering his judgments of things spiritual or temporal, but it is lamentable to see how in a case like this there is no open confession of having been for years in a false position, no blaming of himself by Mr. Allan at all. The blame is all for others, notwithstanding that he has been aiding and abetting all along what now he so strongly condemns. This self-justification tells its own sad tale.

We now turn to Mr. Allan's present exposition of Scripture with a view of showing that he does not rightly divide

the Word of Truth. He rather so divides that which God has joined that he would leave for God's people to-day a very small allowance of Holy Scripture indeed, as we may say, he would give us "The smallest Bible in the World." We are bound, however, to mention that we cannot, in the light of what we have else read and heard, regard the present booklet as a complete or adequate account of what Mr. Allan's views are.

An important point in the pamphlet appears to be to show that the early disciples of Acts 2.-6. were on entirely Jewish ground, and further, that even Cornelius was brought into the same position. To fit in with this it is therefore suggested that he was possibly a proselyte. But this is to miss the very point of the Acts 10. scripture, to lose sight of the way in which it was needful for Peter fully to learn his lesson as to Gentiles, of which this chapter is full. We have proselytes in Acts 2.; they gave Peter no difficulty; if Cornelius had been a proselyte the vision of the sheet would have been unnecessary. But if Cornelius were not a proselyte, but an uncircumcized Gentile, though a devout man, then it is clear that God was doing something new, and that he was bringing an uncircumcized person directly into a place of equal privilege. But was it a Jewish position? Certainly not. Mr. Allan says in the pamphlet (p. 5)—

We see the other sheep mentioned by our Lord brought into the one flock, being guided to the pasture ground of the millennial reign when they will be safely in the fold and no more scattered.

But this is the very opposite of the truth, for the disciples in the Acts were so far from having Jewish or millennial hopes that they actually sold the very land that God had given to them as Abraham's seed according to the flesh (see NEEDED TRUTH, vol. 18, pp. 289, 308).

As a further reason for identifying the disciples of the Acts with Israel blessing the prophecy of John the Baptist

and the baptism in the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost are put side by side. But although John the Baptist's prophecy is quoted by Mr. Allan from Matthew and Luke's account, "He shall baptize in Holy Spirit and in fire," he utterly ignores the fact that the baptism on the Day of Pentecost was in Holy Spirit and not in fire—that the fire baptism at least awaits entirely a future fulfilment.

We may, to avoid repetition, here refer to the articles in last year's volume of NEEDED TRUTH *His Body, the Church*, vol. 18, pp. 241, 265, 289.

In his attempt to show the difference between the early disciples whom he calls the remnant, and the saints embraced in the Mystery, Mr. Allan says on page 5—

This remnant is composed of Jews and Gentiles and forms one flock, not one body.

Later on he says on page 18—

The One Body, the dwelling-place of God, is also the Church of God.

Yet he says on the next page—

The first twelve chapters of the Acts give the history of the remnant's testimony to the ungodly part of the nation, and the temple is their gathering centre. True, they were the Church of God.

This is confusion. First we are told the Remnant is not the Body, the Body is the Church of God, and yet the Remnant is the Church of God. These and other terms are mixed up in inextricable confusion, though the pamphlet is written to teach how to rightly divide the Word of Truth.

Mr. Allan seems to be gradually taking more and more from the Church. We are told, page 7—

that so far as the Acts of the Apostles is concerned, no further revelations are there made known, and that book finishes up with that prophecy of Isaiah 6. applied to the leading men among the Jews at Rome.

This statement is partly based on Paul's declaring before

King Agrippa that he spake none other things than Moses and the prophets did say should come. . . This is not rightly dividing the Word of Truth, this is wresting the Scripture. A moment before, Paul had told the same king that he had been appointed a witness of the things in which he had seen the Lord and the things in which the Lord was to appear to him. So that, according to Mr. Allan's interpretation, Paul first tells the king that he was commanded to bear witness to special revelation, and then says that he taught nothing that was not in the Old Testament Scriptures. Whence this interpretation of Acts 26. 22, 23 comes we have no idea, but that it is unsound and impossible is the very least that can be said. Let it be remembered that Paul had already written the two letters to Thessalonians, and the two to Corinthians with all their revelation. He had already said, "I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you." "Behold, I tell you a mystery," and yet he had spoken nothing that Moses and the prophets had not said!

But when the attempt is made to carve up the Scriptures on such lines as these, incongruities and anachronisms will inevitably appear. Mr. Allan speaks of ten years indeed, but the words spoken before Agrippa carry us right up to the time when they were spoken. Paul's words were—

UNTO THIS DAY.

We now come to the teaching of the pamphlet on *Household Salvation*. This is the old heresy of household baptism under a fresh name. We are told on page 8 that household salvation is spoken of throughout the Acts. We are told to find it in Acts 2. 39. We certainly find there, "to you is the promise and to your children," but we also read "as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." Indeed, when we read this about children sharing in the deliverance because of their parents' faith, and perishing in the judgment because of the wickedness of their parents.

we wonder if the writer has quite forgotten the sons of Korah, or the setting of the Divine word,

“The soul that sinneth it shall die,”

keeping to Old Testament times; or whether when he quotes (p. 12, for instance)—

“WHOSOEVER

shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,” he has no recollection of the use of this “whosoever” in his own gospel preaching as meaning individuals and enforcing individual responsibility! And we almost cease to wonder that for so many years he has been in a Community of persons who assuredly do not believe that household salvation is taught in the Acts, and yet never thought it necessary to discuss the matter with them. We cannot understand his surprise (p. 21) to find certain Christians practising household baptism, and believing in household salvation. For, if these things are to be found in the Acts as Mr. Allan says, he must not expect that the Christians to whom he refers are likely to be delivered from this danger by a theory like his own, which requires us to believe that the Philippian jailor was part of the Jewish Remnant!

On page 12 Mr. Allan refers to Matthew 28. 18–20, and says that the coming again of the Lord Jesus

must take place before the commission of Matthew 28. can be carried out, for in the carrying out of that commission He must be with them according to His word.

Thus we are asked to believe that the great commission of Matthew 28. 18–20 cannot now be carried out, because the Lord is not now with His servants. Does Mr. Allan then altogether forget the many passages of Scripture in which conditionally or unconditionally the Lord’s presence with His own on earth is asserted in direct reference to this time when personally He is at the right hand of the Majesty on high? What of John 14. 23, for instance, “My Father will love him and We will come unto him and make Our

abode with him," or again, 2 Thessalonians 3. 16, "The Lord be with you," or, still more to the point perhaps, 2 Timothy 4. 17, "The Lord stood by me." We might further seek to recall to Mr. Allan his own experience as a preacher of the Gospel. Surely he does not mean to say that he has had no personal enjoyment of the Lord's being with him in all his service!

The Lord's own words, "All authority hath been given Me . . . go ye therefore," clearly show that present service was that with which He was entrusting them. Whatever may be said in favour of a future application of Matthew 28. 18-20 (and so many scriptures have a twofold application that we are not at all inclined to deny this), it is impossible with any show of reason to entirely relegate the fulfilment of this scripture to the future. This, whether Mr. Allan has learnt it from others or not, must be regarded as a purely imaginative interpretation.

The most serious errors in Mr. Allan's pamphlet are to be found on page 14, where, referring to Paul's letter to Timothy, he says—

The things which Timothy had learned from him are specially connected with the One Body, the dwelling-place of God, which we are told in 1 Timothy 3. 16. is a great mystery. This House of God, Church of Living God, pillar and foundation of the truth is the mystery of Godliness—God manifest in flesh, justified in spirit, seen of angels preached among the nations, believed on in the world, and, last of all, received up in glory—all of which was also doubtless true of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

In the first place it is the purest assumption to say that the things Timothy had learned from Paul were specially connected with the One Body. Not a vestige of evidence is given for it, nor can it be substantiated. Let the candid reader go through the whole of the record in Scripture and he will fail to find any ground for this confident statement of Mr. Allan's. The One Body is not even mentioned

in Paul's letters to Timothy, neither is its membership nor its constitution to be found there. And yet we are asked to believe that what Paul never mentioned in his letters to Timothy had been the chief subject of his oral teaching!

Then Mr. Allan says that the One Body is the House of God, but he gives no reason for this statement. Are readers expected to believe it on the ground of his unsupported assertion? He tells us on page 15 that this House of God

is neither dependent on men for its building nor preserving.

But throughout the Scriptures the reader will find that the habitual usage of the term House of God absolutely forbids us to accept this dictum. The House of God has always been a conditional thing. The tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple erected in Jerusalem, both called the House of God, are rich with instruction on this head. Both of these were made by God to be dependent on men for their building and their preservation. Therefore let such simple historical facts be remembered, as that the House of God was

BUILT by men, 2 Chronicles 3.

PLUNDERED by men, 2 Chronicles 12.

RESTORED by men, 2 Chronicles 24. 4, 5.

DEFILED by men, 2 Chronicles 33. 7.

CLEANSED by men, 2 Chronicles 34. 8.

POLLUTED by men, 2 Chronicles 36. 14.

BURNT and DESTROYED by men, 2 Chronicles 36. 19.

REBUILT by men, Ezra 6. 14.

Then if we would rightly divide the Word of Truth, that is to say, handle it aright, let us apply these Old Testament facts to the New Testament House of God according to the analogy of the faith. What, then, becomes of Mr. Allan's dogma "It is neither dependent on men for its building nor preserving"? But further, even in Paul's first letter to Corinth, it is distinctly stated that he laid

the foundation and another built thereon, and that it is possible for man to destroy God’s holy Temple (see 1 Cor. 3. 10–17).

We have yet to deal with the still more serious statement of Mr. Allan’s that the House of God is the Mystery of godliness, God manifest in flesh. Thus the Lord Jesus Christ is robbed of His glory in order to make room for Mr. Allan’s theory. Much has been heard lately about the Divinity of Man, but we little expected to find Mr. Allan teaching such startling heresy as this. True, he says that this was also true of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. “Also true” forsooth! Thus putting the Lord into the second place, and giving the first place to the Body. It must be observed that this is not our interpretation of Mr. Allan. He himself says in the plainest words that the House of God is God manifest in the flesh, and that this is also true, doubtless, of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are persuaded in our own minds that Mr. Allan has had no intention of dishonouring the Lord Jesus Christ in what he says, but the fact remains. Indeed, the history of the last century seems to teach that the result of making the truth of the One Body the cardinal doctrine of a system has ever been to rob Him Who is the Head of the Body, and the Head over all things to the Church, His Body, of what is His true and-only place. Let us be warned by this, for of all heresies they are the worst which directly touch the person and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lest any may even yet be won by fair speeches, let us put down plainly three of Mr. Allan’s statements:—

(1) That believers in the present dispensation are so near to God that they have no need of anything in the nature of priesthood to enable them to draw nigh (from the article on *The Dwelling Place of God*).

(2) That the Lord Jesus Christ is not now with His servants (from *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, page 12).

(3) That the Body consisting of all believers is God manifest in the flesh (from *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, page 14).

If, in face of these three assertions any are still disposed to follow the writer of the pamphlet, we fear we can do nothing to deliver them.

It may be well to point out in closing what 1 Timothy 3. 16 really does state. The previous verse speaks of the House of God, which is the Church of Living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth. Then comes a full stop. Verse 16 is distinct, though joined by the word "and," something more is now stated—

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.

Let it be well noted that the mystery has to do with a person. "He Who," as the revisers correctly render the Greek $\delta\varsigma$ hos. The manuscripts of first-rate authority in no case give $\Theta\epsilon\delta\varsigma$ Theos, God, in this verse. The balance of evidence is decidedly in favour of $\delta\varsigma$ hos, who. There is an inferior weight of authority in favour of θ which.

S. P. Tregelles, who gave this verse in English substantially as the revisers have done, but as early as 1854:

Confessedly great is the mystery of godliness

HE WHO was manifested in the flesh,

(He who) was justified in spirit,

(He who) was seen by angels,

(He who) was preached among Gentiles,

(He who) was believed on in the world,

(He who) was received up in glory,

aptly says: "The passage thus sets before us the whole

dignity of Christ's person ; and it has been well asked if He were not essentially superhuman, how could the Apostle have emphatically declared that He was *manifested in flesh* ? (An account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament, 1854, pp. 227-231).

Let us see to it, who would rightly value the truth of the One Body and rightly value Divine revelation as to the House of God, that we ever give its true pre-eminence to that which concerns the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For it is by our appreciation of Himself, of His personal excellencies, of His mighty work, and of His transcendent exaltation, that we alone can be found well pleasing unto His God and Father.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

THE PRESENT OPPORTUNITY.

TRUE it is that "Satan finds some mischief still, for idle hands to do"; and if any are idle it is not for lack of something to do, for truly "the fields are white already to harvest," and "the harvest is plenteous."

An esteemed brother, writing some time ago, says, "We have been thinking that the summer time will be lost to us again, if there is nothing done as aggressive gospel work," and suggests tent work as a means to such an end ; and gives promise of very practical sympathy and fellowship with such being got and wrought, especially in districts that have as yet been unwrought. The same correspondent again writes, "I sincerely believe that many will be spoiled if they take and use up all their time with difficulties. I believe God has fitted men for looking into intricate matters, whilst others are as useful to and for God in another way," with all of which the present writer fully agrees.

The conviction has been for long, and it has become confirmed and strengthened, that much valuable energy in ser-

vice in the gospel has been and is being misspent. Brethren go to the same parts and to the same people, again and again, and again, and yet to any careful observer there is not the least vestige of interest or desire apparent to hear the message of the gospel; only callous indifference and unconcern, and at times even more active opposition is manifested. Why continue to spend valuable time and energy in circumstances such as these? On the other hand, is it not the case that there have been found times and places and people where eagerness and interest and desire to hear are betrayed by the very expression on the faces, and by the attitude and attention, that one realizes they are not speaking to stone walls, but to interested human beings. We do not mean that places may not be tried for long, till an interest is eventually awakened, and it may be good results follow, but that the principle of "having no more place in these regions" is a Scriptural one; as well as the other of "preaching the gospel, even unto the parts beyond you." It is to this latter we wish to direct present and particular attention. Virgin soil ever presents very great opportunities and possibilities, and that there are open and opening doors, for preaching the pure and simple gospel in country districts, where such is seldom heard, recent experience has shewn to be the case, and for many reasons it seems incumbent upon us to seek to reach unto and labour in such where may be found open ears and hearts as well as open doors, and a measure of interest and attention not very often got in parts where the message of the Gospel is more frequently told. Then, again, does not the word of the commission, "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," as well as, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations," carry with it the injunction and responsibility to go to the people, more than to try and get the people to come to us. Then the weather conditions of the summer time particularly present splendid opportunities for this by servants of the Lord getting out into the country, combining

the service of carrying the gospel to new parts with the advantage of getting the pure fresh air, which is a vast improvement on the impure air of some close stuffy halls, especially on the evening of a hot summer day. What about the hamlets and villages and towns adjoining and surrounding the places where assemblies are? Have these yet been reached and wrought? Has our responsibility toward such been fulfilled? We certainly might begin with these before we go wider afield; and in these may be found oftentimes very good interest and encouragement, and, it may be, a hearty invitation to come back again. Then these give opportunities not only for preaching the word, but for the distribution of gospel literature. So much for the opportunities of such service.

Now as to the worker or workers. One very necessary and important matter is that we be "workers together." The principle of fellowship is herein set forth. All have not the same character or measure of gift; all have not the same work to do, but all should be exercised to know what they can do, and what they should do, and then to do it faithfully and well. The striving should be according to the character of Phil. 1. 27: the elder and more gifted and experienced seeking to foster gift and encourage energy in the younger; and the younger willing to learn from and be helped by the wider experience of the elder.

To younger men in particular we wish to appeal under the subject of the present opportunity.

While thankful for many of such who have and are giving good fulfilment of the hopes entertained concerning them, and are doing good service in the work of the gospel and otherwise unto the advancement of the Kingdom of God, yet of others our hopes have rather been blighted than realized. It has already been asked in a recent issue of NEEDED TRUTH, What are our young men doing? and we wish to repeat the question. With youth, health, energy, time and talent at their disposal, how solemnly responsible! Are such gifts

being used or abused? Are they being used in God's service, and in doing God's will and work? Then what privileges and advantages such have, and opportunities for help and conference and service. Are such being embraced, and are they profiting by the same? Surely something is expected from all this, of positive effort and definite progress aggressively? Into the details of the matter we do not now intend to go; our purpose is to exercise consciences, to stir up gift, to stimulate energy in God's service amongst younger brethren. We wish to appeal to such in the words of old: "Consecrate yourselves (fill your hands) to-day to the Lord." This is the cure for idle and empty hands. Let them be filled for God. The time to build the House of God is come; the service of His House requires attention; the vessels of the House need to be held and guarded. Who are ready and willing to say, "Here am I, send me." Proved and approved ones; true and devoted; faithful and whole hearted: such may have the greatest of all honours, that of being engaged in the noblest and best of all service, even that of the living and true God, Whom seraphim and cherubim alike count it their highest honour to serve, as with veiled faces and feet they fly to fulfil His commands, and do His will and pleasure.

There are perhaps some who say, all this is very right and true, but all this means and entails something. Money and expense are involved, and here, perhaps, is the greatest drawback and difficulty to aggressive work. To some it seems an insurmountable difficulty. Taking all things into consideration they cannot see how we can do much, if anything at all, in this way. In their judgment, saints and assemblies have as much to do at present as they are well able for. We have no wish to be over-exacting or ungracious, but would it not be better to face the matter honestly, and say that they do as much as they have heart for, not that they are able for. For is not this the test and

index of the measure of our ability after all, that is, our condition of soul? It is not generally those who have most who give most. It is not, in other words, the biggest purse, but the biggest heart. To some of old the apostle wrote not, "out of abundance," but of "their deep poverty" they gave. The Divine principle of giving seems to have yet to be learned, or if learned has been sadly neglected. We hesitate not to say that one cause of the poverty and need of many is the lack of giving. "There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty," while on the other hand "there is that scattereth and yet increaseth." But there is another view of the matter. The poverty of many saints may be the result of thriftless waste and mismanagement; many who have large incomes and moderate expenditure are in abject poverty from this cause; while others who have small incomes are in quite comfortable circumstances, as the result of strict carefulness and management. These are matters that should exercise saints more than they do. Then what will we say as to the foolish extravagance and indulgence of the flesh, in the costly apparel and adornment lavished upon the person, and that by those who profess to take the Scriptures as their guide. Do such read 1 Tim. 2. 8, 9, and 1 Peter 3. 3, 4? It almost seems as if some have no conscience about this matter whatsoever, or consider not that the Lord's will applies to such matters, and should guide therein. Then what about the unnecessary expenditure to gratify the lusts of the flesh? How much might be done for the Lord, and given to the Lord, if saints were to deny themselves these foolish and hurtful lusts, and be none the worse but the better for so doing? These things mean money and expense as well, and cost a great deal in some instances. But sufficient may have been said; let us try at least and not be hypocrites, and if we do, as we certainly do, take high ground, let us try and be something and do something worthy of our high profession.

Ere closing, we would like to add a little in a different

direction. The present opportunity presents possibilities to us of another character. Who can fail to see the signs of the times on all hands? Declension, departure and apostasy from the truth of God characterise such very manifestly and very prevalently. Everything almost, that we have learned, and fought, and suffered for, seems to be denied and given up by some who have at one time, professedly at least, believed and contended for the same. These things to some seem to be a cause of discouragement and weakness, but should it be so? May we not expect such things, in the light of the testimony of the Scriptures? Suppose learned men deny and ignore the fundamental truths of the gospel, are we to give up faith in these, or cease to fulfil our responsibility in proclaiming the same? Or again if others deny the foundation principles of the Faith, relative to the House of God, and the Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, the present Community in which we are found, are we to give up these, and go anywhere, or do anything that seems right in our own eyes? Nay! the rather more are we to stand firm therein, and hold fast the same; counting ourselves to be privileged and honoured indeed, to have the sacred trust and stewardship of the things and the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ thus committed into our hand; and seek by the grace of God to use the present opportunity for the worthy fulfilment of the same. Amen and Amen.

DAVID SMITH.

“TILL I COME.”

How these words have filled with hope the heart of many a weary watcher through this little while; “If I will that he tarry till I come.” These words the Lord Jesus spake ere He left His disciples, filling their hearts with the hope of His speedy return. “For there went abroad this saying that this disciple should not die.” No doubt the words spoken by the Lord Jesus to them, just before the cross, were fresh in their memories. “For I go to prepare a

place for you ; and if I go and prepare a place for you—I come again—and will receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also." They had not forgotten ; and they now understand more in resurrection, through the teaching of the Lord in the forty days during which He accompanied with them and taught them many things concerning the Kingdom.

And although they were not yet fully enlightened by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, yet their hearts go out to Him their Lord and Master in this blessed hope, that He, Whom they had so loved while He was with them, Whom they had mourned for as dead, but Who was now restored to them in resurrection, was going away for a little while, to prepare a place for them and to return, that He might receive them unto

HIMSELF.

Ah yes ! it was Himself. His own blessed person had attracted them from the very first, and caused them to forsake all and follow Him. It was Himself Who had been with them, as Teacher, Comforter, and Guide, and Whom they had learned to love ; but there came a time when they could follow Him no further. " Whither I go ye cannot follow Me now." " Why cannot I follow Thee, even now ? I will lay down my life for Thee," said the ever ready Peter. " Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me ? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice."

Ah yes ! even those who had once boasted that they had forsaken all to follow Him, all forsook Him and fled ; and he who had professed so much, did indeed deny with oaths that he knew Him.

YET THEY LOVED HIM.

We little know perhaps how dearly, but all their love could not take them into the deep depth of suffering and shame, into which He entered and which He must bear

ALONE.

Oh! how terribly alone in that darkest hour when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

"Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

"For consider Him . . . that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls."

Now in resurrection He begins to enter into the joy, to see of the travail of His soul, as His disciples are again gathered around Himself. He speaks to them of all that must be done while He is away, at the same time filling their hearts with joy, as He tells them of His speedy return.

"TARRY TILL I COME."

Wait a little while, continue—but now eighteen hundred and seventy years and more have passed away since these words were spoken. And we hear men scoffingly say, "Where is the promise of His coming?" and Satan has raised up men to prophesy dates and thus bring discredit upon the promise.

Men are wilfully ignorant of God's dealings in the past. And to them the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night and they shall not escape.

"But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, but long-suffering, not wishing that any should perish," so in mercy towards men, the day of grace is lengthened out, yet we know the promise is sure, and has He not said: "For ye have need of patience that having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise." "For yet a little while, He that cometh, shall come and shall not tarry."

But "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and waiting and watching is but weary work, if so be that the heart and

mind are not occupied with the business which He has left for us to be engaged in during His absence.

So alongside the word—

“TARRY TILL I COME,”

let us place that other word of His—

“OCCUPY TILL I COME,”

or (trade ye). He has indeed left us something to do, and if the little while is to be a little while to us, we must earnestly engage ourselves about the things which He has left for us to do. To the idler the days drag out a weary monotony, and time hangs heavily upon his hands; he must ever be seeking some fresh pleasure, to pass away the time.

How different it is with the one who is happily and busily engaged in his work. His mind is fully occupied with the business in hand; the time flies past, evening comes, and he is surprised how quickly the day has fled. He has not accomplished all he hoped to do, but the evening shadows close, and he must needs leave his work until another day.

Our Lord knew this, and left us something to do for Him. “To each one His work.”¹ He gave also His Holy Spirit to energize, control, and guide, “Dividing to each one severally even as He will”;² also remembering always, that “Each man’s work shall be made manifest, for the Day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire, and the fire itself shall prove each man’s work—of what sort it is. . . .”³ “And then shall each man have his praise from God.”⁴ But let “each man prove his own work,”⁵ for “each man shall bear his own burden.”

“TRADE YE HEREWITH TILL I COME.”

And when He comes He shall receive His own with interest, and we also shall be approved by God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, having handled aright the Word of truth.

G. T. REEVE.

¹ Mark 13. 34.

² 1-Cor. 12. 11.

³ 1 Cor. 3. 13.

⁴ 1 Cor. 4. 5.

⁵ Gal. 6. 4, 5.

(To be continued.)

The Woman in Her Sphere

She girdeth her loins with strength,
And maketh strong her arms.

WE may well be thankful to be taught by Divine revelation that although women are by nature the weaker vessels, yet they have no need to cultivate weakness in order that they may be womanly. The excellent woman strengtheneth herself. One might be tempted to say that one could divide the women one knows into two classes, those who cultivate weakness and those who seek to be strong. The loins girded with strength are in marked contrast to the narrow waists so fashionable and so common. So the strong arms are scarcely the ones likely to be ornamented with bangles and other silly things.

Women need to be strong if they are to rightly fill the woman's sphere. Strong in spirit as well as in body. Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Firm to be and to do and to suffer, like the holy women of old. Like Miriam, Rahab, Ruth, Esther, and countless others who have had witness borne to them.

What are women doing that they may be strong to-day; for strength is needed to-day? Strength of character and firmness of purpose are required in those who may be mothers and wives and sisters of men of God. Indeed, it is more often from the mother than from the father, we believe, that a son inherits what strength of character he may possess. From his wife also, frequently, a man will have his purpose of heart reinforced and strengthened. Whilst the opposite of these things is, moreover, sadly possible. Therefore, we earnestly exhort faithful women to gird their loins with strength and to strengthen their arms by earnest study of the Holy Scriptures and prayerful meditation thereupon.

PRINCIPLES OF GATHERING.

THERE is one Body—one only, spoken of as “the Christ.” Christ in resurrection is seated in the heavenlies. By the Spirit sent down, God quickens with Him, raises with Him and seats with Him in the heavenlies. So that the Body of Christ means that Christ associates with Himself, where He is, all who believe, and brings them into living actual union with Himself.

That Body is constantly being increased (Eph. 4. 16 ; Col. 2. 19), and will go on until the full-grown man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, is reached.

Those once in the Body are always in the Body, those still to be will go to augment it, but the Body can sustain no loss.

The application to ourselves of this truth of the Body can only apply to those on the earth, but the Church which Christ will present to Himself will embrace all the saints of this dispensation, and no view or aspect which is inconsistent with this can be true.

It is to be observed that the word in 1 Cor. 12. 27, addressed to the assembly in Corinth, is “ye are body of Christ,” not *the* Body as embracing all, but as possessing the same character as the whole, and being together in definite fellowship they could exhibit the operations of the Body, which cannot be done at all properly in connexion with sectarian division.

Membership of the Body is brought about by sovereign operation, like the new birth, the granting of eternal life, the possession of the Spirit, outside the will of man ; neither occasioned by man, nor frustrated by man.

Further, the being in and of the Body (as well as the other blessings above mentioned) is a secret thing actually known to God and in measure to the person blessed, who has the witness of the Spirit, but these things in themselves alone are not certainly known by others, and cannot form

a basis for fellowship in a church of God. Something of a very definite public character is required as evidence, and that not merely after a long interval, but immediately on the truth being received.

If church fellowship is regulated by the fact of membership of the Body, then evidence of that fact must be forthcoming. If such evidence is given (though it is gravely questioned whether it is possible in the nature of the case) then the person must be accepted, and (if membership of the Body is a sufficient principle) such a place can never on any account whatever be forfeited.

No question of unsoundness of doctrine or of unrighteousness in behaviour can be entertained, if membership of the Body is in itself a sufficient title to a place in a church of God.

If, on the other hand, membership of the Body (even if it can be certainly proved) is an insufficient basis for church fellowship, it becomes necessary for us to examine the Scriptures to find out what is the teaching on the point. We often hear about soundness of doctrine and uprightness of walk, as though these were the only conditions, but let us get to the Word and testimony. The following propositions are set forth as being the teaching of the word on this subject.

1. That no internal work by God is, in itself, a ground for fellowship with God's people.

2. That confession of the Lord and discipleship are necessary as preliminary.

3. That only those who have been baptized are contemplated as being in fellowship.

4. That being baptized as individuals, is preliminary to being added together in a company.

5. That such company is spoken of as a church of God.

6. That only those who are so added, and are in a church of God, are entitled as partners to a share in the privileges and obligations of fellowship.

7. That "occasional fellowship" is a misnomer, and, as suggesting the right for people not added together to share in the privileges of the added, is mischievous.

8. That privilege and responsibility must ever go hand in hand, and that those who break the bread must be subject to the discipline of God's House.

9. That there should be a "within," where the church judges, and a "without," where God judges.

10. That a church of God is responsible to put away the wicked. That it, consequently, has the power to receive. That it has power to bind and to loose.

11. That the church of God is a company brought together as aforesaid, having its locality in a city or town; that it is capable of hearing God's word, and of unitedly carrying it out.

12. That human responsibility is much in evidence both in the forming of a church of God, and in its maintenance. That there are builders who should be wise-hearted, but may be the reverse (1 Cor. 3. 9-17).

13. That a local company, a church of God, is united in the same Fellowship with all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord—the Lord common to all—which Fellowship is that of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. That calling on the Lord is the acknowledgment of Him in that character, carrying with it the obligation to obey Him as Lord, whether this be done by the individual or the assembly.

14. That the principles of gathering characterizing the church of God in Corinth, are necessarily implied as guiding all those in every place who all own the same Lord by calling upon Him. Consequently, such were churches of God in their own places.

15. That the Scriptures not only speak of a church of God in relation to a city, but quite as definitely group such assemblies together in a country, as, for example, churches of Asia, Galatia, Achaia, and so forth.

16. That for the proper care of saints it is contemplated that each assembly should have its guides or overseers.

17. That not only are churches of God grouped in individual countries, but that the same principle is extended indefinitely, of which we have an illustration in 1 Pet. 5. one flock—one company of elders—throughout five countries.

18. That the unity of the whole is particularly evidenced by the use of letters of commendation, which are needed according to Scripture.

19. That the giving and receiving of letters of commendation implies (a) that those commending and those to whom commended are occupying a similar position ; (b) that the privilege of being in one assembly carries the privilege of being in any ; (c) as also, that if outside of one, consequently outside of all ; (d) that no one can go into an assembly without being admitted or received.

20. That the responsibilities of the overseers are co-extensive with the churches, that, consequently, we see overseers in their joint responsibility in connexion with an assembly, and we see overseers in their joint responsibility over a larger area.

21. That there are "chief men" among the brethren ; that there are elders who rule well and are worthy of *double* honour ; those are mentioned as "especially" worthy of honour who labour in the word and teaching. That all have not the same measure of ability, nor the same measure of responsibility. There are some reputed as pillars. But all are to be united in mutual dependence, and in absolute unity of action.

S. J. HILL.

“TILL I COME.”

(Continued from page 199.)

AGAIN, these words come down to us from the throne to which He has been exalted, having finished the work which He came on earth to accomplish.

"Howbeit that which ye have
Hold fast till I come." ¹

What need there is for this exhortation to be again and yet again repeated at this present time, when many around us are letting go even the fundamental, first principles of the Faith; when "New Theology" theories are leavening the professedly so-called Christian Churches more and more. The inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the Divinity of Christ, the fall of man, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and other truths are denied; they have made

SHIPWRECK OF THE FAITH,

teaching for doctrines the theories of men.

Howbeit "the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His, and let every one that nameth the name of the Lord

DEPART FROM UNRIGHTEOUSNESS."

And departing therefrom, what have we? Thank God, we have Himself and the Word of His grace, which is able to build up, and give an inheritance among all them who are sanctified.

THAT WHICH THOU HAST HOLD FAST.

"Whose House are we if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end?" ² "Let us hold fast our confession." ³ "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope, that it waver not, for He is faithful that promised." ⁴ "Thou holdest fast My name, and didst not deny My Faith." ⁵ "I come quickly. Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown." ⁶

They that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize, so run that ye may obtain. Remembering that they who strive, must strive lawfully; and they who run, must continue to the end. Many who did run well have been hindered, some of the foremost have turned back. The desert

¹ Rev. 2. 26. ² Heb. 3. 6. ³ Heb. 4. 14. ⁴ Heb. 10. 23.

⁵ Rev. 2. 13. ⁶ Rev. 3. 11.

pathway is strewn with the dead and dying. And what shall we do? "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth closely cling to us, and let us run with patience the race set before us,

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

the Author and Perfecter of faith."

"Holding faith and a good conscience," and at the same time holding forth the Word of Life,

TILL I COME.

This is the horizon which bounds our view, whether it be from the mountain top of communion or from the deep valley of conflict with our unseen but powerful foes; the time for service and suffering will then be past; and we shall enter upon the more and more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. But the present moment is ours: and how to redeem the time, and fill up this little moment with walk, work, word, worship, and warfare, which shall bring glory to His Name, requires our constant care and effort.

To this end may these present exhortations stir up our hearts to continue in, trade with, and hold fast that which we have

TILL HE COME.

G. T. REEVE.

Conference Notes

ARMAGH, JULY 12, 1907.

A TELEGRAM was received from Mr. ELSON referring us to Romans 8. 28. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, even to them that are called according to His purpose."

Mr. G. R. GEDDES read from John 1. John was the forerunner, verse 35, John stood still while Jesus walked. There is the perfect copy. He is not looking at Him now as the Lamb of God in His taking away the sin of the world, it is now as the pattern for the believer how to walk. Two of John's disciples heard him and left John to follow Jesus; they

became His disciples, and if we are His disciples He says, Go, make disciples, baptizing them into the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We baptize disciples in water into the Name, those who have learned a little of His will so far and are willing to learn and to do. It may cost much; never mind, it will cost you much not to do it. The cost of doing His will is now, the cost of not doing it is hereafter—a much greater loss. You will lose far more than through not doing His will than you could possibly gain. Jesus turned and beheld the two disciples following, and said “What seek ye?” and they said “Rabbi, where dwellest Thou?” They are His disciples and give Him His true name—“Master, where dwellest Thou?” “Come and see.” It must be a special cheer to His heart to-day to see some following; perhaps we have not made the progress we might, nevertheless He sees we are still following in the ways which be in Christ. They beheld the Sin-bearer, they beheld Him as the pattern, they have been baptized as disciples, they are still following and they went and abode with Him. John 15. tells us “I abide in My Father’s love,” and where He is there is room for you. You see the result of the following and abiding: they bring others, and one thus is able to bring another because he knows Him, individual hook and line fishing, not platform work, and you will often find it is better than bills and posters, individual effort in winning souls for Christ, one invited bringing along a neighbour, so another and another, all the outcome of seeing, following and abiding. To know a man you must live with him, you will know him best and be better able to speak of him and invite others to come and be saved as you were, so in the path of discipleship, as a believer it may be, “No man can come to Me (whether sinner or saint) unless the Father draw him.” It is to Him they come, whether as sinner or saint: to Him as Saviour and Lord.

Mr. J. C. RADCLIFFE. Jude, verses 1 to 3, also verse 20. Now Mr. Geddes has been speaking about following on, but

we have here in this third verse something different to that. The word "contend" here is from the same word as our English word "agony" comes, not contention in the way of strife, but contending earnestly for the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints. Now that brings us to Acts 1. All that Jesus began, that implies that He went on in this 2nd book by Luke speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God. I have heard it said that the commission in Matthew 28. has nothing to do with us, but when was it given? During the period when He spoke to them the things concerning the Kingdom of God. "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." And though there are many things peculiar to Israel and an Israelitish nation, yet there are many things common to both dispensations, and the subject of the Kingdom of God covers both, for it is summed up in the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Galatians 1. 24. We have the Faith mentioned here, and throughout the New Testament it is spoken of even in the later letters which speak of the apostasy, where we read some shall depart from the Faith, and in Jude we are exhorted to earnestly contend or agonize for the Faith. The first place we have the Faith mentioned is in Acts, collective faith, not individual faith but the Faith for which we are to agonize, and Acts proves that the Faith was a very early thing, and when the Lord Jesus spake for forty days concerning the Kingdom of God it included the Faith. We will look at Galatians 1. again, verse 22. He not only made havoc of the church of God but of the Faith, showing that the church in Jerusalem and the Faith are connected together and are connected with the Kingdom of God. We are earnestly to contend for the Faith, of which the Lord Jesus spoke during the forty days, which was afterwards supplemented by the apostles, for the supplement does not alter the original. We are to agonize for this. I am convinced that a great many

that took their so-called stand fifteen or more years ago thought it would have been a path of sunshine, a bed of roses, but instead of that it has been something like this year—not much sunshine. We have the sunny years and we have our sunless years, and so in the things of God we have sunny and sunless years. We have gone through dark and difficult times ; some were not prepared for it—they want all sunshine ; it is too much for the Pliables. Pliable was a character in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, who thought to try the fortunes of the way but found it anything but sunshine, and when dark and sunless days came he tired of the road and went back. What is sectarianism ? It is simply children of God seeking to make an easier path for themselves than the path of faith, to escape the difficulties.

Saul made havoc of the Faith, and I want you to grasp that quite early the Faith was once for all delivered to the saints, nothing to suit present times, nothing to suit the spirit of the age, no change spiritually, it is earnestly contending for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints, and surely the Book is one ; what we read in principle in the New Testament we read in the Old Testament. We know that God blessed and owned the work of Hezekiah and others ; upon what did they base their work ? The law of Moses which is found in the first five books of the Old Testament ; the other books are supplementary prophetic books, meditative books, but the first five books contained the teaching of the law of Moses and every revival for God was based on the law of Moses. In Malachi, the Jude of the Old Testament, we find “ Remember the law of Moses which was given in Horeb.” Nothing new ; it is the first principles of the Faith, “ contend earnestly for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints.” We find many departing from the Faith, and we are told that many will depart from the Faith by giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.

(To be continued.)

PREDESTINATION.

IN the proclamation of the Gospel of the Grace of God (Acts 20. 24), we are very fond of quoting that well-known text, John 3. 16 : “ 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.” And rightly so, for it is a scripture that has often been used to the salvation of many that have seen and known their need of a Saviour. It contains the sublimest declaration of God’s love that the world has ever witnessed, or that has ever been declared. It is the final declaration of His love, and it manifests the very extremity of it—His Son. It does not say, He gave His prophet Moses or His Archangel Michael, but that He gave His Son. It does not say, God so loved the chosen few or the elect, but that God so loved the world, and not one or two here and there. And it connects with the Son a world-wide invitation, that whosoever believeth on Him, . . .

And when we proclaim the Gospel to the perishing (1 Cor. 1. 18) and the lost (2 Cor. 4. 3) we cannot find more fitting words to prove that God’s love is a universal love.

Then we turn from John 3. 16 and invite and beseech the sinner to behold the Lamb of God bearing the judgment of sin on the Cross, and to the best of our abilities we tell him the glad tidings flowing from that death. The poor sinner believes it—that is, he takes his place in the whosoever of John 3. 16 and accepts Christ as his Saviour, and is saved with an Eternal Salvation.

All this time the sinner does not know anything of election, all he knows is that Christ died for his sins and he believes it. Now this is just where predestination comes in, for predestination only concerns those who are saved and in the family of God, as we shall see.

Paul in his introductory remarks when writing to the saints at Ephesus, says, “ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Who hath blessed us with every spiritual

blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (Eph. 1.). We may note here, that the last words "in Christ" form one of the key-notes of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and from other scriptures we know that it is the place of no condemnation (Rom. 8. 1). It is the place of acceptance (Eph. 1. 6). It is the place of completeness (Col. 2. 10) and new creation (Eph. 2. 10).

The earthly people of God were blessed with earthly blessings, they had earthly enemies to contend with, and looked forward to an earthly inheritance (Deut. 2. 10-31), but we who are in Christ are a heavenly people blessed with spiritual blessings, we have a spiritual warfare (not against flesh and blood like Israel) (Eph. 6. 12). Our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3. 20) and our inheritance is there, and there our heart and mind are to be also (Col. 3. 1). Now read Eph. 1. 4: "Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love," away, away back,

Before Adam's clay was formed,
Or earth's foundation laid,

the believer had his place in the Divine purpose which He purposed in Himself (Eph. 1. 9), and the inference is that the matchless grace which reached us in our deep and dire need as lost sinners, was no after-thought of God, but the outcome of His purpose and grace which was given us before eternal times (2 Tim. 2. 9).

Having predestinated or foreordained us unto sonship through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will (verse 5), this means that God foreordained us to be sons simply because He willed it, and who will dare to say anything about what God does? If any such there be, Rom. 9. 20 finds a fitting place here: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" and again, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Rom. 8. 33), and He is Sovereign Lord of all and can do just what He likes and as He likes, and man has no

voice in the matter whatever. He giveth not account of any of His matters (Job 33. 12), for whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate. What for? to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified them He also glorified (Rom. 8. 30). Now in the light of this scripture, we have no warrant to look around at our fellow-men and say, "this person or that person is one of the elect." It is rather a question, are they justified? Then it follows they were called, and if they were called, then it follows they were predestinated and the predestination is associated with the foreknowledge of God (see also 1 Peter 1. 2). And when we look at our brethren, what do we see? not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and the base things of the world, things that are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and the things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are (1 Cor 1. 26).

Please turn to 2 Thess. 2. 13, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth whereunto He called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." These verses contain the Sovereignty of God in "choosing us from the beginning," and the responsibility of man is seen in "belief of the truth." The sinner is outside the sphere of blessing, and God is calling men, through the Gospel, and if a man turns his back upon the call and heeds it not, he will remain unblessed and will die in his sins—a Christ-rejector—and will suffer a Christ-rejector's doom.

For God hath not chosen us to wrath, but to obtaining salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5. 9). This is

salvation in its final aspect which will take place when the Lord Jesus comes for His saints (1 Thess. 2. 4). Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another, and if any man hath a quarrel (complaint) against any, even as Christ forgave you so do ye (Col. 3. 12). Are these characteristics of the "Elect of God" seen in us? If not, they ought to be! They are not in us naturally, they have to be put on. How little we do as Christ did.

We now turn to Romans 9. and we will look at a few passages concerning the Sovereignty of God. These scriptures are a little difficult to interpret, but nevertheless, seeing that they are in keeping with our subject we will do well to consider them. Verse 15, "For He said unto Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.'" Verse 17, "For the Scripture saith to Pharaoh, 'Even for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee and that my Name may be declared throughout the earth.'" "

These words are found in the dispensational portion of the Epistle to Romans (chap. 9. 11). Chapter 9. has to do not so much with individuals, but nations (though there must be individuals before we can get nations). The first five verses are taken up with the privileges of Israel (as a nation), and verse 15 is quoted to show that there is no unrighteousness with God. As to verse 17, this is a scripture at which the natural mind at once revolts, with the result that people ask: "Do you mean to tell me that God slew all the Egyptians simply to make His name and fame known?" This is the outcome of the natural mind, but one who humbly believes that God means what He says in His Word may readily notice the fact that God changes His attitude towards men according to their attitude towards Him. For instance, read in Romans 1. commencing at verse 26, "For this cause God gave them up to uncleanness, through the lust

of their own hearts," and so on; verse 28, "God gave them over to a reprobate mind." But why? what is the reason? It was because, as verse 21 says, "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were hardened" (see also 2 Thess 2. 10-11).

When we read through the early chapters of the book of Exodus we see the reason why God hardened Pharaoh's heart. We find Pharaoh first hardened his own heart against God. When God sent Moses with the message to Pharaoh, "Let My people go that they may serve Me," Pharaoh replied: "Who is Jehovah that I should obey His voice and let His people go" (Ex. 5. 2)? In effect God says, "I will show you who Jehovah is." For He punished Pharaoh with plague after plague and brought His people out of bondage gloriously with a stretched-out arm and with great Judgment, and so His name and fame became known in all the earth.

THE WILL OF THE LORD.

(Eph. 5. 17.)

It is not too much to say, that to know and to do the will of the Lord ought to be the first and main object of the life of every one who claims the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.

The bondservant is purchased, not to do his own will but that of his Master. Of absolute subjection to the will of another we have the perfect example in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Being originally in the form of God, He emptied Himself, and took the form of a bondservant. When God had no pleasure in burnt-offerings, and offerings for sins, then said He, "Lo, I am come to do Thy will, O God." "He left us an example that we should follow His steps" (1 Pet: 2. 21).

It is often asked, how can I know the will of the Lord as to my path and behaviour? What saith the Psalmist?

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path” (Ps. 119. 105).

Apart from acquaintance with God's Word it is impossible to know His will. We have an example in Ezra it would be well to copy: “He set his heart to seek the law of the Lord and to do it.”

Our object in writing this article, is to try to show the need for closer conformity to the will of the Lord, and to stir up hearts to search the Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation. In the first place, as to the tongue. Remember the words of the Lord, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” The tongue is the index of the heart. Is there foolish talking and jesting? “Such is not befitting,” or as some read it, “such is beneath you.” This conformity to the world's manner of speech is sadly indicative of a heart out of touch with the things of God.

One is reminded of Bunyan's pilgrims in the town of Vanity; one thing that brought down on the pilgrims' heads the ill-will of the townspeople was because they spoke a different language. Let us have a pure lip, sound speech that cannot be condemned. Let our speech be with grace seasoned with salt. There is so much need of edifying words, words needed for the weary ones, there is no room or time for idle talk. There is serious blame attaching to us when we circulate in whispers the faults of erring ones. The will of God is plain as to this (Matt. 18. 15).

Again, as to dress. Is there not much worldliness among the people of God in this? Of course there is the use, but there is also the abuse of everything; there is that which is needful, but there is that which is unnecessary.

Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a daughter of the Philistines and sought her for a wife, because she pleased him well. It is sad indeed when young saints go out to the unseparated or down among the unsaved to seek a wife or husband; nevertheless, there are other things for which we

go down to the world. A gaudy dress, or a fashionable hat, elaborate and expensive, which pleases us, regardless of the Lord's good pleasure. Alas, at times such is purchased even though the Lord's portion is withheld in order to obtain it!

What pain and shame it gives to see at times Christians coming into the Lord's Day morning meeting flaunting their finery when they have come to keep the feast which brings so vividly before the mind the Lord Himself in His hour of untold agony.

“ For who can tell His woes,
Whose grief outgloomed the night ? ”

How out of place this is ! At least let the world's fashions and ways be kept away from that solemn hour when we gaze on the Christ of Golgotha, now the Enthroned Sin-purger ; for there is no room beneath either the cross or the throne for that which ministers to the lusts of the flesh.

There is not a detail in all that goes to make up daily life in which we need err, would we only meditate on the Word of God—please read Ps. 19. 17–14. Many, alas ! spend in reading novels what little time they have at their disposal for reading. This perverted taste not only bespeaks little relish for the Scriptures, but if continued in, turns the mind against what now to them is light bread.

Let it be remembered that this disregard for the Word of God, and this conformity to worldly ways is ruin to those who are entangled therein. Let us pray and labour that it may not corrupt the Community with which God has entrusted His Truth. Let it not be said that it is out of place to write concerning these things ; the spirit of God condescends to speak of them and condemns even small things when such are opposed to the will of God (see Isaiah 3. 17).

Let us bring our ways to the standard of Holy Writ, and if in anything we are out of line with the will of the Lord let us abandon it, and receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save our souls.

T. C. O'NEILL.

The Woman in Her Sphere.

TETH.

She perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable ;
Her lamp goeth not out by night.

It is the perception of the excellent woman on which King Lemuel here specially insists. Her labour is not fruitless because, as a result of her years of training, she can discern that her merchandise is good and profitable. The perception has not come to her in a moment : it is by reason of use that her senses are exercised. She knows what to buy and what to sell. Her merchandise is good and she knows it. Perception as to the value of her merchandise has come through her earnest attention to the subject through many long, and perhaps weary, years ; in which very likely she has made mistakes that have cost her dear. She is now a competent merchant-woman who has that which is her own, for the use of her lord (as Lydia when she entertained the messengers of her Lord).

In counselling the imitation of this ninth point of excellence, we remember that it is in general not the woman's place to-day to provide for the needs of husband and family. Yet may she occupy herself with profitable merchandise if she will grow in perception. Thus she may learn to buy the Truth and acquire a conception of its value that will prevent her from selling it. Thus she will become willing to sacrifice things of less value for the Truth's sake and the Name's sake.

Ye may count the cost, ye may count the cost
Of all Egyptia's treasure ;
But the riches of Christ ye cannot count,
His love ye cannot measure.

The excellent woman's lamp goes not out, for it has been carefully trimmed and provided with the oil her merchandise has enabled her to purchase. She is no foolish virgin to be left in darkness when the sun goes down.

The night is dark and drear, Silence and stupor reign outside ;
Her well-trimmed lamp burns clear With plenteous oil supplied.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 23 (Acts 16. 11-15).

THE WORK AT PHILIPPI.

LYDIA.

(Continued from page 176.)

From LONDON, S.W. In these verses we read of the first attempt to spread the gospel in Europe, it is therefore probable that Lydia was the first European convert. The name suggests that she was a Greek by birth, but the fact that Paul finds her at a place of prayer on the Sabbath day, would show, if this is the case, that she was a proselyte. [Not necessarily, simply that she was a devout woman.—ED.] She was a native of Thyatira, a city famous for its dyers, and by trade a seller of purple. It would appear from the fact that her husband is not mentioned, that she was a widow, or it may be she was unmarried; in any case we would suggest that her household consisted mainly of her servants. In Rev. 2. 18 it is recorded that a church existed at Thyatira, but we are not told how it came into existence, and no mention is made of the gospel being preached there. [See Acts 19. 10, 26.—ED.] Is it not possible that the household of Lydia formed the nucleus of the church of that city?

We do not see in this portion anything to support the so-called household baptism practised by some. In nearly every case that a baptism is mentioned it is first stated that those who were to be baptized had believed, and there is no reason to suppose that it was otherwise in this instance.

From DARWEN. Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke sail together from Troas to Philippi via Samothrace and Neapolis. Some days are spent in Philippi ere the river side meeting, but evidently not a week, as on the Sabbath day they are found at the place of prayer, and no doubt this would be their first Sabbath in the city.

There does not seem to have been much certainty on the Apostle's part as to the existence of a place for praying—it was a supposed place, and from this we presume there was no synagogue in Philippi; but the Jewish customs were well known to the Apostle that if there was a place of prayer such would be outside the city by the side of the river.

If then there was no synagogue the Jews in Philippi would be few.

At the river side only a few women are assembled. Here is no need for ceremony. They sit down and talk to these women; and eternal blessing is the result. Lydia the purple seller from Thyatira would find much opportunity in this Roman colony for the sale of her wares. She was one who worshipped God, but like Saul of Tarsus it was not according to knowledge, the true knowledge of God. Listening to this light of the Gentiles she hears, and her heart is opened to receive the things spoken by Paul; she obtains knowledge of God such as she had not hitherto.

One happy result of her conversion is seen in her ready hospitality to these noble men in their great work.

From BARROW. In response to the cry of the man of Macedonia, who in a vision of the night (Job 33. 15) appeared to Paul, while still at Troas, straightway they sought to obey what they concluded to be the mind of the Lord. We would note here that although the vision appeared to Paul alone, yet he consulted with his fellow-labourers. The presence and power of God with them was manifested by His blessing upon their labours, in opening the heart of Lydia to give heed unto the word that was spoken; the expulsion of the Python, and the conversion of the jailor and all his. These all go to prove that the vision was of God, and that their conclusion was in accordance with His will.

Upon their arrival at Philippi they tarried certain days, and having ascertained [?] that there was a place of prayer

outside the city, on the Sabbath day they journeyed forth to a riverside, and sitting down they spake unto the women that were assembled together.

What a humble beginning for the Apostle and his co-workers to assist the Macedonians, yet nevertheless they were carrying out the will of God, for she who was a worshipper of God, was the one whose heart the Lord opened to obey His Word, as spoken by Paul. Her faithfulness to the Lord was manifested by her obedience in baptism, and because she showed herself faithful to the commandments of her Lord, she was privileged to entertain His servants.

From JARVIS BROOK. Though Paul was forbidden to speak the word in Asia, at Philippi there is found a woman, and with her other women, possibly also from Asia, and these are the first to whom the word was spoken at Philippi. That which is written of Lydia, "a worshipper of God," recalls the case of Cornelius, Acts 10., "one that feared God with all his house," also of the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts 8., "who had come to Jerusalem for to worship . . . was reading the prophet Isaiah," cases illustrative of those seeking after God, and blessing resulting (see Acts 17. 23-27, and contrast Roman 1. 18-28; 3. 10, 18).

The Lord having opened the heart of Lydia, she attends to the things spoken by Paul, and being baptized and her household, she opens her house to the Lord's servants, and constrained them to accept of her hospitality, thus the seller of purple became a giver of good.

Approaching the question of the baptizing of her household, the question arises as to whether it consisted of any who were not disciples—such as the commandment was given to make, baptize and teach (see Matthew 28. 19; Acts 2. 41; 10. 47, and other scriptures). If there were others, where can the scripture warrant be found for baptizing them? If an innovation was taking place such as would thereafter make it Scriptural and right to baptize households (as including infants or unregenerate ones), surely some-

thing more would have been said about it? As the record stands there is no mention of Lydia having an husband or children; she was many miles away from Thyatira and apparently pursuing her business vocation; mention is made of women only as having been spoken to, and these or some of them may have been her assistants. If not, Lydia being reached, the door would be open to speak to those forming her household [see verse 32—ED.] with a result such as Acts 10. 44, 48, and all be baptized; hence it may be reasonably concluded that the household of Lydia consisted of none but believing ones or disciples, and as such they were baptized.

Section 24 (Acts 16. 16-24).

THE WORK AT PHILIPPI.

THE PYTHON.

From BRIGHTON. Though Satan had been active in opposition, while the Word of God was being preached in Asia, it almost seems as though he makes now a more subtle and more determined effort to prevent, if possible, the advent of the Truth into Europe. In fact, it might be gathered that he foresaw the rapidity with which the knowledge of God's Word would spread, and the hold its teachings would have on the yet pagan Europeans. At any rate he does not wait for the open proclamation of the message, but through this maid, dominated by one of his own emissaries, he raises the storm, which he hopes will overthrow the servants of God.

Like Demetrius the Ephesian (chapter 20) the masters of this maid are so held by the power of money, that the loss of gain suffices to bring into exercise all that is brutal and vengeful in their natures, in spite of what must have been evident to their mind, namely that the testimony of the maid was true. "Love of money is the root of all evil," and though these men contended, ostensibly, in the interests of law and order (v. 21), yet rage at the loss of gain (v. 19) was really the motive which impelled them to turn the

multitude—and magistrates—against Paul and Silas. What a warning !

The consequences of the tumult—the imprisonment of Paul and Silas, the earthquake, the conversion of the jailor, and singular release of Paul and Silas—all tend but to do what Satan had attempted to avert, that is, to bring before the Macedonians the servants of God and their message of Salvation. The sequel is the establishment in Philippi of a bright and stable testimony for God.

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 21.

FROM BARROW. Our knowledge of the loving-kindness of the Most High (ver. 7) should cause our hearts also to joy in His strength and rejoice in His salvation, knowing that in whatever circumstance we may be placed He is always ready to give us our hearts' desire if it be for our good ; for no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly (Ps. 84. 11). But the Psalmist brings before us One Whose requests were never withholden, "Who in the days of His flesh offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him Who was able to save Him out of death" (Heb. 5. 7).

"He asked life of Thee, Thou gavest it Him,
Even length of days for ever and ever."

And again the Psalmist makes reference to Him in the words :

"Thou wilt not leave My soul to Sheol,
Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."
(Ps. 16. 10.)

David, being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins He would set One upon his throne, he foreseeing this, spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was He left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God

raise up. . . . Being, therefore, at the Right Hand of God exalted (Acts 2. 30-33) we behold Him, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour (Heb. 2. 9).

“Honour and majesty dost Thou lay upon Him,
For Thou makest Him most blessed for ever;
Thou makest Him glad with joy in Thy presence.”

It would prove helpful in our consideration of this Psalm to link it with Ps. 16. Therein we read—

“In His presence is fulness of joy;
In Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

The latter portion of this Psalm shows forth how utterly futile are the devices of men when they seek to range themselves against the purposes of God.

From BLACKRIDGE. This Psalm, according to Mr. Newberry, is “pertaining to David.” The wonderful goodness of the Lord to him causes him to rejoice greatly, for the Lord preventest or goes before with blessings of goodness.

Great is his joy in God's salvation. It is not here as in Psalm 51, “Restore unto me the joy of Thy Salvation,” but he rejoices and glories in it.

Now comes the question to us of Hebrews 2. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” Let us see that we neglect it not, but rejoice in it and know its delivering effects.

God has given him his heart's desire (see 2 Sam. 1. 7), which are the last words of David, and wondrous they are indeed. Note verse 5, wherein he expresses the foregoing as his desire.

See verse 6 of this Psalm and last sentence thereof, with which connect verse 28 of Acts 2. David foresees the Seed Who is to sit upon his throne. The destruction of the enemies is seen from verse 8-12, and the Psalm closes with praise to the Lord.

Psalm 22.

(Continued from p. 176.)

From BLACKRIDGE. We would seek to add our stone to the already large cairn of writings on this Psalm.

Without doubt it is the pre-eminent Psalm of the Cross. It may be that David passed through sufferings which caused him to write such words, but the Son of God Who endured sufferings with which David's cannot vie gave force and meaning to the words which otherwise would have been lacking. Thus we read from verse 1 to 21 regarding the Cross with its plain and figurative language, each colouring the other in the sublimeness of the structure.

Verse 21 seems to connect with Hebrews 5. 7, "Having been heard for His godly fear." He was saved out of death. While verse 22 views Him in resurrection and the work which is His now as God's High and Great Priest in association with a people with a heavenly calling. A sweeter Singer is in the midst of the congregation now than David ever was in the midst of Israel in the past (see Heb. 2. 11, 12).

Not only does this Psalm deal with the present and past, but also with the future, when the kingdom shall surely be manifested as being the Lord's. Israel shall then be restored to her former greatness, and all the nations shall worship before the Lord. View the wondrous plan which God alone could frame. How much rested upon Him of verse 1, Who utters those agonizing words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" To God be the glory that He proved Himself equal to the awful burden which was laid upon Him and to the purposes of God which were in Him.

The sufferings of the Christ and the glories which should follow are herein seen (see 1 Peter 1. 11 and Luke 24. 26).

Psalm 19.

From BLACKRIDGE. Question, *N.T.*, 186, January, 1907, Y.M.C.

Verse 12. Who can discern errors? It is the writer that asks the question. Connect Hebrews 5. 14, which seems to answer.

PAUL ON WORSHIP.

VI.

IN his letter to Corinth Paul speaks of the ordinance of the Lord which, under the New Covenant, takes the place of all the ritual given through Moses. He had received from the Lord and delivered to them that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took a loaf and having given thanks (eucharistēsas) He brake it and said "This is My body which is for you, this do in remembrance of Me." In like manner also the cup after the supper, saying "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me."

This command of the Lord is unique, and provides the gathered people of God with an opportunity like to nought else, for acceptable service as an expression of their worship of Him Who is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. For here we have the Perfect Example offering thanks to His God and Father for the loaf which spake of His body, once prepared for Him in Mary's womb, then about to be offered, nailed to Calvary's Cross. For the cup too, ere He poured it out to symbolize His blood about to be shed, He offered thanks and blessed His God and Father. Thus is it the privilege of those to do who have been called by God into the Fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, of those and of none other; of them when together for this purpose according to His word. This thanksgiving for the loaf and for the cup constitutes, as we understand, the highest act of worship, the most worthy offering of Divine service that can have place in the House of God.

But, as unto the Mosaic ritual of offerings and sacrifices David as the man after God's heart added a service of sacred song, so may there be added conformably to the revealed will of God, musical exercises of praise to the thanksgiving and blessing that form so important a part of the breaking of the bread. This may be found in germs in such scriptures

as Ephesians 5. 19-21, because while, to say the least, in this passage it is to one another or to ourselves that we first are exhorted to speak, whether in psalms or hymns or spiritual songs, yet it is to the Lord (that is God the Father, see Colossians) that we are to make melody with our hearts, and it is to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that we are to give thanks in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ always for all things. So in Colossians 3. whilst first exhorted to teach and admonish one another (or ourselves) with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs yet even so it is to God that with grace in our hearts we are to sing. And whether it be what we do in word or deed this is to be done in the Name of the Lord Jesus, or when we give thanks it is to be to God the Father through Him.

From this association of thanksgiving with psalms, hymns, songs, we are led to believe that we may have such an association in the meeting on the morning of the Lordly Day when together for the breaking of the bread. It is the Holy Priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices (according to Peter's letter) and while the main thing is the thanksgiving (the Eucharist) associated with the loaf and the cup when we draw near through the rent veil into the Holies, yet with this there may be associated psalms, hymns, songs, these being spiritual, that is directed by the Spirit of God, according to the dictum "God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."¹

To be according to the Spirit certain conditions are requisite. It is not every hymn that may be sung at such a time. It is not, for example, hymns for mutual exhortation or teaching, it is not those that are full of individual experience that have a place. When the broken loaf and the poured out cup are replaced upon the table they have brought to the mind of those who have said "Amen" to the thanksgiving, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The grace that led Him though rich to become poor, to empty

¹ John 4. 24.

Himself and become partaker of human flesh ; the life of goodness and kindness and the death of shame and sorrow, the humiliation, the agony, these have been brought before us if the Holy Spirit's power has been experienced in connexion with the ordinance. The triumph of the resurrection, the exaltation of Himself and His Name at the hands of His Father, His present and His future joy ; the satisfaction and enjoyment too of the Father in what has been accomplished, all these have of right a place, and such-like thoughts may well find expression in psalms, hymns and songs which are spiritual.

Deeply impressed with the immense importance of giving the breaking of the loaf with that which is immediately connected therewith (1 Cor. 11.) its pre-eminent place we desire to speak here of that further thanksgiving, that added praise in psalms, hymns, and songs spiritual which might in our judgment have far fuller place than we have yet known.

If there be a willing mind it will be accepted according to what we have and not according to what we have not. The Lord's Day morning is not the time to learn or practise new tunes. And extemporaneous composing of words or music must for obvious reasons be put out of account. What qualifications then must be possessed by hymns for use as an expansion and continuation of the service of the Holies ?

1. The hymns must be addressed to God the Father ; either expressly, or else there should, at least, be nothing in their wording inconsistent with the direct address to Him. All hymns of mere meditation are out of place as are all direct addresses to the Lord Jesus Christ (see the passage from Colossians above). The mention of the name of the Lord in the way of apostrophe as in the verse

“ Man of Sorrows,” what a Name
 For the Son of God Who came
 Ruined sinners to reclaim.
 Hallelujah ! What a Saviour,

is by no means to be objected to if it is abundantly clear that the hymn is not addressed to Him.

2. God is to be addressed as the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ ; He is also our God and our Father, but when engaged in priestly service, though we may rightly address Him as our God, it is out of place to speak to Him as Father or our Father, for the relationship of Father which He bears to us is altogether different from that in which we approach Him as worshippers.

3. In the adoration or heart-worship of which the hymns are an expression we are to recollect the equality and co-eternity of Father and Son and Spirit, and thus we adore one God in Three Persons and Three persons in one God, but our adoration is offered in the Spirit through the Son unto the Father.

4. The leading subject of all Spirit-taught worship is the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. His incarnation, His life, His humiliation, His atoning death, His glorious resurrection, His present exaltation, His future reign ; but above all His personal excellencies. Round this theme all others must centre. The goodness and greatness of God otherwise expressed may have a place. Some hymns will be like the Divine-taught "Hallelujah," an utterance of praise with little or no expression of why the praise is given, an utterance called forth by what has gone before or what is in the minds of all, as in the various doxologies such as :

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,
 Praise Him His people here below,
 Praise Him above ye heavenly host,
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

5. Any reference to ourselves, our needs, our experience, will have a small place. In proportion to our true appreciation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the infinite satisfaction He gives the Father will be the degree in which we lose sight of ourselves and one another when together for the

remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the breaking of the loaf and that which goes therewith.

Of course at the conclusion of the meeting there may be a fitness for some hymns that could not rightly find a place earlier ; hymns, for example, which seek to carry us in a sense of Divine favour on to the opportunities which the rest of the day affords for the service of the Royal Priesthood.

Finally we desire to point out that if psalms, hymns, and songs which are spiritual arise as the outcome of grateful and adoring hearts they will not always be sung singly, but assuredly we shall sometimes sing two or even three or more in succession without waiting as if it were needful that a prayer should always be intercalated. Hymn after hymn might well go up to God if our hearts were truly touched as was his who wrote :

Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZING.

IN looking at this question we may consider the value of the Scriptures themselves, for apart from their Divine origin, they contain more sublimity, purer morality, more important history and finer strains of eloquence, than are to be found in all other books, in whatever language they may have been written. Moreover, in them we have the ways and character of the Living God portrayed, the history of mankind traced with unerring accuracy, the rise and fall of peoples and nations—in a word, the past, present and future of this wonderful world.

All this lies open before us so plainly that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein ; and yet besides we have mysteries so deep and glories so transcendent that it is impossible for the human mind to grasp or lay hold of them, any more than the finite can understand the infinite.

And yet there is nothing more clear than this, that it is the

will of God that His children should know and understand His holy Word in the measure possible to each: "That we might know the things that are freely given to us by God."

But to attain to this knowledge requires both zeal and energy, as hear the words of the wise man:—

"My son, if thou wilt receive my words,
And lay up my commandments with thee;
So that thou incline thine ear to wisdom,
And apply thine heart to understanding;
Yea, if thou cry after discernment,
And lift up thy voice for understanding;
If thou seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hid treasures;
Then shalt thou understand the fear of Jehovah,
And find the knowledge of God" (Prov. 2. 1-5).

Therefore we would say that one of the roads to the attainment of this knowledge is by the memorizing of the Scriptures, or in other words by branding the Scriptures upon one's memory.

It was to this end that God gave commandment to Israel through Moses:

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be for frontlets to thine eyes" (Deut. 6. 6-8).

Moreover, listen to the injunctions God gave to Joshua:—

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein" (Josh. 1. 8).

In addition to this we have the words of the Proverbs:—

Write them upon the table of thine heart (Prov. 3. 3).

Keep them in the midst of thine heart (Prov. 4. 21).

Bind them continually upon thine heart (Prov. 6. 21).

Bind them upon thy fingers,

Write them upon the table of thine heart (Prov. 7. 3).

These scriptures, we think, prove conclusively that it is the desire of God that we should endeavour to learn the Scriptures, to commit them to memory. Besides we have notable examples, of those who took the pains to learn many, and study the Holy Scriptures. Let us consider the example of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who though He was God, yet, being man, He had to learn the Scriptures exactly as we do, namely "Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, and there a little," and yet from His lips falls that sublime utterance :—

"Thy law is within My heart."

Moreover His skill in using the Scriptures as a weapon of warfare is seen in His temptation in the wilderness and in His conflicts with the Scribes and Pharisees.

To come to others, David, the man after God's own heart, bears witness to the preciousness of the Scriptures by saying :—

"More to be desired are they than gold ;
Yea, than much fine gold ;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

Again, who can read the 119th Psalm without being struck by the earnestness of the writer in seeking to brand upon his memory the Scriptures of truth. Almost every line bears eloquent testimony to the intensity of this desire. We quote a few :—

Thy word have I laid up in mine heart,
That I might not sin against Thee (verse 11).

The law of Thy mouth is better unto me
Than thousands of gold and silver (verse 72).

Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever (verse 111).

I love Thy commandments above gold ; yea, above fine gold (verse 127).

I rejoice at Thy word,
As one that findeth great spoil (verse 162).

Again, we have the example of Ezra, for of him it is written :—

“He was a ready scribe in the law of Moses” (Ezra 7. 6).

Job says :—

“ I have treasured up the words of His mouth
More than my necessary food ” (Job 23. 12).

And so we might go on, multiplying such examples, but we think sufficient has been written to show the importance and the preciousness of this very practical subject.

We would close this brief paper by quoting the words of one who said, when asked how best to attain to a knowledge of God :—

“ Study the Holy Scriptures, therein are contained the words of eternal life ; it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter.”

Another while on his deathbed bitterly exclaimed against himself :—

“ I have lost a world of time, time the most precious thing in the world, whereof had I but one year more, it should be spent in reading David’s Psalms and Paul’s Epistles.”

“ Oh, sirs.” he said to those about him, “ mind the world less and God more.”

Another while nearing the close of his life wrote to a friend :—

“ I have been too fond of reading everything valuable and elegant that has been penned in our language, and been peculiarly charmed with the historians, orators and poets of antiquity, but were I to renew my studies, I would take my leave of those accomplished trifles, I would resign the delights of modern wits, amusements and eloquence, and devote my attention to the Scriptures of truth ; I would sit with much greater assiduity at my Divine Master’s feet and desire to know nothing in comparison with Christ and Him crucified.”

In the light of these weighty and important words may we value the opportunities that are ours in learning the Holy Scriptures.

A. ANDERSON.

MY NEIGHBOUR.

Luke 10. 29-37.

MY NEIGHBOUR! Who is he and what am I?
 I, a poor fallen man, who long since leaving God
 Did journey downwards far from light and life,
 Yet confident in self did cast aside His word.
 The knowledge of His ways was not desired by me;
 My mind was filled with fancies and high hopes,
 Which had for their foundation worthless lies
 Of him who is their father. So I journeyed on;
 And when I seemed to realize my hopes
 Suddenly burst upon me three most woeful foes.
 They seemed to be my friends; but ere I knew
 They each did smite me sore and then did leave me
 Wounded, naked, dying. Such my pitiful condition.
 None came to me, cast out to perish on the wayside.
 First a man in priestly garb did look across the way
 And then passed on, for he was not my neighbour.
 His business was with holy things and in that circle he did move,
 Nor did his sympathies go forth to aught beside.
 Second, a Levite came, he also looked and passed the other side.
 What hope had I in man, for had not all turned from me?
 If Priest and Levite fail from whom shall help then come?
 But could they not plead reason? Had they come
 With knowledge and intent equipped to give the needed succour?
 Nay! nothing had they, neither medicine to heal
 Nor beast to bear. Nor yet that neighbour's heart
 Which most of all was needed.

Thus was I left, so hopeless my condition:
 How sad a contrast to the time when full of vain assurance
 I started forth, away from God's own place of blessing!
 And is there none to help and shall my need appeal in vain?
 No neighbour who with heart and hand will undertake my cause?
 Who is yon traveller, who equipped for lengthy journey—
 No casual passer he, but full of good intent,
 And acting in the counsel of another—has journeyed from afar;
 In his attire but common, and with attendants none,
 Shunned by both Priest and Levite, who is he?
 They say Samaritan! and revile with hateful names.

But what say I? Is it not He Who in eternal glory
 Ever was with God, His Fellow, Sharer of His throne,
 The object of the worship and service of the angels.
 How came He here and in what semblance, dost inquire?
 I answer, Joy there was in heaven but woe on earth
 For man, God's image, made according to His likeness
 Had gone far off from God, had sunken into sin,
 Had been o'ercome by lust of flesh, of eyes, of pride of life;
 And there lay helpless and undone, a piteous sight.
 How could that great and loving heart abide amid the angels?
 How could He hear their songs of praise, when to His ear
 Arose the groans and cries of lost and ruined man?
 And did He hear alone? did not the Father also hear?
 And had He not long ere the need determined on His course?
 He sent the Son, and His mind also 'twas to come.

And so He journeyed down and passing angels by
 Was found in fashion as a man and where man was.
 "Came where he was" 'tis written, only so could He deliver-
 ance give,

And having come and with attention gazed upon his plight
 His tender heart was greatly moved with yearning pitying love.
 How sad to see one who had borne so bright a likeness
 Now woefully defaced by marks of threefold sin!
 Is pity there to end and shall He pass him by
 For whom He came? Shall He return again to His own place
 Without a trophy of God's grace and His own toil?
 That may not be! for 'tis forbidden by eternal counsels
 As well as by the purpose and the love of His own heart.
 To him He goes and reaching to his needs his wounds He binds,
 With tender care applies the healing balm of oil and wine.
 How simple does this seem, what little cost is here!
 But if we further ponder as we read, we then shall learn
 That God's beloved Son to reach and save the sinner lost
 Must give Himself to death, on Cross uplifted be,
 For only as He bare the stroke could wounded man be healed.
 To Bethlehem the Saviour came, the God-man seen below;
 Compassions great He showed, His kindness did abound,
 But o'er His path He ever saw the shadow of the Cross,
 For man required a Saviour dead, as well as One Who lived
 (And He Who lived and died should also rise again

The witness and the pledge of His own finished work).
 So as He neared the dreadful hour His soul was sore distressed ;
 Sustained He was by love, love both to God and man
 Led Him right down to where the wounded lay.
 And so He saved him.

And doth His love and care here cease, with life and healing given ?
 And shall He leave the man again to wander on alone his way ?
 Nay ! He who savèd saves, and will go on to save.
 The beast is brought. His beast on which He rode,
 And thereupon the man, still feeble from his past mishap,
 Is placed ; and then with tender care He leads him on.
 How sweet that little journey, for the Saviour and the saved !
 How tenderly He chooses out the path, e'en as a mother
 Doth yearningly regard the weakling infant's need.
 And now at length a building is espied, 'tis but a wayside inn
 Designed for weary travellers, for good fellowship and cheer.
 And there He cared for him with loving tender skill,
 Feeding him with milk at first as though he were a babe,
 But afterwards with stronger meat as he increased in strength.
 At length He rises up, for to His home He must return,
 But having loved so far, He loved him to the end,
 And to the worthy host He doth commit his charge.
 Two pence, says He, I give thee that he may nothing lack ;
 Use those two pence and if perchance thou spendest more
 I will not fail to recompense when I return again.

So did the gracious Lord, as He was going away,
 Make full provision for the need of His, and whom He loved.
 A Fellow-worker He did send to take His own in charge,
 One Who both knew His mind and willing was to do.
 And further He did build a House in which the saved might be
 Well furnished with all store of good, with willing helpers too.
 Love was its law, all vied with one another
 Who should most humble service do. They washed the feet
 Of weary ones ; they did support with kindly care the weak.
 In it were young and old, the feeble and the strong.
 In fellowship they lived, e'en as members of a body
 Under guidance of the head, they cared with mutual love,
 And that which helped them in their work of faith,
 Their loving labour, that which gave them patience under trial,

Was hope, that blessed hope which rested on His word alone.
 "I come again," He said, just as He left them sorrowing,
 "And when I come then I and you will be together,
 No more shall sundered be unto eternal ages."
 He also said "I leave you work to do for Me,
 And when I come again, rewards will I not fail to give."

Who then was neighbour unto him who fell among the thieves ?
 What need is there to ask ? 'Twas he who mercy showed.
 And wilt thou not be neighbour, now that He has gone ?
 Is there not need ? Go thou and do likewise.

Conference Notes.

ARMAGH, JULY 12, 1907.

(Continued from page 209.)

History repeats itself. There is one who stands out above all others who followed close in the steps of the Master, one of the closest of all. What does he say. He gets it by direct revelation from God, no sentimentality about it. We have seen these words prostituted to do service to a politician or to a Christian who has been anything but what he should be in his life for God. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the Faith." Oh ! may that be true of you and me, beloved. It will not be known here, perhaps we may suddenly pass away as some during this year have, those we would have never thought of suddenly taken away off this scene. It will be known at the judgment seat of Christ whether we have kept the Faith, for we may be in the testimony, coming in and out upon Sunday mornings, breaking the bread and be in an apostate condition for years, ere we openly make shipwreck of the Faith. May it be ours then to earnestly contend for the Faith, once for all delivered unto the saints.

Mr. DAVID SMITH. Acts 11. 20., 1 Peter 5. 12. Stand fast

in the true grace of God., We have heard it said oftentimes that we are in a dispensation of grace. It is true, yet what that means seems to be misunderstood by many; they contrast the past with the present and say in the past the people were under law and now God's people are under grace, and as far as their actions declare, it is that now we are under grace we can do what we please. There never was a more mistaken idea as to what it means to be under grace. God has been pleased to give us a revelation of His will and purposes concerning those who by the grace of God have been saved from hell and from coming wrath. "Receive not the grace of God in vain." "Not turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." Both are possible even to those who have been recipients of the grace of God. "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." The grace of God which teacheth, traineth, disciplineth us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we may live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age. It has to do with our manner of life.

1 Peter 1. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." How do we know Him to-day? How do we speak of Him to-day? What is our attitude to Him to-day? We may, surely, thus speak truly, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus. Has He begotten us? Is that true? Does that belong to a past dispensation? Are we not the born of God, the begotten of God? begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from amongst the dead. Saved by grace, we are being kept by the power of God unto a salvation ready to be revealed. Well might we say, What manner of persons ought we to be? are we the manner of persons we ought to be: are we? Do we show that we appreciate the grace of God, and in what measure and manner do we show it? Is it by our words alone, or is it by our acts as well as our words, for actions speak louder than words. While it is good to sing His praise it is also good to live to His praise and to show the operations of

the grace of God towards us individually in each and all the relationships of our lives.

We read in Colossians something about the knowledge of His will; we need to know His will, and we are not expected to know it until we learn it, and the very fact that there is something about the knowledge of His will shows us He has revealed His will, in order that we might know it and do it. First, then, the knowledge of His will and next the proving as we find in Romans 12, "Proving what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God," proving what it is. Do not take it for granted. Do not believe because So-and-So says it. We are in days of testing. The Bereans did not take for granted what the Apostle Paul said, no, they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were true, and their faith did not stand on the Apostle Paul; they had learned God's will from His word.

And if we know His will then there is another responsibility, a very solemn one, and that is, to be doers of His will. "The God of peace that brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do His will." Thus we may learn to do the will of God and of Him we have been hearing of to-day Who was manifested in the flesh, Who was full of grace and truth, Who displayed the true grace of God, of Whom it was written and of Whom it was true, "Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of Me, to do Thy will, O God." He was the One in Whom and by Whom the will of God was done on earth perfectly, and we have the wondrous opportunity of displaying how much we have appreciated the true grace of God, by doing that perfect will of God.

Mr. ALBERT FOSTER. We have to-day been looking at some of the things we were listening to in this room last year, and I wonder how many of these things we have heard to-day we may be able to remember in the years to come. There is one thing I remember that was brought to my notice when

present last year, and that was the question of power in connexion with God's work. It was a subject that set me thinking and searching the Word. Luke 24. 49. "Tarry in Jerusalem till ye be endued with power from on high." They lacked power, and if in the Gospel by Matthew He bids them go, this other bids them tarry for power. In the Acts, the continuation of this gospel, we have the fulfilment of the promise after ten days' waiting, and if we would know the power of apostolic days then we must follow more the apostolic ways. Chap 3. "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth walk." What was behind the name? the person; so there is power in the name. Now this great power of Chap. 4. is seen as the outcome of the waiting together upon God. It was God they knew and to Him they spoke; to Him they looked for power, they knew Him by the works He had done, they learned His power day by day, "Thou art God that hast made" and "Thou art God that hast said." These are the two chief means by which we come to know God, and the more we study the works of God in the Word of God the more we shall know God, and prayer becomes a reality as we know the God to Whom we pray. Would we know power individually and collectively, lay hold upon God in prayer. Some spell power with five letters. I will show you how to spell it with six—"Prayer," not lifeless, empty words. I heard Christians exhorted once to leave their long prayers at home and bring their short ones. Some people are in the habit of saying their short prayers at home and bringing their long ones to meetings.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 24 (Acts 16. 16-24).

THE WORK AT PHILIPPI. THE PYTHON.

(Continued from page 222.)

From BELFAST. The preachers, having crossed to Europe, began their work in a most unostentatious manner—conversing with a number of women at a place of prayer. One woman is converted, Lydia by name, being the first convert, as far as we know, in Europe. She was immediately baptized, she and her household. Some have endeavoured to find in this an argument in favour of infant baptism. But apart from there being children it has yet to be proved that Lydia was even married; rather she owned the business, she controlled the household (servants), and to her the house belonged.

Paul and his companions continued to visit the place of prayer. In the streets they were followed for some days by a girl possessed by a spirit of Python, who proclaimed them as servants of God Most High. Paul being displeased caused the spirit to leave the girl. This action caused the girl's master to rise against Paul. He and Silas ultimately find themselves lying in an inner dungeon with their backs sore from stripes and their feet fast in stocks. Naturally speaking, these things were not conducive to joy, yet Paul and Silas sang, and the outcome of the occurrence was that the jailor who thrust them into the prison became convicted of his sinnership, which caused him to give utterance to those eager words: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved." It was a straight question and it received a straight answer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved." He believed and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. There were no infants here, because

the word was spoken to all that were in the house (v. 32), who having received it rejoiced greatly.

Now here we have undoubtedly the nucleus of the church in Philippi. Two households, the principals of which indeed represent the two extremes of humanity. A God-fearing woman, who worshipped God, and a rough jailor whose very occupation would give him a hard, stony heart; both saved and brought into touch with the Lord. Surely this salvation is by the grace of God to all men. A common salvation.

From BARROW. As Paul and his fellow-workers were making their way to the place of prayer they were met by one possessed by a spirit of divination, which daily cried out regarding them, that they were "servants of the Most High God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation." It was indeed truth that was uttered, as it was also when the demon declared concerning Jesus that He was the Holy One of God (Mark 1. 24, 34). But as their Master refused to give ear to such testimony, so Paul desired not that she should speak such things regarding them, therefore he commanded the spirit in the name of Jesus to come out of her, and it came out that very hour.

This was but another device of the adversary with the intention of deluding the apostles to believe that it would assist them in their work for God. Thus it was well that they gave no place to it, for every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God (1 John 4. 3), and it is worthy of note that it does not use His name in what is exclaimed, yet the power of the name of Jesus is proved by the fact that the spirit was subject thereto.

The Apostle was to endure many things for that Name's sake, stripes and imprisonments; thrice he was beaten with rods, yet he always rejoiced that he was accounted worthy to suffer for the Name, that the purposes of God might be accomplished.

Section 25 (Acts 16. 25-40).

Psalm 119. 62. AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

From GREENOCK. Why did not Paul and Silas proclaim to the magistrates that they were Romans, before being cast into prison? The probability that, if they had, the jailor would never have been converted, points to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We think the jailor had heard previously that these men were preaching the way of salvation.

The earthquake awakening; the realization of his utterly hopeless condition which prompted the question: "What must I do to be saved"; the bold and unhesitating proclamation of the way of salvation, could only result in his believing God. The 31st verse is linked inseparably with the 32nd verse. "Believe . . . saved, and they spake the word of the Lord unto him with all that were in his house."

The first evidence of the new nature in the jailor is in his washing the apostles' stripes, though he had the same night thrust them into the innermost part of the prison. The second evidence is in him, with all in his house, acknowledging Jesus as Lord in baptism.

The pacific conduct of Paul is shown in that he did not bring the magistrates, who had themselves broken the Roman law, to judgment. Such forgiving conduct should characterize the children of God in their dealings with all men in the present day.

Who are the brethren visited by Paul and Silas at the house of Lydia (v. 40)? Would they be they of the household of Lydia (v. 15)?

[It has been suggested that when the jailor said "What must I do to be saved?" he was only thinking of escape from temporal dangers, the earthquake for one thing; his anxiety as to loss of prisoners may not have been altogether set aside. What do our correspondents say to this?

"Sirs" in the mouth of the jailor is literally "Lords," or to be more correct the Greek word *κυριος*, *Kurios*, when used

as a form of address (*κύριε*, Kurie, John 4. 11, *κύριοι*, Kurioi, Acts 16. 30) may be translated indifferently Sir or Lord. So Alford says: "Sirs is literally Lords; they will not take this title to themselves, but tell him of One Who was alone worthy of it. Believe on the Lord . . . not without allusion to the name by which he had addressed them." Is this sound?—
ED.]

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 22.

(Continued from page 224.)

FROM BARROW. One cannot peruse this psalm without in some measure being aware of the extreme agony borne by Him of Whom it speaks (Matt. 27. 46, Mark 15. 34). The greatest pang that was endured by the Lord Jesus was when He was forsaken by God on account of His bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness (1 Peter 2. 24). He Who was ever God's delight, what anguish it would cause to Him as He realized that no longer could He remain with Him in that dread hour when needed most! For it was impossible for God to abide where sin was, for

"Thou art Holy

O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel"

(v. 3).

He was despised and rejected of men; He was oppressed, yet He humbled Himself and opened not His mouth; this was possible to be endured without a murmur from His lips, but to be smitten and deserted by His God was the cause of that cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

In that hour of deepest pain and suffering He knew that the fathers had trusted aforesaid and had been delivered, yet here was the Son bearing the taunts and scorn of the passing crowd; none to help (v. 11) or to deliver, no eye to pity save a few helpless disciples, a spectacle of ignominy and

misery to all, compassed by dogs ; inclosed by the assembly of evildoers (v. 16). This was their hour and the power of darkness, and they did their utmost to increase His suffering. He bore also the wrath and judgment that was our due, and by His death He made powerless him that had the power of death. Thus death fails to hold its prey, and the third day He arose far above all principality and power unto the Right Hand of the Majesty on high.

He that inhabitest the praises of Israel will receive such in the great congregation (verses 22 and 25) from those that fear Him (v. 23) and those that seek after Him (v. 26).

The latter portion of the Psalm tells forth the sovereignty of God, that His righteousness shall be declared and His work extolled.

[Readers should notice in the marginal rendering in Matthew 27. 46 and Mark 15. 34 that the Lord said : " Why didst Thou forsake Me," with which we believe the Hebrew of Psalm 22. 1 is in strict agreement. This was at the ninth hour ; the darkness from noon until the ninth hour (half-way to sunset) seems to indicate the time when as a sin offering and a guilt offering the Holy Victim was under the Divine wrath. This we believe was the fifth utterance on the cross, the first four preceding the dark noon. His first and last utterances on the cross being addressed definitely, " Father " (see N.T. vol. xv., pages 256-262).—ED.]

Question and Answer.

Please explain in what sense the Son Who is the image of the invisible God is the First-Born of all creation (Col. 1. 15).

It may be noted in the first place that the term " first-born " does not mean " first-created " ; had this been so a different word in the original would doubtless have been used. The term first-born in most of its occurrences in the Old Testament Scriptures means simply the one who has priority of birth, the earliest born as compared with others

later born, and in such a sense necessarily involves maternity; so in Luke 2. 7.¹ From this there comes a secondary sense or derived meaning, inasmuch as the sons of Hebrews, by priority of birth had certain rights and dignity, for example, Deut. 21. 17, Gen. 27. 29, involving pre-eminence or authority, supremacy or sovereignty, and this comes to be the meaning of the term in certain usages where the idea of "relation," as implied by birth involving a human mother, is entirely absent, and that of "rank" survives and becomes significant, for example, Job 18. 13, Jer. 31. 9, Exod. 4. 22 and Ps. 89. 27, in which last verse Jehovah says: "I will make him my first-born," that is, as the text shows, give to him the right of supremacy and sovereignty. In Col. 1. 15, above quoted, the idea of rank and dignity is the ruling thought, the proximate reason of which is found in the words which follow: "for by Him were all things created"; but yet there is a higher reason found in the eternal relation which He sustains to the Father, namely, Son of God's love, verse 13. "Who is the image of the invisible God," in the highest sense Divinely begotten and the participator of the Father's nature and essence, because He is this in respect of His eternal being, the Only-Begotten, the First-Born. He has in respect to creation the dignity of Divine primogeniture, being at once Creator and Lord of the Universe, hence the title "First-Born."

J.H.

[The subject of this question and answer is so important that further concise contributions on it and on cognate topics will be welcomed from reverent and competent expositors. —ED.]

¹ This is one of the two occurrences of the Greek word *πρωτοτοκος* *prototokos*, firstborn, in the New Testament in this primary sense. For Matt. 1. 25. see R.V.

The Woman in Her Sphere.

'Jod.

She layeth her hands to the distaff,
And her palms hold the spindle.

THIS will seem a small matter to many, and indeed the Hebrew initial letter 'jod is a very small one. But the Lord Himself has testified that not one jod shall fail. Indeed it is no unimportant matter how the hands of the woman are occupied. Many cases could be cited of women who have forsaken the domestic duties set forth by the distaff and the spindle and their idle hands have found mischief to do with their pens. How much good could be done by the domestic arts that is often lost because women do not believe

“The daily round, the common task,
Should furnish all we ought to ask.
Room to deny ourselves ; a road
To bring us daily nearer God.”

We may say in passing that the eleventh point of excellence (v. 20) can only be reached as the tenth point (v. 19) has its place.

The emphasis here is on the hand, that wonderful expression of the Creator's skill. What are Christian women doing with their hands? With the hand guided by the head energized by the heart may be effectuated what else can never be accomplished.

It is perhaps as much by the hand as by ought else that the bodies of men and women are distinguished from the bodies of the brute creation. A great surgeon has said—

“The human hand is so beautifully formed ; it has so fine a sensibility, that sensibility governs its motions so correctly, every effort of the will is answered so instantly, as if the hand itself were the seat of that will ; its actions are so powerful, so free, and yet so delicate. . . .”
(BELL, Bridgewater Treatise, The Hand).

What use are Christian women making of such an instru-

ment? Are they in very deed presenting it as a servant unto righteousness?

As Hannah to young Samuel brought
 The little robe her hands had wrought,
 As Mary's hands the vesture wove
 For her Great Son come from above;
 So every woman's hands may make,
 And give some garment for His sake.

For Youngest Believers.

ABNER, JOAB, BENAIAH.

THERE are three men, whose characters are worthy of notice, brought before us in the Scriptures; the names of the men are Abner, Joab, and Benaiah; they lived during the life of David; the consideration of the characters of these men and their attitude towards David may afford us instruction if we look at them with the object of comparing and contrasting them, gathering therefrom that which shall be to our help and profit. Look first into the character of Abner. We read of him as captain of Saul's army (1 Sam. 14. 50). He is captain of that army when David as a youth delivers Israel from their dreaded enemy, Goliath of Gath (1 Sam. 17). What must he have thought as he led David into the presence of Saul with the head of Goliath? I wonder whether he admired or envied David, at any rate we read of him with Saul chasing David (1 Sam. 26.). It will, perhaps, be helpful if we bear in mind that this takes place after the Lord had rejected Saul from being king, and after the anointing of David by Samuel at the command of the Lord. Abner knew what the Lord had sworn concerning David (2 Sam. 3. 9), yet he is with Saul in his attempts to kill David. Then we read of him after the death of Saul, making Ishbosheth, Saul's son, king over Israel (2 Sam. 2. 8, 9). He fights against David's men (2 Sam. 2.). He shews himself strong in the house of Saul (or for the house of Saul,

see margin). But the day comes when his lord and master, Ish-bosheth, finds fault with him; he is offended, and threatens to leave Ish-bosheth, and join himself to David (2 Sam. 3. 6 to 11). Let us notice the cause of Abner's change; it is not love for David, it is because Ish-bosheth has given offence. How like many of God's children to-day who leave one party for another because of some personal grievance, even some who once professed to be in the Fellowship of the Son of God have withdrawn themselves for similar reasons; once they professed to hold the principles of God and His truth, but now they have let them go. It is a good thing to hold the truth, but it is certainly better to be held by the truth. It does not appear to have been love that drew Abner to David, but circumstances and his own personal feelings seem to have entered very largely into the matter, but he joins himself to David's cause; he promises to bring all Israel to David (2 Sam. 3. 21). He starts on his errand, but is easily drawn aside by Joab and slain; he exhibits no wholeheartedness, he was not really concerned about David's will, or he would have prosecuted his errand, which was a good errand, with more zeal and earnestness; he would not have returned at the beck of Joab, when the king's business required haste, but we see from verse 26 that the messengers brought him back from the well, Sirah, which means turning aside; he was not steadfast in his purpose, simply because it was not love for David that prompted him, but it was his personal feelings that he was considering; he had a grievance against Ish-bosheth; his was a work of envy, not of good will (Phil. 1. 15). [Will any of our readers say a good word for Abner?—ED.]

(To be continued.)

GREAT SALVATION.

*How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation
(Heb. 2. 3) ?*

How often have we had these words as a warning when we were without Christ and without hope, bound by Satan's captive chains, hurrying on to eternal woe! Truly we were either neglecting or rejecting a great salvation, its issues being eternal happiness with our Lord Jesus Christ, or eternal woe with Satan. And now, with heart, and soul, and all that is within us, we bless His Holy Name for having, according to His mercy, saved us from the coming wrath.

But are not these words spoken to those who have been saved through faith, and therefore are not in danger of the Lake of Fire? "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them." It seems to the writer that those referred to are saved from the penalty of sin, because any one apart from Christ has nothing to drift away from, for they are already at enmity with God, and His anointed. Read on, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which having first been spoken through the Lord, and confirmed or made sure unto us by them that heard." Surely the reading of these few verses in Hebrews 2. will suffice to show that they are born of God. At the same time we see they were in great danger of drifting, by forgetting the things that they had heard, and going to that which is not pleasing to God now, offering sacrifices not according to knowledge. "A soul without knowledge is not good." And, sad to say, multitudes of Christians to-day are doing the very thing that these were in danger of drifting into, namely offering sacrifices which are not according to knowledge.

For an illustration, see 1 Sam. 15. 3, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy." But through not giving

more heed to what was said to him by the Lord, Saul put sacrifice before obedience. Instead of obeying the voice of the Lord he brought back with him sheep, oxen and the chief of the devoted things to sacrifice unto the Lord at Gilgal. We do not for a minute doubt that Saul was in real earnest, zealous about the matter. But, oh! what words, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in the obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "Give the more earnest heed." Sad it is to say there are myriads of Christians to-day who have got the same disease, bringing sacrifice or service before they have learned obedience to the will of God in baptism, and being gathered into the Name of the risen Lord. If the reader has not obeyed the voice of the Lord in being "baptized into the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit," is not this neglecting this great salvation which has been "spoken through the Lord"? In these last days God has spoken to us in His Son (Heb. 1. 2). We do well to remember that God has spoken right through the New Testament in His Son. In Acts 10. 48, "He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." Obedience to this command saves from a guilty conscience towards God.

Please turn to 1 Tim. 4. 1, "But the Spirit saith expressly that in later times some shall fall away from the Faith." Now read the last verse, "Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching, for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." Is this not the salvation of Hebrews 2. ? Something which we have to give earnest heed to. That is, the teaching of Holy Scripture, which has been spoken through our Lord, not salvation from wrath, for nothing can sever us from Him Who is at the right hand of God.

"Once in Him, in Him for ever
Thus the eternal covenant stands."

This salvation has to do with every believer in the Lord

Jesus as to whether his works will be burnt up or not at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Then each believer will receive his praise from God for service done in obedience to His Holy will and to His glory.

As Christ is the only refuge for a poor lost sinner, so also the teaching of Holy Scripture will have to be the only refuge for each believer. That is if we wish to be free from wood, hay and stubble, which will eventually be burnt up. And Scripture testifies on this wise, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God" (John 7.). So then of a truth we will be without excuse, seeing it is left to us whether or not we are willing to do His will. Alas! as we look around at the different communities of professing Christians, and the different methods in seeking to carry out God's mind and will, we ask ourselves the question, Is there only one mark which we have to press towards? Or are there many? "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." May we get to the Word of God, which alone will guide us, and make it a matter of earnest prayer before the throne of grace, that we may in all things be taught by the Holy Spirit as to what is the Apostles' doctrine.

Sad to say, many are trying to destroy with all their might the wisdom of the infinite Godhead, in seeking to blindfold young and old believers with their teaching, that although they have been born from above, they might eventually spend their eternity in the Lake of Fire. But this is only man's reasoning. The Word of God teaches us thus: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "For ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Further, "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8. 38).

Others say baptism is not necessary. But baptism results in a good conscience towards God, not the putting away

of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation, or "inquiry" of a good conscience towards God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is evident then from Holy Scripture that if we want a good conscience towards God, baptism is imperative.

Listen to Him Who is both Lord and Christ, as He was about to be immersed in Jordan's waters, "Suffer it to be so now. For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3. 14). We pray God that this may be the desire of all our hearts, to fulfil all righteousness. But we can never fulfil all righteousness apart from baptism. Remember this is He Who said, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me." Again God has spoken through His Son (Acts 10. 48). "And He commanded them to be baptized in the Name." Note this is not into the Body or in the Holy Spirit. Previous verses tell that they have received the Holy Spirit. Have you been baptized into the Name? Oh! how shall we escape, if we neglect this salvation, from having a guilty conscience towards God? "Why call ye Me Lord, and do not the things which I command you." Let us give the more earnest heed not to be contrary to the written command of God, neither seeking to separate what God has joined, nor joining what God has divided. Alas, that instead of letting Holy Scripture judge their thoughts, some would like to judge Scripture to suit their own reasonings, which is not good. "Add thou not unto His words, lest thou be reprov'd, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30. 4).

THE TEST OF LOVE.

"He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me." John 14. 21.

"If a man love Me, he will keep My word." John 14. 23.

THE PRECIOUS SONS OF ZION.

AMONG the many cities and strongholds made mention of in Scriptural history, Zion stands out in a very conspicuous manner. Thinking a little about this wonderful spot on earth, so dear to the heart of the man after God's own heart, we would seek to connect a few thoughts, in order to bring about enjoyment thereof in the present day.

Zion, with all its heights and bulwarks could not withstand God's anointed and conquering king (1 Chron. 2. 5). Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion. He smote the Jebusites. Then he dwelt therein, and began to build and repair the city round about; thus David waxed stronger and greater, for the Lord of Hosts was with him.

1 Chronicles 15., 16. show us the Ark of God being brought into the city, and placed in the Tent which had been prepared for it by David; who found favour in the sight of God, and asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob; but Solomon built Him a House (Acts 7. 46, 47). How true! The Lord has chosen Zion. He has desired it, for His habitation; saying, Here will I dwell, for I have desired it; this is My resting-place for ever (Ps. 132. 13, 14). Thus God was in the midst of her; David's son was upon the throne; and all Israel was united unto the son of David. The nations were casting their glory and pride at the feet of Israel's King, as seen in the gold and cedars.

What satisfaction this to the heart of God to rest in His House, in Zion, which He so desired! Yet, alas! as in Eden's garden, His rest was soon disturbed. Solomon erred, and was gathered unto his fathers; and Rehoboam ascended the throne: not to rule and judge the twelve tribes as did Solomon his father; not even to rule the half; only two tribes are left around the Lord's Anointed, while the ten go to their tents, not only to mind their own things, but also to join in Jeroboam's idolatry. Two tribes known as Judah: ten tribes known as Israel. The minority in the mind of God. The majority turned aside after an idolater.

This rent in the Israel of God affords some helpful and comforting lessons unto us, who are seeking to gather around the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is rejected, not by the world only, but by many of God's dear children. Those were all sons of Israel, yet God's pleasure was in the few, and God could reveal Himself unto the two tribes in a manner He could not unto the ten. Kings rise and fall, both in Israel and Judah; yet Israel remains away.

"What portion have we in David?" is truly the language of their hearts. In Judah some kings go back, others again in whose hearts are the words of God, do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord, and a revival is experienced. Such knew indeed the blessedness of the man in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Yet alas! Although Judah saw what backsliding Israel had received for her adulterous ways, treacherous Judah feared not; but went and played the harlot also; thus sharing in the same fate (Jer. 3.). What sad degeneration! The Zion of God's choice and rest is now in the hands of the enemy, its walls are knocked down, and the precious "Sons of Zion," comparable unto fine gold, are carried into captivity.

"How is the gold become dim! How is the most pure gold changed! The stones of the sanctuary are poured out at the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable unto fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen vessels, the work of the hands of the potter?" (Lam. 4. 1-2).

What a lament indeed from Jeremiah as he now beholds, and enters into God's mind about, this awful catastrophe!

Now let us compare the degeneration in the New Testament, and mark the close analogy which exists, as it presents itself to our minds and hearts. The early Apostolic Churches, which were indeed buildings of God (1 Cor. 3.), were unitedly builded together (Eph. 2.), making a spiritual House (1 Pet. 2.), House of God, which is Church of living God, pillar and ground (stay) of the Truth (1 Tim. 3.), the thing,

or place, which God desired, and chose ; wherein He found His rest : wherein He dwelt with His people, and wherein was His Kingdom, and power, unto His glory : thus answering to the days of Solomon. But note carefully how the warning voice is raised by Paul in Acts 20. 29-31, and by Peter in his second letter (Ch. 2.). Which, alas ! Paul did see, before he fell asleep. Oh, how vividly it is brought before us in 2 Tim. 1. 15. "This thou knowest that all they that are in Asia turned away from me."

So Paul, in his godly care, has sent Timothy to Ephesus, and by letter now seeks to brace him up for the conflict. The condition of things in Asia can now no longer be recognized as of God. Degeneration has done its deadly work ; and now the contrast to "House of God" is brought to view, namely, "A great house." Let us mark the characteristics thereof. It has vessels of gold and of silver, and also of wood and of earth, some unto honour, and some unto dishonour. With what propriety might we quote again the Lamentation of Jeremiah. How is the gold become dim ! How is the most pure gold changed !

Truly the House of God should possess the golden vessels ; but where have the earthen ones come from ? Surely these are they, whose profane babblings have advanced them further in ungodliness ; and thus the precious sons of Zion, comparable unto fine gold, are esteemed as earthen vessels, the work of the hands of the potter.

Having thus far briefly compared the degenerative steps of God's people in both dispensations, let us now hear His voice unto those who have thus robbed Him of His joy and rest. "Return, O backsliding children, for I am a husband unto you, and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and bring you to Zion. And I will give you shepherds after Mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3. 14-15).

Note Ezra 4. 1, for those who responded to the merciful call of God—Judah and Benjamin—these were the last

to go away : they are the first to return to build again the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel.

The condition of things was beyond remedy in Asia, hence comes the call of God :—“ Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness.” “ If a man therefore purge himself from these (earthen vessels), he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use, prepared unto every good work.” Thus purged from the very sons of Zion who were esteemed as earthen vessels, the work of the potter’s hands, bringing them one of a city, and two of a family, to seek the peace of Jerusalem, and to follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

May we realize the consolation of this yet more, and accept from His shepherds the food of knowledge and understanding. Thus may we know the blessing of Ps. 132. 15-16, because we have also found a place for the soles of His feet, where He can dwell with His saints.

Looking back from 1907—perhaps 1841 years or so—we view a company of saints obedient to the Lord’s call, having outpurged themselves, entirely left the vessels of wood, and of earth, to call on the Lord out of a pure heart, we might ask : What is this outpurged company called ? The answer, as it comes from the Holy Writings, should surely suffice, as seen in the early part of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, through John. This revelation comes at a time subsequent to the writing of Paul’s second letter to Timothy. So in Revelation 1. we have seven stars, and seven lampstands ; seven angels, and seven churches in the province of Asia. Churches in possession of the lampstands, and of what were they formed ? Surely of those very ones who had outpurged themselves at the Lord’s bidding, through His servant Timothy, and others.

The first three chapters of the Revelation are taken up with things that really are, while chapter 4. commences with things to come ; this is worthy of special attention.

Now, as we note the commendations and warnings sent unto those in the province of Asia, we perceive that the outpurged saints, who were thus gathered as churches, were again dropping away. Some have left their first love, as note the prominent Ephesus (Rev. 32. 4). The teaching of Balaam, is prevailing (verse 14), and so forth. These are clear manifestations of the apostasy again setting in, which ultimately resulted in the dark Roman ages, when God was robbed entirely of a collective testimony. But now, seeing it has pleased our God Whose loving-kindness is so great, to give us a little reviving, let us not despise the day of small things, nor reject the nail He has given us in His holy Place; but rejoice before our God, with His revealed will before us, that the precious "Sons of Zion," comparable unto fine gold, should not be found with those whom God esteems the work of the potter's hand. Thus should we take our outpurged position, and stand firm in our first love; rejecting with all authority the Balaamite teaching, or any other contrary to sound teaching, not forgetting to call to others of Zion's sons:—"Ho Zion, escape, thou that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon!" (Zech. 2. 7.) Thus may we actually enjoy the glory of verse 10, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee."

We now cast our eye in retrospect upon the few comparisons of our article. What ups and downs! What faithfulness on God's part! What unfaithfulness on man's! We change, He changes not, is truly manifested all along. Surely in the dust before our God is our true place, with all humility praying that we may be kept a people for His own possession; a spiritual building; wherein He can have His abode in the Spirit, which unto Him is truly the perfection of beauty.

G. PRASHER.

PAUL ON WORSHIP.

VII.

As a conclusion to our articles on these subjects,¹ we propose in the present paper to bring together a number of passages of the Holy Scriptures of the New Covenant, not confining ourselves to the writings of Paul, in order to substantiate certain important dicta.

I. WORSHIP. The Greek verb *προσκυνέω*, *proskuneo*, usually describes an attitude towards God as witnessed by its use in Matt. 4. 9, 10; Luke 4. 7, 8; John 4. 20-24; 12. 20. Occasionally it is used so as to imply reverence to man (see Matt. 18. 26, 29).

This worship which is befitting from man to God was paid to the Lord Jesus Christ—

1. In his infancy by the Magi (Matt. 2. 2, 8, 11).
2. During His public ministry by a leper (Matt. 8. 2); by a ruler (Matt. 9. 18); by those with Him in the boat saying that He was the Son of God (Matt. 14. 33); by the Canaanitish woman whose daughter had a demon (Matt. 15. 22); by the mother of James and John (Matt. 20. 20); by the man with a legion of demons (Mark 5. 6); by the man born blind (John 9. 38).
3. After His resurrection by the women (Matt. 28. 9); by the eleven (Matt. 28. 17; Luke 24. 52).

The thought of homage expressed by bodily attitude is strengthened in some of the above passages by the addition of other words, such as *πιπτω*, *pipto*, to fall down, in Matt. 2. 11; 4. 9; 18. 26.

In other passages these words are used alone to convey an idea almost identical with that involved in the word *προσκυνέω*, *proskuneo*. See, for instance, *πιπτω*, *pipto*, to fall down, in Matt. 17. 6; Mark 5. 22; Luke 8. 41 (compare the parallel, Matt. 9. 18); Luke 5. 12 (compare Matt. 8. 2); 17. 16; John 11. 32.

¹ See this volume, pages 49, 73, 129, 157, 225.

So also *προσπιπτω*, *prospipto*, to fall down before a person, in Mark 3. 11; 5. 33; Luke 8. 47; Mark 7. 25 (compare the parallel, Matt. 15. 22); Luke 5. 8.

The above passages are all taken from the Gospels. Matthew uses the word *προσκυνέω*, *proskuneo*, more often than Mark and Luke; perhaps this might be taken as giving the thought of homage to a King, but a study of the above instances in their entirety shows that the sense of the word goes far beyond that of expressing fealty to a monarch.

The occurrences of *προσκυνεω*, *proskuneo*, in Acts are instructive (7. 43; 8. 27; 10. 25; 24. 11).

Note in Revelation 1. 17 the occurrence of *πιπτω*, *pipto*, exactly parallel to its use in Matt. 17. 6; see that the Lord Jesus Christ is rightly an object of worship, but as pointed out previously, Divine service, *λατρεία*, *latreia*, is not to be offered to Him.

II. We shall in connexion with this trace the recorded utterances to God in the Acts and Epistles from after the Ascension.

Acts 1. 24: The prayer appears to have been to God the Father.

4. 24: Certainly it is so here, for the Son and the Spirit are both spoken of in the third person. It is the Father Who is addressed as Master (Despot), and as Lord.

27. 35 and 28. 15: Paul gives thanks to God.

The above cases are in agreement with the admonitions in the Epistles, namely in—

Eph. 5. 19, 20; Col. 3. 16, 17; Phil. 4. 6; Heb. 12. 28; 13. 15; James 1. 5; 4. 8, and with the Lord's own words in John 14. 13; 15. 7; 16. 23, 24, 26 (verse 14 of John 14. being a difficult one).

The examples in the Epistles follow the same rule:—

1 Thess. 1. 2, 3; 2. 13; 3. 9. . . . We give thanks to God . . . remembering before our God and Father. . . . We also thank God. What thanksgiving can we render again unto God.

2 Thes. 1. 3, 11; 2. 13; 3. 1. . . . give thanks to God.

We also pray. . . . bound to give thanks to God.
. . . . pray for us. . . .

1 Cor. 1. 4, 14; 10. 30; 11. 13, 24; 14. 15, 16, 25, 28;
15. 57: I thank my God. . . . I thank God . . . I give
thanks. . . . pray unto God . . . He had given thanks . . .
. . . . pray with the spirit, bless with the spirit . . . fall on
His face and worship God . . . let him speak . . . to
God. . . . thanks be to God . . .

2 Cor. 1. 3; 2. 14; 8. 16; 9. 15: Blessed be the God
and Father . . . Thanks be unto God . . . Thanks be to
God . . . Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift . . .

Rom. 1. 8; 7. 25; 8. 15; 14. 6: I thank my God,
through Jesus Christ . . . I thank God through Jesus
Christ our Lord. . . . we cry Abba, Father. . . . he giveth
God thanks . . . giveth God thanks.

Eph. 1. 15-17; 3. 14: I cease not to give thanks for
you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the
God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of glory. . . .
I bow my knees unto the Father . . . that He would
grant.

Col. 1. 3, 12: We give thanks to God the Father . . .
giving thanks unto the Father.

Philemon 4: I thank my God.

Phil. 1. 3-11: I thank my God . . . this I pray.

2 Tim. 1. 3: I thank God. (*See next page*).

James 3. 9: We bless the Lord and Father.

1 John 1. 9: If we confess our sins He (the Father) is
faithful . . .

Thus we have an immense preponderance both in pre-
cept and example of prayer and thanksgiving being offered
to God the Father.

The exceptions are as follows:—

Saul when the Lord appeared to him on the Damascus
road (Acts 9. 22., 26.) This is evidently an exceptional
occasion in no ordinary degree.

Perhaps Acts 9. 10 ; 10. 14 are to be looked at in the same light.

Acts 7. 59 : "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" seems to us to show that though the rule is as above, we are in no way prohibited from addressing the Lord Jesus Christ occasionally. But note that in all the above cases we have an appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. This may be the case in 2 Cor. 12. 8, where we conclude that the prayer is to the Lord Jesus because of the reply, "My grace . . . my power," and the comment "the strength of Christ." The English words "power" and "strength" here both represent the same Greek word, *δυναμις*, *dunamis*. If the early part of 2 Cor. 12. does not indicate that verses 8, 9 describe a vision, then this is a very remarkable exception to the rule that prayer is addressed to the Father. Then Rev 22. 17, 20 must be noted.

In 1 Tim. 1. 12, with no vision or appearance or anything of the sort we seem to have a direct address of thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ. This example in the present dispensation is, we think, unique. Note, however, that Paul does not here use the customary expression for giving thanks. The expression *χαρίν ἔχω*, *charin echo*, used in 1 Tim. 1. 12 and 2 Tim. 1. 3 might on the analogy of Heb. 12. 28 margin be rendered "I have thankfulness," or better "I am thankful."

Other passages of Scripture show that whilst praise and thanks are in general to be offered to the Father (as divine service, see Heb. 12. 28), yet this in no degree precludes the ascription of glory to the Son. We quote particularly Rev. 1. 5, 6, specially reminding our readers that Chapters 1. 2. 3. of this book refer to things that are (Rev. 1. 19).

The foregoing additional references are given to help students of Scripture to find out for themselves the due force and weight of some of the things we have been endeavouring to elucidate in the preceding articles on worship.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 25 (Acts 16. 25-40).

PSALM 119. 62 AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

From BARROW. Although smitten with many stripes, yet the pain of such hinders not Paul and Silas from raising their voices in prayer and praise unto God within the prison at Philippi. The apostle had learnt in whatsoever state he was, therein to be content (Phil. 4. 11). Notwithstanding their suffering and the shameful treatment unto which both had been subjected (*1 Thess. 2. 2*), yet they still sought to fulfil the purpose for which they had been called of God (*Acts 13. 2*) even with feet fastened in the stocks (*Acts 16. 24*).

Though mention is but made of the prisoners listening to them, yet we must infer that the prayers that had ascended unto their God had been heard and evoked from Him this manifestation of His mighty power. God could have sent His angel to deliver His servants as He did when Peter was seized by Herod and cast into prison, and although guarded and bound by soldiers with chains yet the prayers of the church were answered by God. Many are the instances recorded in the Acts where God in His infinite power and wisdom has replied to prayer, and in this chapter He makes use of an earthquake to liberate Paul and Silas and to constrain the jailor to realize his need of salvation.

Even though the way of escape was open unto them, yet the salvation of the jailor was to the apostles of most consequence, therefore they made known to him that none had taken the liberty that was within reach.

His eager enquiry being answered, he and all his do greatly rejoice, having believed in God; and he manifests his gratitude to the apostles, and his obedience unto the word of the Lord.

From BLACKBRIDGE. With feet fastened firm in the

stocks of the inner prison, these noble servants bear testimony to the Living God. Their praying and singing were listened to by the other prisoners, which was a voice to them for eternity. As we read this narrative we are reminded of James 5. 13, not forgetting Paul's own words of 1 Cor. 14. 15, as also the words of the poet—

Faith can sing through days of sorrow.

We would note that their praying and singing were unto God, which was in verity heard by God. It was no mere form of words, or finely constructed sentences, to show how able or eloquent they were, nor yet to sing to have the applaud of others in having a beautiful voice, but rather that God may have praise, and be petitioned respecting this their need. Compare 1 Peter 3. 12–18. The adversary through his votaries was trying hard to beat down the noble witness-bearing of God's servants, but behind the scene God was working unto the fulfilment of His purposes. For—

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.

The shaking of the foundations open the prison doors, which the jailor sees as he is aroused out of sleep, and there and then would have killed himself, had not the watchful servant of God cried out, "Do thyself no harm." Thus returning good for evil. Then in a trembling manner he rushes in, brings them out, and falls down, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And though some have thought that the jailor desired safety from temporal danger, yet the Lord's servant made answer to him for his eternal safety, and spoke the word of the Lord to him, and all that were in his house. They all heard the word of the Lord, believed in God, were baptized, and rejoiced greatly. Thus we have the jailor who was a slave to sin, and servant to Satan completely changed—a new man, no longer to fear shaky things but to know of that that cannot be shaken (see

Heb. 12. 26 to end). As we consider this epoch in Paul's history, we may well ask ourselves the question, "How much are we suffering for the truth of God?" Have we entered the conflict, with determination to fight the good fight of the Faith, and to lay hold on the Life Eternal (1 Tim. 6. 12). For it is written, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9. 62). Paul makes reference to the manner of treatment he received at Philippi (1 Thess. 2. 2), and how his suffering was a means of furthering the work of God (see Phil. 1. 12, with which consider verse 29 and read Col. 1. 24).

Paul's labours in Philippi were very fruitful, as note his letter to the assembly he had planted, in which he sees the Saints, with Overseers and Deacons, working together for the glory of God. Which principle should obtain to-day amongst His called out people, each seeking to fulfil the purpose for which he has been called.

Section 26 (Acts 17. 1-15).

THESSALONICA AND BEREÄ.

From DERBY. In noticing this 17th of the Acts it is well to remember the closing scenes of the previous chapter. We have the magistrates coming to Paul and Silas in the prison at Philippi, and entreating them to go away from the city. Then from Philippi they pass through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica. The distance from Philippi to Thessalonica was 100 miles. Amphipolis and Apollonia appear to be smaller places. The expression in the first verse, that in Thessalonica "there was a synagogue of the Jews," seems to imply that there was no synagogue at Amphipolis or Apollonia. The distance from Philippi to Amphipolis was thirty-three miles, and so would be a day's journey—probably the lodging place for the night. Amphipolis to Apollonia was thirty miles—another day's journey, and then from Apollonia to Thessalonica thirty-seven miles. The road was part of the great military road that

led direct through the Roman colony at Philippi up to Rome itself, and there are still traces of it to be seen.

The action of the Apostle may be considered, first in the light of that word of the Lord given to those he sent forth (see Matthew 10. 23), and again in the remembrance that the vision seen at Troas was "a man of Macedonia," and not a man simply of Philippi (see Acts 16. 9).

Then again in the passing by the smaller places to Thessalonica, which was one of the larger cities, Amphipolis could be reached in a later day by those of Philippi (see Phil. 1. 5), and Apollonia could be easily reached from Thessalonica (see Thess. 1. 8). This shows the wisdom of the Apostle in not staying at the smaller places, but in passing on to the chief cities.

Thessalonica was named after the daughter of Alexander. It bears to-day the name of Salonika, and has continued to be a city known for its commerce and its prosperity. In the synagogue for three successive Sabbath-days Paul reasoned with them from the Scriptures.

It was usual to invite chief men to read the Scriptures, and thus the opportunity was given to the Apostle to read the word, and then to open and allege "that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, Whom," said he, "I proclaim unto you, is the Christ." We suggest that the words "opening and alleging" govern the two expressions that follow. He opened up the Scriptures to them, and showed them that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead, and he alleged that the Lord Jesus Whom he proclaimed is the Christ. The word "to allege" is the same used in the Gospel according to Luke 24. 32. This word is only once translated "allege." It is also rendered "commit" and "commend"; it seems to imply something that has been entrusted (see 2 Tim. 1. 12).

Then some few of them were persuaded, and consorted with them, a word which means to cast in one's lot; and,

as a further result of the testimony borne, "of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few" (v. 4).

Whilst the Apostle used the Sabbath-days for his testimony to the Jews, we can well understand that the other days would be used in seeking to reach the Greeks, and it is among them that the greater number believed, and it was on account of this that the Jews were moved with jealousy. Further, that the greater number were among the Greeks and not among the Jews is plainly seen from reading the Epistles to the Thessalonians (see 1 Thess. 2. 14-16). Though some were persuaded many opposed, "and they took unto them some of the vile fellows of the rabble and assaulted the house of Jason."

Probably the house of Jason refers to the place where the Apostle lodged, and if it be that this Jason is the one referred to in Romans 16. 21, then Jason would be a kinsman of the Apostle—he was probably a Jew.

And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." Whether Paul and Silas had been there but had escaped, or whether, by the providence of God, they were not in the house at the time of the assault, is not stated, but in either case we have God's protection of them.

Thessalonica was a free city and had rulers of its own. It was like Tarsus and Athens. They are brought before these rulers with the charge that they act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying there is another King, one Jesus. It was not on religious grounds the charges were laid, but political. It is against Cæsar, and the preaching of the Apostle had set forth the coming kingdom, as is seen by several references in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, showing that they were truly looking forward to that kingdom. (see 1 Thess. 2. 12). When they had taken security from Jason they let them go. The security would probably be

a sum of money taken from Jason as a guarantee of future peace. It is in consequence of having given that security Paul and Silas departed immediately, and because of the violent opposition of the people they go away secretly by night to Berea, sixty miles further. This account in the Acts throws its light upon the Epistles to the Thessalonians, as again the Epistles to the Thessalonians throw their light back upon these verses.

If the Apostle had looked around him he would not have gone to Thessalonica at all. He would have had enough of the experience at Philippi. Looking at his surroundings he might have given up, but he said, "We waxed bold in our God" (see 1 Thess. 2. 1 and 2).

It must have been a very trying time for the Apostle when he was in Thessalonica (see 1 Thess. 2. 9), as it seems that [not only was he opposed in preaching] the word of God, but that his temporal needs necessitated working night and day (see Phil. 4. 16), as well as his setting an example to others (see 2 Thess. 3. 6-12).

There is a matter we should like help upon, and that is the absence of any reference to Timothy either at Philippi or at Thessalonica. He is seen in chapter 16. at Lystra and Derbe. Then again in chapter 17. at Berea, but there is silence as to him between those two verses. It is worth considering whether he was at Philippi and not taking a prominent place, and whether again he was at Thessalonica.

It may have been that he was used as the one who communicated from Philippi with the Apostle at Thessalonica (see Phil. 4. 16).

"In Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my need." As the Epistle to the Thessalonians is from Paul and Silas and Timothy, we judge that Timothy is one who is known to the saints at Thessalonica, and as Paul and Silas left for Berea by night it may have been that Timothy stayed on for a short time with the Thessalonians for their help, and then came on to Berea.

THE BREATHINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 23.

From BLACKRIDGE. This is, perhaps, the best known of all the psalms. The sublimeness of its language and construction has attracted men of all ages. It is lisped by the child and repeated by the sage. In it the spirit of independence is lost sight of and the dignity of man sinks into oblivion. The one who was chosen to be the Shepherd of Israel himself speaks those words of unfeigned and beautiful humility, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." "He maketh," "He leadeth," "He restoreth" and "He guideth." We meditate on such words to the strengthening of our souls and the increasing of our faith. But while doing so let us think of the psalmist of old whose consideration of God's dealings with him causes his feeling to find vent in such a psalm as this. No repetition of the words of another, but the very essence of his thoughts of Jehovah's shepherding care. Sometimes he was led and sometimes he had to be guided. Difficult parts in the pathway required careful guidance and required the Lord's presence much closer than others. Yet, He guided him in the paths of righteousness for His own name's sake, inasmuch as the psalmist gains confidence and says, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me." The rod of defence and chastisement and the staff of support are his comforts. A table prepared, his head anointed and his cup running over are his also, and he cannot go back from such a Shepherd Who has caused goodness and mercy to follow him. So his resolve is, "I will dwell in the House of Jehovah for the length of days."

What about us upon whom the end of the ages is come? David has gone, but Jehovah remains. Let us each say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," and let us dwell where He is.

From BARROW. It is possible to know the Lord Jesus as

He is portrayed in Psalm 9. 22 without possessing the knowledge of Him as the psalmist manifests in this psalm. If we would experience the peace and joy that He alone can bestow it is essential that we know Him as our Shepherd, then with confidence we will be enabled in faith to exclaim—

Jehovah is my Shepherd, I shall not want.

There is no want known by them that wholly trust in Him, for there is a sufficiency in Him to satisfy and also a security that nothing around us can impart.

Constrained by Himself we rest in the pastures of His Word which ever give sustenance and comfort to the one who realizes His tender care and gentle leading (Isa. 40. 11). Without the daily acknowledgment of Him in all our ways, we fail to experience His guidance in the paths of righteousness. We should be able to say continually, "Thou art with me," for if He be not with us and we know Him not as the One that giveth power to the faint, and as the Increaser of strength (Isa. 40. 29)—surely our steps will falter until finally the path of righteousness will seem too rough to tread and so we shall wander from His ways.

It is His rod and staff that comfort, not those that we ourselves have provided, and although the path before us seems dismal to our eyes, yet His Presence is proof of His affection and His Power will be for our protection.

Our knowledge of His Providence should incite us to trust Him the more, and with anointed head and overflowing cup our hearts should know no restraint, but also overflow with gratitude and praise, not only that He laid down His life for us, but that He ever liveth for us, and by His intercessory work causes all things to abound unto us.

As we too review the past lovingkindness of our God, like the psalmist, our one desire will be that—

Only goodness and kindness pursue me,
All the days of my life,
And my dwelling is in the House of Jehovah,
For a length of days!

Question and Answer.

Please explain Heb. 1. 3. "Effulgence of His glory and the very image of His substance." Do not these words speak of the Son as the One Who was manifested to men and told out God, the One Who made purification for sins, God manifest in flesh?

As we read Heb. 1. 3 in the original and English translation our hearts adore the Eternal Father for His condescending grace in using such imagery to convey to our feeble and finite minds some thoughts of the pre-existent and Divine nature of our One and Only Lord, Jesus Christ.

The words to which the interrogation refers do not in the present writer's judgment, refer to any manifestation of the Incarnate Son (although some acute and learned commentators believe they do). To refer such words so definitely predicated of the Son, to what pertained to His humiliation, would be to violate the plain words of the text, as well as their obvious and only sense: for the expression "image of His substance" is surely a personal description of the Divine Son, from which His "likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8.) was far removed, and had He appeared amongst men as the radiance or "effulgence of His glory," no mortal eye could have gazed upon Him. In the words "When He had made purification of sins" the writer of the Epistle wishes to emphasize the fact that "purification of sins" was made by One of such dignity and exalted rank, and thus He gave to His work the ineffable value of His own blessed and infinite person. It must be remarked, moreover, that the words "Who being" must denote what He is in Himself, and they do not imply a transient act or series of acts, and are adequately represented by their equivalent "Who exists as," in contrast to what He became, or was made. They plainly point to His eternal mode of being, before His incarnation, and to no parts or manifestations during His earthly life.

Adding a brief note as to the import of the terms themselves, it may be remarked that the words "effulgence" and "glory," "image" and "substance," and the words of the original which they represent, are undoubtedly to be interpreted as correlatives, of which they form two pairs. The first term in the original is *απανγασμα*, and is compounded of *ἀπο*, from, and *ἀνγαζω*, to shine, hence its meaning effulgence, radiation, splendour which proceeds forth from; and as in the very nature and usage of language the word "son" cannot exist alone, but implies the existence of another term, "father," its correlative, so *ἀπανγασμα*, proceeding radiance, implies and necessitates another term, its correlative, *ἀύγη*, splendour, inherent light, or inherent splendour; and this truth is borne to us and here set forth, that as the sunbeam is to all common knowledge of the same nature as the light of the sun, or its proceeding splendour identical in nature with the inherent splendour, so the Eternal Son is of the same nature and essence as the Eternal Father, of Whom He was begotten, both Father and Son being eternally and infinitely co-existent. [The second pair of correlatives are *χαρακτηρ*, image, and *ὑποστασις*, substance, the former carrying with it the idea of precise and accurate likeness, resulting from impression, as seen in a coin struck from a die, or in wax from a seal. The form in the seal may be viewed as represented by the term *ὑποστασις*; that which is in the wax is *χαρακτηρ*. Hence the words "effulgence of His glory" convey the thought of perfect agreement and correspondence in nature and essence, indicating co-existence, albeit distinction; the words "image of His substance" convey the thought of exact likeness, and together the words declare the Son to be the absolute and perfect image of the Father; and of the same substance or nature; moreover, if the Father is an Eternal Father the Son is absolutely and unequivocally an Eternal Son, the mystery of Whose ineffable and glorious being is conveyed to us in the terms in which the writer

of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares the Son to be the effulgence of His Father's glory and the image of His Father's substance.

J. H.

For Youngest Believers.

ABNER, JOAB, BENAIAH

(Continued from page 248).

Now let us look at Joab ; 2 Sam. 8. 16 tells us that David's host was commanded by Joab, and from 1 Chron. 11. 6 it seems that he gained that position by bravery. Joab was indeed a fighter, but a study of his character shows very clearly that he would stoop to meanness to attain his object ; he maintained his position by unworthy actions. Was it really in David's cause that he slew Abner, or was he afraid of Abner superseding him ? In the light of later events the latter, I think, for we see how jealous Joab is for himself in 2 Sam. 20. 9, 10, where he pretends love to Amasa, whom David had sworn to make captain of the host in Joab's room, but then kills him. Jealous, crafty Joab. Neither does Joab seem to have much real regard for the will of David, or the word of David, or he never would have acted as he did in the case of Absalom (2 Sam. 12. 5). David gave command to deal gently with the young man Absalom for his (David's) sake. We see what Joab thought of that command in verses 11 to 15 ; we see how he ignored the expressed desire of his king ; Joab could easily have taken Absalom alive, but he would not spare. Then as David draws near to the end of his earthly life, how does Joab act ; he pays no heed to the will of David concerning the making of his son Solomon king, but he follows Adonijah, who seeks to exalt himself (1 Kings 1. 5 to 7). Joab's selfishness coupled with his subtlety and tenacity, maintains for him his high position, but was it wise on his part ? The time came when righteous judgment was executed ; be sure your sin will find you out. " Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord, I will repay." What an object lesson we have in Joab !

(To be continued.)

DANGER SIGNALS.

IN the kindness and consideration of an ever-faithful God for His people and for His things, He has made provision in the Holy Scriptures for "teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely to every good work" (2 Tim. 3. 16); but He has done more, for therein we hear, again and again, words of solemn and faithful warning from the lips of those who were as the watchmen of Israel of old, in the provision and appointment of Jehovah, to warn from Jehovah in view of dangers and enemies to which God's people were exposed. The responsibility and work of such were great and important indeed, and it needed constant and unceasing vigilance to be ever on the outlook, alert to detect the slightest indications of the approach of an enemy, and to raise the alarm.

The words that follow show the requirements and responsibilities of the watchmen of Israel: "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel," said God to Ezekiel of old, "therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me." Again, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me." "Go set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth"; and again, "Watchman! what of the night? watchman, what of the night?"

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning"; and not only in the past dispensation, but also in the present experience of God's people and things, have such principles an application, and is such provision necessary. Such need is provided for; and again and again is the watchman's warning voice heard, as the expression of earnest care for the churches, implanted by God, and exercised in the fear of the Lord, in the Fellowship which is of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Especially in view of the approach of the dangers and

difficulties of the closing days of a dark apostate night, is the faithful watchman's solemn cry heard in the sacred writings of the God-breathed Scriptures of truth, which remain as beacons of warning, and are as danger signals. If such were needed in an earlier stage of the history and experience of God's present testimony, surely they are more needed now than ever; yet how few seem to hear them, or to heed them, and thus instead of being forewarned and thus forearmed, many fall into the snare and danger, and become a prey to the enemy, to the destruction of their lives, and of their usefulness for God.

Feeling some responsibility, and having some exercise in the matter, we would desire to refer to God's danger signals, especially for His own people, if haply they may give ear and heed; and thus to discharge an obligation in connexion with a stewardship God hath given us to fulfil.

Those concerning whom 1 Peter 5. 12 has had a past, and has a present application, have not only become recipients of the true grace of God, but also show manifestation of its operation upon them, in the time of their sojourning here, so that they answer to God's purposes for them as a redeemed people; as a spiritual House; as a people for God's possession; and as the little Flock of God. It is not at all to be wondered at, therefore, that such become the special objects of the Adversary's malice and hate, as it has been, and is, and shall be. Hence the importance of the warning words of 1 Peter 5. 8, "Be sober, be watchful; your adversary the Devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." An enemy at hand: a strong mighty foe; ever active, ever on the alert; unceasing and unflagging in his opposition, and in his purpose to destroy and to devour the Flock of God. Wherefore watch! watch all; but on some is the special responsibility to do so. Faithful shepherds, who love the Flock, for it is the Flock of God; albeit it is a little Flock; and who are willing to spend and be spent, to use and risk, yea lay down their lives for its

protection and defence. With the hireling it is otherwise, who regards only the safety of his life, no matter what becomes of the Flock, and flees when he seeth the wolf coming. Words whereby we may examine ourselves that we be not, and do not as the hireling.

But there is another danger to the Flock of God, concerning which we wish to raise the warning cry. "I know this . . . grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the Flock." Wolves in character truly, but not wolves in appearance. Listen again, "False prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them." This is how they enter in. It is by deception—under false pretences, professing one thing by their words and appearance, and because, it may be, of the slothfulness, unwatchfulness or unfaithfulness of the watchmen their hypocrisy escapes detection. What is the Flock to these? Their purpose and object are but to scatter and destroy. Let us give ear and heed to the warning cry, and let us beware of the dangers and foes from without.

But there is another and a greater danger still, and that is from within. The warning words of the faithful watchman of old proclaim the danger to which God's people and God's testimony have always been exposed, both in the past and in the present dispensations. "There arose false prophets also among the people," was true of old; and in Deuteronomy 13. warning words were found in reference to the same, proclaiming and forewarning of the danger, and instructing how to act toward the same, as well as revealing God's purpose in permitting such to arise to be for the proving of His people. These are some of the things written aforetime, and they are for our learning. Moreover, 2 Peter 2. 1 tells us that "there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers." Again, "From among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away

the disciples after them" (Acts 20. 30). Again, "Take heed (beware) lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil (or a prey) of you, through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col 2. 8); and yet again, "Beware, lest being carried away with the error of the wicked (lawless or unrestrained) ye fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Peter 3. 17). We would ask, Are such trumpet blasts of the faithful watchmen without significance? Is there no danger here to which the Flock of God is exposed, and concerning which such need to be on their guard? If not, wherefore such warning words? There is danger truly, real and imminent, and we would sound aloud the warning word:

"Hark! 'tis the watchman's cry:
Wake, brethren, wake."

There is a great Adversary at hand. There are adversaries also, as of old. Let us still learn from the past for the present. In association with the will and work of God being done by the remnant of God's people, delivered and brought up out of Babylon, to build the House of the Lord in Jerusalem, we read, "Joshua the high priest stood before the angel of the Lord, and Satan was standing at his right hand to be an Adversary" (Zech. 3. 1). Here is the real Adversary, working behind the scenes, and he works through human instrumentality. Who are the objects of the Adversary's attack? Men who are great and gifted, honoured and used of God it may have been in the past, these are they whom the Adversary seeks to get hold of and use. Do we realize the awful character of the foe, and the imminent danger to which we are exposed? "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall,"

Then again, to Peter of old on one occasion the Son of God said, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." How solemn! Let us hear and heed this warning voice, and attend to this danger signal. Has

he got any of us ? Is he using any of us ? How successfully the Adversary works at times, because his real character is not understood, and we are ignorant of his devices. In these days, discernment in this respect is much needed. It is not as the roaring lion, he appears so much now, as the angel of light, and "his ministers . . . as the ministers of righteousness" (2 Cor. 11. 15). So again we say, let us beware. Discerning of spirits, one of the gifts spoken of in 1 Cor. 12., is also important and necessary in these days. "Try the spirits, whether they are of God," we are commanded, and we need to do this in the light of the characteristics of the last days. Discernment of the times also is necessary, and discernment of God's purpose as to these times. Remnant times, they are. Such have been in the past, and admittedly such are now.

In such times in a past dispensation was to be found God's testimony, the Assembly of God (see Neh. 15.), who acted out the responsibilities as well as claimed the privileges of such. These built God's House, and built again the wall of Jerusalem. These feared Jehovah, and wrought His will, and Jehovah acknowledged them as His. They were not all the tribes of Israel ; neither were they the whole of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but they were those whose spirit God had stirred, to go from Babylon to Jerusalem, and they knew Jehovah's presence with them, and His Spirit working through them.

So with God's testimony to-day as expressed in the assemblies of God, and in the "House of God, which is the Assembly of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth" (1 Tim. 3. 15). These act out the responsibilities, as well as claim the privileges of such. They are sanctified in Christ Jesus, yet they are not all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. Moreover, more is true of them than this, they are also sanctified in the truth. Being thus sanctified they can give effect and fulfilment to the Lord's wish as found in John 17. 23, that they may be perfected into one.

One in doctrine ; one in practice ; one in purpose ; one in aim ; not only together, but workers together. Not some speaking one thing, and others opposite things ; or some doing one thing, and others opposite things ; but seeking to be imitators together of the apostles and of the Lord ; as well as imitators of the churches of God. Then and thus shall God's will and work be done, and His pleasure and His blessing be secured ; yet we may also expect the hatred and the opposition of the great and wily adversary, the Devil, through such as he may be able to affect and use.

To the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin of old, the reply was given, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God, but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord, the God of Israel" (Ezra 4. 3). May such courage and such faithfulness characterize God's remnant and God's servants to-day. No sinking of differences to accommodate professed sympathizers and helpers ; no lowering of God's standard of separation to suit modern popular ideas and methods ; no compromise of truth and error ; and last but not least, no surrender from fear either of foes or false friends, of difficulties, or consequences ; but having bought the truth, at much cost too, let us not sell it. No doubt there are many adversaries, and many difficulties, and much suffering and reproach involved ; yet whatever else we may claim to be or not claim to be, we can and do claim, as of old, the God of heaven He will prosper us ; and the words, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28. 20), from Him Who speaks, as having all authority in heaven and on earth, and Who is ever faithful and ever true ; so that with good courage we say

"The Lord is my Helper ; I will not fear :
What shall man do unto me ?" (Heb. 13. 6.)

DAVID SMITH.

PRACTICAL LOVE.

LOVE is undoubtedly one of the greatest attributes of the Almighty God, so much so, that John the disciple, whom Jesus loved, is so taken up with that side of the character of God that in his first Epistle (chapter 4. verse 16) he seems to reach a climax in his beautiful exposition of the love of God by saying "God is love." Yet we learn from the Scriptures that God is not only love.

Let us refer to those beautiful words used by God in testimony concerning His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, which we find in Hebrews 1. 9 :

"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity ;
Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee
With the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."

Here we see that God is delighted to exalt His Son, for the victory He had gained over sin and death by the perfect display of these two prominent characteristics, namely, love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity, which proved beyond doubt His relationship to God His Father. If this testimony is true concerning the Son, and who is he that dares to dispute the testimony of the Almighty God ? then we are safe in saying it is also true of the Father, for we read concerning the Son that He is the very image of His substance (Heb. 1. 3). Thus we see the perfect combination of love and hatred in the character of God ; for He loves righteousness and hates iniquity.

God loves His creature man, but, be it ever remembered, God hates man's sin. God loves man, and it is His great desire to save him from the consequences of his sin. The question now arises, How can God do this ? Will the fact that He loves man save him from the penalty of his sins ? Is it possible to save a man from drowning by assuring him from the bank of the river that you love him ? God's love sought out a means whereby man, the object of His love, who was convicted of sin, could be saved from an impending doom. Let us use an illustration. A Judge

has a friend before him, who has been convicted of murder, and it is his duty to pass judgment upon him. In the space of a few moments he racks his brain for some means of saving his friend from the punishment which the law must inflict, but without avail, and to remain a righteous judge he must pass the sentence of death upon the man he loves. The man must die! No one can die in his room and stead, for there is no such thing as substitution known to the law of this land; the law merely punishes sins and by no means forgives them. Therefore, the judge is unable to accept a substitute for his friend, though one should be willing to die in his stead, for the law calls for the punishment of the guilty person. It is not so with God, for He has the power to forgive the sinner as well as to punish sins; therefore, having satisfied the claims of justice by the punishment of the sin of the world in His Son, He is now able to forgive because of the Atonement accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ.

God, early in the history of man, indicated the means whereby He intended to save him from the penalty of his sins, which was by substitution, as seen in many of the sacrifices of bulls and goats. These all pointed onward to the perfect substitute and sacrifice, Jesus Christ, the well-beloved Son of God. Who can say that God did not make a tremendous sacrifice when He gave up the One He loved so dearly, that He might suffer death for every man? and who dares to say that Christ did not make a great sacrifice for man whom He loved, when He became his substitute and gave up His own life's blood for him upon the Cross? Now God's heart is filled with joy unspeakable, for there is now no need for man, whom He loves, to suffer the penalty due to him, for He has found a ransom. He has now found and provided such means that man can not only be saved from the consequences of his sin, but he can be offered an inheritance reserved in Heaven, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

How beautifully the words of **Romans 5. 8** express the love of God: "But God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This is practical love. This is righteous love.

"The love of God is righteous love,
Inscribed upon Golgotha's tree."

God (as every true lover like Him) wants all who have received His wonderful gift to return His love, and what shall we return ?

Many Christians appear to have a wrong conception of the love they should offer to God in return for the love He has bestowed upon them. Their love is of the sentimental type, and their supposed godliness is found, upon close scrutiny, to be more or less pretentious. It is very easy for us to say "I love God" and to be very sentimental in saying so ; but do our lives bear out the testimony of our lips ? We should always bear in mind that love itself is a thing of the heart, and like the sap of a tree, is not seen, but is known to exist by the fruit it produces.

We will now consider a few passages of Scripture which will convince us that God wants from us a practical love. "This is love, that we should walk after His commandments" (2 John 6) ; "And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another" (1 John 3. 23). "If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His love is perfected in us" (1 John 4. 12) ; "but whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him" (1 John 3. 17) ? "Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and do His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments ; and His commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5. 2 and 3). "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love ; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His

love" (John 15. 10). "If a man love Me he will keep My word : and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him" (John 14. 23). A close examination of these Scriptures will convince us that it is a practical love that God wants from us, not only to Himself, but to one another. In these Scriptures we are exhorted to demonstrate our love, not merely by our word of mouth, but by our works.

A great many children of God do not abide in the love of God ; of whom we can rightly say, they do not love God because they do not keep His commandments. But, on the other hand, when the Devil presents doubts to us as to our salvation ; when our hearts condemn us ; when that quiet whisper within would suggest, that perhaps after all we are hypocrites ; perhaps we are not saved at all, it is well if we find, when we reflect upon our manner of life, that we are engaged in a practical love, as we read those words in 1 John 3. 18 : "Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue ; but in deed and truth. Hereby shall we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him, where-insoever our heart condemn us ; because God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."

The love of God being a practical thing can go on unto perfection. 1 John 2. 5 : "Whoso keepeth His word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected" ; 1 John 4. 12 : "If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His love is perfected in us." It is only as we follow after love by keeping His commandments that the love of God can be perfected in us. What does it profit us if the love of God is not perfected in us ? 1 John 4. 17 : "Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment ; because as He is, even so are we in the world." "There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment ; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love." This scripture, like a finger post, points us onward to the day of judgment when the children

of God will be solemnly ushered before the Judgment Seat of Christ to answer for the deeds done in the body (2 Cor. 5. 10). If from our hearts we love God and our brethren, and are putting our love into practice by keeping the commandments of God, then His love will be made perfect in us and we shall have boldness in that day of judgment, for perfect love casteth out fear. If, on the other hand, like the drone, our spiritual life is one of idleness; having no desire or love in our hearts for the things of God; being content with mere existence; feeding upon that which others gather; with our gift or gifts in the napkin, then it can by no means be said that the love of God is made perfect in us, and on that day of judgment, when we stand to give an account of the deeds done in the body, that boldness which is the portion of the faithful soldier, when he stands before his leader to receive his reward, will not be ours.

In summing up we would say that the Apostle Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (chapter 13.) shows out very clearly the secret of the Christian's life and walk when he says, verse 2: "If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." Here we see that unless our works are the outcome of the love of God in our hearts, we labour in vain; and our service will not be well pleasing to our Master, for He knoweth the heart. Let us search our hearts and see if we are working out of love to God, with a single eye to His glory, or if our work is done in a spirit of vain glory with the object of gaining the praise of our fellow-men. The Apostle Paul tells us that there are three things that remain: Faith, Hope, Love; and the greatest of these is Love.

"Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up" (1 Cor. 8. 1).

"Follow after love" (1 Cor. 14. 1).

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For Youngest Believers.

ABNER, JOAB, BENAIAH.

(Continued from page 272.)

Now let us consider Benaiah ; we read of him in 1 Chron. 11. 22. Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel ; he did mighty deeds, and no wonder, for as we consider the meaning of the names, Benaiah, Jehoiada and Kabzeel, they are very suggestive and bring to mind the words of the Apostle Paul concerning the unfeigned faith which was in Timothy, which, said the Apostle, "dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, then in thy mother, Eunice, and I am persuaded in thee also" (2 Tim. 1. 5). Benaiah, the one whose character we are considering, means "Built by Jehovah." I think of this in connexion with the character ; the character of Benaiah was built by Jehovah, according to the "knowledge of Jehovah," for this is the meaning of the name of his father, Jehoiada, and he was the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, which means God assembles, or the assembly of God ; how suggestive this is, a character "built by God" according to the "knowledge of God," in the "place of God." No wonder he did mighty deeds. And David set him over his bodyguard, and as we think of him always near his lord, ready, waiting to hear and obey, what a contrast to Joab ! Benaiah is with David in the cave, in his rejection, he is with him in his kingdom, he is with him during the rebellion of his son Absalom, he is with him in his death chamber ; notice his attitude when David (having heard of what Adonijah had done) calls for Zadok, Nathan and Benaiah (1 Kings 1. 32 to 36). David makes known his will concerning his son Solomon. "Amen," says Benaiah, "the Lord, the God of my lord the king say so too." He might have been with Joab seeking to get into favour with the supposed coming king,

but no, he desires only to know and do the will of his lord and master.

His is indeed a noble character; right through the life of David after his anointing, he is with him, he does not fear the enmity of Saul, he does not dread the cave; neither do the beauty and geniality of Absalom attract him; he is not moved by upstart Adonijah, neither does he exhibit the fickleness of Abner, nor the selfishness of Joab; he is an example of steadfastness; truly he continued steadfastly. When Solomon occupies the throne Benaiah is set over the host (1 Kings 2. 35), he is the one through whom King Solomon executes righteous judgment against Adonijah, Joab and Shimei. See him as he goes to carry out the command of his king concerning Joab. Joab has fled to the tent of the Lord, and lays hold on the horns of the altar; there Benaiah finds him, but the tent of the Lord and the altar are precious in the eyes of Benaiah, he would not rashly shed blood in that place, for it is holy; he calls Joab forth, but Joab refuses; Benaiah carries the news to Solomon, who in righteousness declares that judgment must be executed, even though Joab is in the tent of the Lord, and has laid hold on the horns of the altar, but the behaviour of Benaiah is worthy of notice; surely as we trace Benaiah through the life of David and into the reign of Solomon he stands out as an example of faithfulness, continuing steadfastly, and as Solomon set him over the hosts, can we not say a fitting reward for unswerving loyalty. Who can show such loyalty but those whose characters are "built by God" according to the "knowledge of God," in the "place of God"? May it be ours to shun the fickleness of Abner, to be saved from the selfishness and rebellion of Joab, being "builded" in character "by God," according to the knowledge of God in the assembly of God, so that through weal or woe it may be our lot to be found continuing steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching, the Fellowship, the breaking of the bread, and the prayers.

A GOOD WORD FOR ABNER.

In regard to this great man (2 Sam. 3. 38), notwithstanding the much which may be rightly said against his character, yet by consideration thereof we may learn that which may be to our profit in our life for God. Although we may possess a low estimation of his qualities, yet it would appear that David greatly respected him for his worth and ability, or he could not have uttered such words, "Art thou not a valiant man, and who is like thee in Israel" (1 Sam. 26. 15)? After the death of Abner we read of David mourning his loss, and he speaks of him in no disparaging terms, and surely he would be capable to judge, seeing that he was conversant with the position he held and his behaviour. Though Abner assisted Saul in his persecution of David, yet instead of declaring any faults and failings, David laments for him as "a prince and a great man fallen in Israel."

Solomon when contrasting him with Joab could refer to Abner as being "more righteous and better than he" (1 Kings 2. 32), and such weighty words coming as they do from the lips of the wisest of men ought not to be lightly set aside.

He must indeed have been trustworthy and courageous, to fill the position which was entrusted to him, and surely these are things which we should endeavour to our utmost to imitate. Whatever may have been his faults, our God would have us to imitate that which is good. To be worthy of the trust of our fellow-men is also to be desired, and to be a prince in Israel is to be aimed at, even though such may not be attained.

T. W.

Young Men's Corner.

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

Section 25 (Acts 16. 25-40).

PSALM 119. 62, AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

(Concluded from page 264.)

From JARVIS BROOK. . . . Although there is no mention of anything having been said to the jailor by Paul and Silas when they were committed to his charge, yet there may have been, and their attitude, too, may have made an impression upon him. That his inquiry was that of a soul awakened unto deep concern as to the way of salvation there should be no doubt (he having been previously assured of the safety of the prisoners, the earthquake shock had abated and Paul and Silas brought out by him) when it is seen that Paul and Silas understood it as such and spoke to him accordingly. The results too were in keeping with such a case.

From BELFAST. Re question in NEEDED TRUTH, October, pp. 242-3. Having regard to the fact that Paul and Silas were well advertised in Philippi as servants of the Most High God who proclaimed a way of Salvation, we think the question "What must I do to be saved?" addressed to such men would be appropriate from one whose conscience was awakened by manifestations of the Most High God in the presence of His servants. This way of Salvation, proclaimed before the earthquake, was what the jailor desired to know.

From YORKS WEST. Acts 16. 40 does not necessarily mean the brethren were of the household of Lydia, but rather that Paul and Silas when released go first to the house of Lydia and then either the brethren came to them there, or they afterwards went to the brethren. The former seems most probable. We understand "the brethren" to mean those of the jailor's household, and those of Lydia's

household, together with any others who may have been made disciples, and Luke, who from the altered pronouns of Acts 16. 6, 10, 17, and 17. 1, and 20. 6, appears to have stayed at or near Phillipi until the return half of the Apostle's last visit in the Acts. See what is recorded these brethren did very soon after this time in Phil. 4. 15 and 16. "The brethren" were the church in Phillipi.

From GREENOCK. His question, "Sirs (or Lords) what must I do to be saved," we take to be addressed to them as to men who had been manifestly owned by God and who would be able, if any could, to tell him how he must be saved.

Their action in pointing him to the Lord, led to the jailor and all his house knowing and rejoicing in the knowledge of the God Who can now as He did then loose the bands of the prisoner.

Section 26 (Acts 17. 1-15).

THESSALONICA AND BEREIA.

(Concluded from page 267.)

From YORKS WEST. In versé 1 we are not told if the Apostles preached the word in Amphipolis or Apollonia, or made any disciples. Are we to understand they did not? 1 Thess. 2. 2 suggests that the work at Thessalonica was immediately after the suffering at Phillipi.

Verse 2 reveals to us how slow God was to abandon His people, even when as a nation they had rejected His well-beloved Son. How solemn such a forsaking must be. It also shows how very much the Apostle was in the mind of God in his attitude towards His ancient people, leading him to go in unto them and reason with them from the Scriptures. No principle here of present-day "united effort" or amalgamation. The Apostle was chosen and sent forth (Acts 9. 13, and 13. 2 and 3) to bear the Name of the Lord before all, and to be the herald of a Divine message of grace

(2 Tim. 1. 11), and according to the will of God (Acts 16. 10) he finds himself in this town of Thessalonica. How may the people he wishes to reach with this message hear it? Here is a common meeting-place where all may read and hear the Scriptures; here then is his opportunity to make known his message and bring the Scriptures to bear upon it. What an example for us in aggressive work to-day, if indeed we do believe we are His witnesses, and in the place where we are according to His will.

The closing part of this verse shows the unimpeachable authority of the Apostle, as he preached not himself, but turned them to what God had already revealed.

Verse 3 tersely relates the three great points which formed the subject matter of his discourses during those three weeks:—

1. He Who was foretold in prophecy was to be a suffering Messiah.
2. Christ's death and resurrection from among the dead.
3. That Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Messiah Who had been foretold should come.

All this is very marked in the light of the Epistle to the Thessalonians, where the theme is the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ—in continuation of his previous subjects.

The effect of such reasoning is seen in verse 4, together with 1 Thess. 1. 4–10, and 2. 13 and 14. Some Jews and many Greeks saved, gathered out and gathered together; a church of God planted, the second recorded one in Europe; and they become ensamples to all around them. How truly the epistles written to this church show that such a Gospel came to them not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance!

1 Thess. 2. shows the fitness of the messengers; so necessary and important if our entering in is not to be found vain.

The enmity and opposition of the Jews remind us of a word to certain others of their race in Acts 13. 46. The

accusation of the Jews calls to mind a similar one against the Blessed Lord and Master Himself (Luke 23. 2). Truly the Apostle was a worthy servant of his Master : while Rom. 13. 1-7 shows how false was the accusation.

Here we would also notice the comfort and joy the Apostle now receives from the saints at Phillipi. Phil 4. 15 and 16, what a comfort this must have been to him with the suffering at Phillipi still fresh in his mind. So also in Thessalonica there is much suffering, but the result is a hope, a joy, a crown of glorying before our Lord Jesus at His coming—even the Thessalonian saints themselves.

In verse 10 we note that the readiness of mind with which the Bereans received the word, for which they were commended, was accompanied with examining the Scriptures for themselves. We desire to emphasize the word “therefore” in verse 12 in connexion with this. Also if we would advance in the things of God we must continue as these Bereans so well began, “examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.”

We are now reaching the time when the Epistles of the New Testament began to be written. Verse 14 of this chapter helps in connexion with the first of these if considered in the light of others. Silas and Timothy were left behind in Berea [rather in Macedonia, Ed.] for a definite purpose, namely, that Timothy should go back to Thessalonica to establish and comfort them (1 Thess. 2. 17 to 3. 10). On the return of Timothy with the good news of their faith and love, the first letter to the Thessalonians, the first one to be written of the New Testament, was sent from Corinth : compare the words of 1 Thess. 3. 6, “Timothy came even now,” and Acts 13. 5. How wonderfully instructive are the words of 1 Thess. 1. 7, 8 and 9 in the light of this !

From BARROW. The Apostles had been shamefully entreated at Philippi, yet they waxed bold in their God to speak the Gospel of God unto the Thessalonians in much conflict (1 Thess. 2. 1). While Paul was amongst them he

laboured night and day, that he might not be burdensome to any of them (1 Thess. 2. 9, also 2 Thess. 3. 8). And their Gospel came not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance . . . they turned unto God from idols to serve a Living and True God and to wait for His Son from Heaven (1 Thess. 1. 5-10), yet Luke declares that the Bereans were more noble than those at Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and by a daily examination of the Scriptures they sought to discern for themselves whether the things spoken by Paul and Silas were in accordance therewith (ver. 11).

Within the synagogue of the Jews the Apostles desired to prove from the Scriptures that the predicted sufferings and resurrection of the expected Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus; the result being that some of their Jewish hearers, a great multitude of devout Greeks and a number of the chief women were persuaded and consorted with them.

The proclamation of the Word of God causes hatred and jealousy on the part of the Jews, and they are not content until Paul and Silas depart, but even the knowledge that they were in Berea incites them to further evil and they are not satisfied till the Apostles are forced to take their departure even from that place.

FROM BELFAST. From the change of pronoun in chapter 17. 1 we judge that Luke remained in Philippi in order to carry on this good work of exhorting. The other three men passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia and arrived at Thessalonica.

Here the Apostle Paul as his custom was went into the synagogue of the Jews. Paul's object always was first of all to reach the Jews, until, rejected by them, he went to the Gentiles. In order to reach the Jews, Paul, whenever he entered a city, sought out the synagogue, and entering in he reasoned with those who were come together and from the Scriptures declared that Jesus Whom he preached was the Christ.

In connexion with this action of the Apostle Paul we would like to say that we see no authority for the inference of some that there is licence here for going into the chapels and missions which abound in the present day to preach the Gospel. There was in the synagogues an opportunity of reading and expounding the Scriptures, but we know of no such open door for the whole of the Scriptures in this our day.

Many were persuaded that the things spoken by Paul were so, but this evidently did not please the Adversary, whose aim was and is to-day to destroy the work of God. Using the Jews as his instruments in this case, they set the city in an uproar and, assaulting the house of Jason wherein we suppose that Paul and his company were lodging, and not being able to find them there, they brought Jason and some of the brethren before the rulers of the city, and seeking to gain the favour of the Romans they accuse them of acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king.

This persecution caused the brethren to send Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, who nothing daunted again went into the synagogue of the Jews.

It is recorded of the Bereans that they were more noble than the Thessalonians, because they had a daily Bible reading to see if what they heard was true.

NOTICE.

In order to conclude the notes on the work in Macedonia we give nothing on the Psalms this month. The programme now before us is as follows:—

THE HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP, Section 27, Paul at Athens, Acts 17. 16–34; Section 28, The work in Corinth, Acts 18. 1–18; Section 29, Ephesus I, Acts 18. 18 to 19. 7; Section 30, Ephesus II, Acts 19. 8–41; Psalms 24. 25. 26. 119.
